



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 148 • NUMBER 156 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, March 23, 2017

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, March 23, 2017

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the 2016 annual report of the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(e), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

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[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

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INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from January 23 to January 26, 2017, I led a delegation with five other parliamentarians to Bogota, Colombia. After 50 years of armed conflict, in November 2016 a historic peace agreement was reached between Colombia's government and the revolutionary armed forces of Colombia. The delegation met with numerous partners involved in the post-conflict reconstruction. I would like to present and table the report on behalf of the Canadian section of ParlAmericas.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HEALTH

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Health in relation to Bill C-277,

An Act providing for the development of a framework on palliative care in Canada. The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House, with amendments.

I want to thank the MP for Sarnia—Lambton for her good work on this. This bill had all-party support. It is timely and very much appreciated by all. Certainly, I am very pleased and proud to present the report.

SCRUTINY OF REGULATIONS

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the second report, entitled “Report No. 90 - Accessibility of Documents Incorporated by Reference in Federal Regulations”, and the third report, entitled “Report No. 91 - Marginal Notes”, of the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations in relation to the review of statutory instruments.

In accordance with Standing Order 109 of the House of Commons, the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations requests that the government table a comprehensive response to these reports in the House of Commons.

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskij (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present two reports, in both official languages.

The first is the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, entitled “Modernization of Client Service Delivery”. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I also have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, entitled “Main Estimates 2017-18”.

[*English*]

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 11th report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, entitled “A Study of the Navigation Protection Act”. Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

Routine Proceedings

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative members of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities unequivocally do not support this committee report on the review of the Navigation Protection Act. From its inception, the review of the Navigation Protection Act was disingenuous. The committee was informed that there would be future amendments to the Navigation Protection Act without being told what those amendments would be. This dissenting report outlines how the study came about, Transport Canada's interference in the committee process, what evidence was heard, and the contradictory recommendations made by the governing members, which do not draw their inspiration from any of the evidence that the committee heard.

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PETITIONS

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by a number of Canadian citizens. They are pointing out that it is impossible for a person to give informed consent to assisted suicide or euthanasia if appropriate palliative care is not available to that person. Therefore, the petitioners are calling on Parliament to establish a national strategy on palliative care.

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour today to present petition e-616, the largest petition in Canadian history. This is a petition sponsored by a gentleman named Jonathan Cassels, calling on the Liberal government to keep its promise that the 2015 election will be the last one under first past the post. More than 130,000 Canadians signed this petition from coast to coast to coast, expressing their desire for the most simple and basic of things in politics, that when a government makes a promise, it keeps its promise, to remove us from the outdated and unfair first-past-the-post election system.

It is my honour to present this petition today. I thank Jonathan Cassels, Leadnow, Fair Vote Canada, the Broadbent Institute, and the other Canadians who have sponsored this petition from across the country, expressing something that I think we all hope for as parliamentarians: That when a prime minister makes a promise and repeats it hundreds of times, Canadians should be able to count on that promise.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Anthony Rota (Nipissing—Timiskaming, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured today to present a petition on behalf of constituents who are asking the House of Commons to specifically identify hospice palliative care as defined by the medical services covered under the Canada Health Act so that provincial and territorial governments will be entitled to funds under the Canada health transfer system to be used to provide accessible and available hospice palliative care for all residents of Canada in their respective provinces and territories.

●(1010)

INTERNATIONAL AID

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present this petition. The petitioners call upon the Government of Canada to allocate 0.7% of Canada's gross national income to official development assistance by 2020.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present a petition today on behalf of constituents in Cowichan—Malahat—Langford who recognize that climate change is resulting in lower water flows in the Cowichan River, which is posing a threat to fish and fish habitat, both of which, I should note, fall under federal jurisdiction.

They note that the Cowichan River weir is necessary for managing the flow rates into the river and that the Cowichan River is a designated heritage river. Therefore, they call on the federal government to honour its pledges for infrastructure, adaptation, and climate resilience, and provide adequate federal funding for raising the weir so that we can protect this vital watershed in my riding.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by a number of Canadians right across this great country who believe, with the Fathers of Confederation, that Canada was intended to be not just a political union but an economic one. Section 121 of the Constitution Act is the free trade clause. We, as Canadians, should be able to buy spirits, beer, and wine from across this great country. The petitioners are calling upon the government to help do exactly that, as the Fathers of Confederation intended.

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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, the following question will be answered today: No. 834.

[Text]

Question No. 834—**Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to the Canadian Revenue Agency's (CRA) administration of the Alberta government's new carbon tax rebates: (i) what is the total number of rebate payments issued, (ii) what is the total monetary amount of these rebates, (iii) what is the total number of rebate payments issued to non-residents of Alberta, (iv) what is the total monetary amount of rebates issued to non-residents, (v) what is the total annual administrative cost for the CRA to manage this program for the provincial government?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, concerning the CRA's administration of the Alberta climate leadership adjustment rebate, ACLAR, the CRA is not in a position to release the information in the manner requested.

The Budget

In processing parliamentary returns, the Privacy Act is applied, as are the principles set out in the Access to information Act. The ACLAR is a program authorized under provincial legislation and is fully funded by the Alberta provincial government. Although the ACLAR legislation is in effect, the service level agreement, which authorizes the CRA to manage and administer this program on behalf of Alberta, is still under negotiation.

Therefore, information will not be provided, on the grounds that the release of information would potentially prejudice the negotiations and be injurious to federal-provincial relations.

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[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 831 to 833, 835, and 836 could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 831—**Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to the purchase of televisions, since November 4, 2015, broken down by department and agency: (a) what is the total value of televisions purchased; (b) how many televisions have been purchased; and (c) what are the details of each purchase, including (i) make and model, (ii) size, (iii) price per unit, (iv) quantity, (v) was the television a 4K television, (vi) was the television a 3-D television?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 832—**Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to studies related to the legalization of illicit drugs conducted since November 4, 2015: (a) what are the details of any studies conducted by the government on the subject, including (i) who conducted the study, (ii) when it was completed, (iii) which drugs were studied, (iv) what were the findings of the study, (v) what was the internal tracking number of the study; and (b) what are the details of any outside studies conducted for the government, including (i) who conducted the study, (ii) when it was completed, (iii) which drugs were studied, (iv) what were the findings of the study, (v) what was the internal tracking number of the study, (vi) what was the vendor name, (vii) what was the amount of the contract, (viii) what was the date of the contract?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 833—**Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to diplomatic postings by Global Affairs Canada, between November 4, 2015, and February 2, 2017: (a) what is the total number of vacancies in diplomatic postings; (b) which positions are vacant; (c) how long have each of the positions identified in (b) been vacant; (d) at which stage of the recruitment and posting process are the positions identified in (b); (e) what is the average length of time taken to fill a diplomatic posting; (f) what percentage of diplomatic postings have been filled from within the Foreign Service; (g) what percentage of ambassadorial postings have been filled from within the Foreign Service; and (h) what percentage of diplomatic postings require ministerial approval?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 835—**Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to the \$2.65 billion in government funding announced on November 27, 2015, in Valetta, Malta, to help combat climate change in developing countries: (a) what is the itemized list of projects funded by this fund, including (i) title of

project, (ii) recipient organization or name, (iii) recipient country, (iv) amount contributed; and (b) what is the number of jobs that have been created outside of Canada with this money that are (i) full-time, (ii) part-time?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 836—**Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to the 2016-2017 Main Estimates relating to Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development: (a) under Contributions and the allotment for "Annual Voluntary Contributions", (i) what is the itemized list of organizations, persons, or programs, which received funding from this allotment, (ii) what items were purchased with this funding; (b) for each of the items in (a)(ii), what was the related (i) title of the project, (ii) recipient name, (iii) recipient country, (iv) amount contributed; (c) under Contributions and the allotment for "Canada Fund for Local Initiatives", (i) what is this fund's mandate, (ii) which department directly administers this program at Global Affairs Canada, (iii) for the 2016-2017 fiscal year, what is the itemized list of organizations, persons, or programs, which received funding from this allotment, (iv) what items were purchased with this funding; (d) for each item in (c)(iv), what was the related (i) title of the project, (ii) recipient name, (iii) recipient country, (iv) amount contributed; (e) under Contributions and the allotment for "Global Commerce Support Program", (i) what is this program's mandate, (ii) which department directly administers this program at Global Affairs Canada, (iii) what is the itemized list of persons, organizations, or programs which received funding from this allotment; (f) for each item in (e)(iii), what was the related (i) title of project, (ii) recipient name, (iii) recipient country, (iv) amount contributed?

(Return tabled)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from March 22 consideration of the motion that the House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): It is my pleasure to rise on behalf of our Conservative caucus and all Canadians who are concerned that their tax dollars are not being respected to respond to the Liberal Budget.

I have had many opportunities to travel this country, and I have seen first-hand how the job-killing policies this Prime Minister promotes are hurting families and businesses.

[English]

It is my pleasure to rise on behalf of our Conservative caucus and all Canadians who are concerned that their tax dollars are not being respected, to respond to the Liberal budget. As Conservatives and as the official opposition, we are here proudly as the voice of the taxpayers.

The Budget

I have had the opportunity to travel this country quite a bit in this role, and I have seen first-hand how the job-killing policies the Prime Minister promotes are hurting families and businesses. In Medicine Hat, I visited a greenhouse that is set to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars, in fact exactly \$750,000, to accommodate the Prime Minister's new carbon tax at \$50 a tonne.

On Canada's proud east coast, I met families who are finding it harder and harder to save after the government hiked the cost of textbooks and after-school programs for their kids. The Prime Minister likes to talk about cleaning up the tax code, but he forgets that all of the tax credits that he is taking away from families made life more affordable for them. The truth is that regular Canadians feel like they are being nickel-and-dimed to death by the Prime Minister.

He promised a lot in the election. He made a lot of commitments, but now it seems like a lot of rhetoric. For all the money that he spent, and for all the taxes Canadians have to pay, what are the results? The Prime Minister is now in his second budget, clinging to this failed Liberal idea of taxing and spending because it seems impossible for him to understand what regular Canadians are actually going through out there.

Canadians needed a break. That is what they were hoping for in this budget, but they did not get one. We, on this side of the House, are not surprised. After all, this is the same government that broke its promise to lower taxes on small businesses, broke its promise to limit its deficit spending to only \$10 billion, and broke its promise to balance the budget, all within six months.

● (1015)

[*Translation*]

These broken promises are proof to Canadians that the Prime Minister does not understand the everyday challenges families and workers are facing.

Canadians are not looking for bigger, shinier promises that will cost millions but never arrive. They are looking for common-sense solutions to the most pressing problems.

[*English*]

What are those most pressing problems? They are about getting new jobs for our young people, and people keeping their jobs and getting to keep more of their hard-earned money while the Prime Minister makes life more expensive.

I was at a function this morning with a lot of small business owners. One of them said that he works 15 hours a day, seven days a week, and in this budget the Prime Minister says he is going to target small business owners because he thinks they are sheltering money. That small business owner said that he invests every cent he has back in his business. He buys new equipment, hires another employee, and expands his business, and the Prime Minister thinks that somehow he is using the tax system to hide taxes.

This is the kind of attitude the Prime Minister has toward small business owners. This year's budget is just a sequel to last year's budget of his nickel-and-dime plan. Last year, it was textbook and education tax credits, which were cancelled. That cost families up to \$600 per student. The Prime Minister made after-school programs more expensive, to the tune of hundreds of dollars. For a regular

family, hundreds of dollars is a lot of money. If a family can write off an expensive registration for hockey, soccer camp, arts classes, or piano lessons, that is a big deal to a family, and those are all gone.

The Prime Minister steamed ahead with the higher small business tax. He got rid of the hiring tax credit for small businesses, which are struggling across the country. They want to hire more people.

We need to provide them with those incentives. Why would he take away an incentive to hire more people in this country? This year they are raising money off the backs of small businesses again by hiking EI premiums and CPP premiums.

They are raising taxes on Canadians who use the bus. Really? If a person takes the bus to work every day, or to school every day, and likes to enjoy a beer at the end of the day, guess what? They are taxing that too. They are even taxing our Saturday night plans. If we want to grab an Uber to go to the pub to have a glass of wine with friends, or a beer, they are taxing all of that. They are taxing Uber ride-sharing. They are taxing our wine, our beer. Why? It is because they are looking for every possible cent they can find in the sofa cushions to fund more government spending.

In short, they are making everyday life more expensive for regular Canadians. What do they have to show for it? They promised more growth. Guess what? There is none.

Despite continuing to squeeze taxpayers, there is not even in this budget new support for the Canadian men and women in uniform who help keep us safe. The Prime Minister just does not seem to get it. The more we watch him, it is like he does not understand what regular people are going through out there.

[*Translation*]

This budget is proof that the Prime Minister is out of touch with the needs of working people. Any family across this country will tell you the anxiety they feel about losing their job. Any student will tell you that their biggest anxiety is whether or not there will be a job for them when they graduate, a job that pays enough to cover their student loan payment and maybe a car loan payment someday. They have reason to worry because wages are not going up, and the jobs out there offer fewer hours of work, which means less money in their pockets.

● (1020)

[*English*]

This budget is proof that the Prime Minister is out of touch with the needs of working people, because any families we talk to across the country will tell us about the anxiety they feel about maybe losing their jobs. Students will tell us that their biggest anxiety is whether there is going to be a job to look for when they finally graduate, a job that will pay enough for them to be able to buy a car one day, get a car loan, get a house or a condo, and pay back a student loan. They have reason to worry, because wages are not going up and the jobs out there on offer are offering fewer hours of work, meaning less money in their pockets.

The Budget

For all the Prime Minister's grandstanding plans, let us remember back to the election. He promised to not raise taxes; he has raised them. He promised to balance the budget; he has not. He promised to spend \$10 billion on infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, which is what most people think of as infrastructure; he has not. What do we have for it? Less growth. We are not seeing the growth he promised, so what is all this spending for?

With an aggressive American administration looking to attract every available job to its side of the border, time is running out to get serious. This budget missed a huge opportunity to protect the Canadian economy from the policies of the Trump administration. We were all waiting for it. We were hoping that he would recalibrate. This is a real threat to our economy. That country is our biggest competitor and our biggest customer. There is a lot on the line. There is a potential border adjustment tax. There are potential changes to NAFTA. He had a chance to change course, and he did not.

Lower taxes and less red tape are the tools to do exactly that to keep us competitive. However, instead of competitive solutions, the Prime Minister offers, and we are not surprised, more spending. As for his buzz words programs, how do I say this? I think yesterday they even invented new words. I thought that was a George Bush thing, but now, apparently, our Prime Minister invents new words as well. These kinds of programs do not reach the vast majority of Canadians. They will never see a benefit from these kinds of programs, as great as the Prime Minister thinks they are. All those people out there who are waiting for a signal from the government are the ones who are going to face much more intense competition from a low-cost, low-tax United States.

If the Liberals think people's jobs are fashionable enough that they might make a good photo-op after the budget, the Prime Minister might show up there. There is a good chance that they might be able to get a photo with him. They will be lucky. If they have a super cluster venture capital accelerator, then they are in luck, because this budget was made for them, but I do not think there are a lot of them in Portage—Lisgar. Maybe one day.

The truth is that graduates are looking at this and saying that they are struggling to pay off debt, let alone save a bit of money. They are looking at this budget and thinking, "What's in it for me", because that is what people look for. There is not a lot. There is not a lot in it for the guy who is working on the oil drilling rig. There is not a lot in it for the person running a family farm. If someone drives a truck or owns a hair salon, those jobs are not fashionable to the current Prime Minister, and there is nothing in this budget for them. I hate to break it to those people, and it is not funny, but those jobs are not Liberal favourites. The Liberals are picking favourites, and the rest of the workforce will pay for it. The rest of the people in this country, families and businesses, will pay for that.

[*Translation*]

As it stands, these billion dollar programs are not really about the average working Canadian. Families and businesses were looking to this budget for a sign that the Prime Minister had done his homework, figured out a plan, and would be moving beyond his haphazard tax-and-spend approach.

[*English*]

As it stands, these billion-dollar programs are not really about the average working family. They really are not. Families and businesses were looking for a sign in this budget from the Prime Minister that he had done his homework, that he had listened, that he had figured out a plan and would be moving beyond this haphazard tax-and-spend approach. However, the opposite is true. There is actually no fiscal plan in the budget. An economist made mention of that yesterday. When is the last time there was a budget with no fiscal plan? There is no fiscal plan. There is no plan to return to balance. There is no appreciation of what this will cost. There is no accounting for the programs and the jobs they will create. There is no costing or measurement of the amount of GDP associated with these programs. The Liberals have not done their homework.

Despite the Prime Minister's promise to return to balance, he admitted yesterday that he has no intention whatsoever of returning to balance. Not only did the Prime Minister break his solemn commitment during the election to spend only \$10 billion, but the upcoming deficit for this year is \$29 billion. In fact, since November of last year, which is just six months, the Prime Minister blew through an additional \$13 billion. Taxpayer money has disappeared into a black hole of photo ops and international trips, which have produced zero growth. Let me rephrase that. There is growth. Do members know where that growth is? It is in the size of government. Yesterday, the comment was made that this is unprecedented growth in modern times. That is how it was described. There has been 12% growth in the size of government. When taxpayers look at that, they think, "What is happening? That is not the bargain we were told we were going to get when the Prime Minister got elected."

The budget also admits that the Prime Minister's infrastructure plan is not on track. It is right there in black and white. Very little of the billion dollars that was earmarked has gone to roads and highways and ports. It sounded like a good idea. We want shovels in the ground. We want people working. Those are the kinds of things Canadians expected when he said he was going to spend on infrastructure. That is not what happened. The construction sector has actually declined by 3.3%. Money is not getting out. Projects are not being built. Shovels are not in the ground. That means that jobs were not created in the construction business.

What is worse, the Prime Minister has not ruled out the idea of selling off Canadian airports to pay for an infrastructure plan that he even admits in this budget, still, after two years, is vague and unfinished. Let us be clear about that. The Prime Minister is still considering selling off Canada's airports to fund what amounts to a \$40-billion shot in the dark for an infrastructure bank. Remember, the infrastructure bank was never mentioned in the election. This was not a promise the Prime Minister made. However, guess what? Canadians will be paying for it.

The Budget

Something else that is very concerning in this budget is the notion of targeting small business owners. There is a shot across the bow in this budget that is very concerning for small business owners. If they are professionals, people who are accountants, doctors, dentists, lawyers, physiotherapists, chiropractors, and I could name a lot of people who are professionals, who work hard in our communities, who serve their communities, who are small business owners, the Prime Minister thinks they are hiding money in the way they manage their money, and he is coming after them. He has done that in this budget. He is also warning in this budget that he is coming for more.

We know the Liberals are squeezing farmers. They are even squeezing campground owners, who are small business owners. They are squeezing everyone who is a small business owner, because he thinks, as he said in the election, that small businesses are a way to shelter money and that somehow small business owners are cheating the system.

• (1025)

I think back to the guy I talked to this morning who works 15 hours a day, seven days a week. That is what small business owners do, and they take a risk to become small business owners. We should thank them, because they take a risk.

They are not living off the government. They are not living off the taxpayer. They have taken a risk and invested their hard-earned dollars to create jobs and to invest in the community. Many of them give back to the community through charitable donations and community work. These are the people who are the backbone of our economy, small business owners, and that is who the government is targeting. Where are its priorities?

[*Translation*]

Canada's Conservatives are here to be the voice of the taxpayer. Taxpayers are regular Canadians: moms and dads, workers and small business owners, seniors and students. All of them have been hit by Liberal tax hikes generated by reckless Liberal spending. Canada's Conservatives will fight to keep money in everyone's pockets at every turn. However, this Prime Minister does not get that.

[*English*]

I will end by saying that Canada's Conservatives are here to be the voice of the taxpayer. Taxpayers are regular Canadians: moms and dads, workers and small business owners, seniors and students. All of them have been hit by Liberal tax hikes generated by this Liberal reckless spending, and Canada's Conservatives will fight to keep more money in the pockets of taxpayers.

Why? I think back to the fellow I talked to this morning and so many other people I have met across the country. They have worked hard, with early mornings, late nights, and long commutes. They have made sacrifices for their families. The Prime Minister does not seem to get that.

We know that responsible governing today will make the decisions of tomorrow far less difficult. Now it is time for the Prime Minister to get serious. There is about to be far more competition from our southern neighbour, which is drastically cutting taxes and reducing red tape in an effort to spur job growth and draw business investment to its side of the border.

For the second time, Canadians were hoping to see a plan from the Prime Minister's budget, and unfortunately, they have come away disappointed.

With that, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the word "That" and substituting the following,

this House not approve the budgetary policy of the government as it: (a) includes a further deficit of at least \$29 billion; (b) contains no plan to return the books to balance; (c) nickel-and-dimes Canadian taxpayers to death by hiking taxes on public transit users, Uber and ride-sharing, beer and wine, donated medicine, childcare, small business owners; and (d) demonstrates that the government's economic plan has failed to create the jobs it promised.

• (1030)

The Deputy Speaker: The amendment is in order. We will go to questions and comments. 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, when the Conservative Party had the opportunity to actually support the middle-class tax cut, what did the Conservatives do? They voted against the tax break for Canada's middle class and those who are aspiring to be part of it. I find it difficult to believe the leader of the official opposition when she says she wants to see more money in the pockets of Canadians, when in fact, her colleagues voted against tax breaks for the middle class. Those tax breaks, those hundreds of millions of dollars, increased the disposable incomes of Canadians in every region of our country and supported our small businesses by providing more customers.

Let me quote, if I may. It is a little bit lengthy. I might not have the time, but let me summarize by saying that I hope through the coming days to share with this House many quotes, which clearly illustrate that this government got it right by putting a priority on industry and on the middle class.

Why will members across the way not support a progressive budget such as this that really makes a difference for Canada's middle class?

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Mr. Speaker, it is funny when I listen to the member opposite. I know he is a Liberal, but he sounds a lot like some of the people south of the border who use alternative facts.

The truth is that in the last 10 years, the middle class grew by 30%. The supposed tax cut that the current government brought in helped the wealthiest part of the middle class, not lower-income people and middle-class Canadians. In fact, even with that supposed tax cut they gave, this is what happens.

The Liberals talked a big talk during the election, but then they taxed everyone to death with the last two budgets. There is nothing left of that middle-class tax cut they supposedly gave people. That is the reality. In fact, people are now more in the hole. The Liberals just keep taking and taking.

Why? We found out in the budget yesterday that it is because the Liberals grew the size of government by 12%. That is an unprecedented growth in the size of government.

The Budget

This is not who we should be focused on. We should be focused on regular working people who need a break, and they did not get a break from the government yesterday.

• (1035)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I guess the hon. leader of the official opposition will agree with us that this is in fact a budget for members of the Rideau Club and those working hard to join it.

[*Translation*]

Unfortunately, this is once again a Liberal budget of broken promises. The Liberals voted in favour of the motion to put an end to poverty among indigenous children. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ordered the government to invest \$155 million to address that issue, but there is nothing in the budget about it. The Liberals promised to close the tax loophole for stock options for CEOs, but there is nothing in the budget about that. They promised to lower the tax rate for SMEs, but there is nothing in the budget about that either. However, there are some surprises. There are unpleasant surprises for families and the middle class. For example, the Liberals have done away with the tax credit of \$150 to \$200 a year for people who take the bus to work.

I would like to hear what the Leader of the Opposition thinks about this Liberal measure that is going to hurt families across Canada.

[*English*]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the hon. member's comment about a budget that is not for regular working people. I love that comment about this being for the elites and friends of the Liberal Party. This is what the budget is about.

The member talked about bus passes. This is mean-spirited. Why would the Liberals take away a benefit for people who take the bus every day to school? This tax credit allowed people to get almost two months of free bus passes back on their tax return. Seniors use this. Students use this. Low-income Canadians use this.

This is not a budget for regular working people, and it's not just about the people getting to work and back, but the people who want to work those 15 hours a day to actually own a small business one day. They want a return on their investment and they are thinking about taking that risk. How do we encourage them to take a risk? If there is a reward at the end of the day, if they work those 15 hours a day, then they are going to get to build a business, to hire people, to actually keep some of their own money. What a wonderful opportunity for them and their community, but what are we doing? We are telling them they are tax cheats. That is what this budget does. We are coming after small business owners now.

It is everything from campground owners to people who operate a family-owned farm. This is ridiculous. This has to end.

We will be the voice of the taxpayers, and we will stand up for families and stand up for small businesses.

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the speech from the hon. leader of the opposition, and she kept talking about not addressing the issues of working-class Canadians. In my riding, I heard a great deal about how important child care was. When the party opposite

was in power, it chose not to invest in child care. We are looking at \$7 billion in child care.

I would ask the leader of the opposition how she considers not investing in child care something that is going to help middle-class families.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Mr. Speaker, once again the government is not focusing on everyday working people, particularly low-income working people.

What was the first thing the government did? It was to take away the universal child care benefit that every single family in this country relied on. It took away choice. It also took away the tax credit for child care, and yesterday in the budget the government took away a credit for employers who were willing to put their own money into child care in their own businesses. If I asked any parents I know, they would say that this is the ideal kind of child care. To have it on site, where they work, close to their own community, with employers willing to put some of their own money into it to make the work environment better for their employees is ideal child care. What a great incentive for child care, and those guys over there took it away.

• (1040)

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we heard last night as the speech was being read that another 1,000 energy workers were laid off in Alberta. I was with a stakeholder last night who was taking calls from a friend of his, one of those 1,000 people who had lost his job. He is a young father with two young kids. It was heartbreaking.

In this budget the government is once again going out of its way to target the energy industry when it is down, to kick it again if it is investing money to look for new wells. These are the people who hire the middle class, and the government is kicking them again when they are down.

The Leader of the Opposition has done a lot of work across the country. She is a strong Albertan and her heart is there. Could she talk about how the budget not only does not help the energy sector, but kicks it when it is down?

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Mr. Speaker, the member said it well. If there were over 100,000 people out of work in any other province in this country, there would have been something in the budget.

There are over 100,000 people who are out of work and are on the EI rolls, but there are thousands of contractors who do not even appear in those reports. There are over 100,000 people who are out of work, running out of EI, going on welfare, having to go to food banks, and there is nothing in this budget for them.

As the member for Chilliwack—Hope said, the government is also getting rid of a particular expense credit for those who drill new wells and explore in the oil and gas sector. Again, this is mean-spirited. The government is kicking a province when it is down. It is kicking an industry while it is down, and there is nothing to help that industry.

The Budget

Imagine if the aerospace sector had 100,000 people out of work. Imagine if the automotive sector had 100,000 people out of work, with no hope and no light at the end of the tunnel. There is nothing in this budget to even recognize that this is happening, and this job crisis continues.

Who suffers the most in this province? It is young people. There is no hope for these young people in Alberta, and there is nothing in this budget to help Albertans.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, New Democrats are very disappointed by the meagreness of the Liberal budget.

I can just imagine the Minister of Finance meeting with the Liberal caucus to say something like, “Last year, we took some small measures to make us look progressive and to give us some lines we can use and some talking points for interviews, measures that will have a small impact here and there, but do not worry. This year, we will not be doing anything. We are going to take a break with this year’s budget. Nothing much will happen. We will wait until it is better for us to take action. We will wait until 2019.”

When we look at this year’s budget and at how and when the measures and investments proposed by the Liberal government will happen, we see that nothing much is planned for 2017 and 2018. When we look at the column for 2017, we see nothing but zeros. Zero for this and zero for that. In the column for 2018, a few numbers start to appear. Small efforts will be made here and there.

I am not sure why, but when we look at the 2019 column, we suddenly see a whole host of things. That is when there will be investments. However, do not hold your breath for the next two years because there will be nothing. The Liberals are all about optics. They issue a press release to bamboozle us with impressive numbers that are in fact meaningless right now because they are such a way off in the future.

It is easy to promise things that will not come to fruition for 8, 10, or 12 years. I can make promises for 2023 as well if you like. The reality is that five or six budgets will be adopted by then. So much can change by then. Things might go in all sorts of directions.

The reality is that people are suffering and need help right now. The reality is that 4.5 million people in Canada are living below the poverty line as we speak. Of those 4.5 million people, 990,000 are children. The Liberal government is telling them to wait because that money will come if they are re-elected in 2019. That is unacceptable to us as progressives and social democrats. The government cannot be asleep at the switch like this for two years while families, the middle class, and workers struggle to make ends meet.

The Minister of Finance cannot tell the Liberal caucus that they will just sit back and only invest when it is advantageous for them. That shows contempt for the people who get up every morning at six o’clock to take their children to school and then go to work by car or bus to try to pay their bills, while their buying power diminishes, their wages stagnate, and personal debt rates reach unprecedented levels.

Not so long ago, we learned that the household debt-to-income ratio had reached 167%. That is unprecedented. People are being paid less, whereas food, rent, and houses are becoming more expensive. Furthermore, increases in productivity never really benefit employees, only the owners, whose profits keep growing.

• (1045)

What happens then? People go into debt. They run up their credit card, their second credit card, and their line of credit.

What is the government offering these people and these families in its budget? Nothing.

The message we want to send the Liberal government is that we cannot wait. We do not have the luxury of time. The government does, since the election is two and a half years away, but people in our communities do not. They have to pay their bills right now.

That is why the NDP believes that yesterday’s budget is a missed opportunity. It completely misses the mark. It does not meet the urgent needs of the people. It meets the needs of the Liberal Party and its friends, who will have the advantage, and who will continue to benefit from unfair and unjust measures. In fact, the budget is good for the rich, the millionaires, the privileged, and those who run major corporations; they get to keep their tax breaks, which the Liberals promised to abolish or address. The reality is that they are keeping them.

[*English*]

It is the big budget of nothingness. It is a big budget of nothing, or “wait and see, it’s coming.” When is it coming? Maybe it will come for the next federal election. However, for the next two years we will have peanuts, or almost nothing, from the Liberals. It is quite easy to put big numbers in a press release, to say they are spreading billions of dollars in innovation, housing, public transit, and all of that, but what is in the budget for 2017? It is a column of zeros, and in 2018, it is the same thing.

Then, suddenly, when we look closely at the budget for 2019, wow, it is wonderful. There are hundreds of millions of dollars for investing in our communities, just in time for the next federal election. I can imagine the finance minister talking to the Liberal caucus, saying not to expect too much from this budget because they are taking a break. They are taking a break because the election is just two and a half years away. They will keep the money for that time.

It is a little ludicrous for the Liberals to show shiny objects to the population, saying they will invest billions of dollars, when actually it is supposed to come only in 2022, 2023, or 2024. There will be five or six other budgets before that. It is quite ridiculous to make people think they will get help and real investment in their communities right now, when actually nothing will happen. It is wait and see.

The Budget

People cannot wait. People do not have the luxury of waiting two years for the interests of the Liberal Party. There are 4.5 million people in our country who are living in poverty. Some 990,000 children are living in poverty. The majority of children in first nation communities are living in poverty. They do not have the luxury of waiting. They need our support, and the Liberal government is failing its responsibility and the promises it made to Canadians to invest in infrastructure, housing, innovation, and public transit. However, all the measures and the rules that benefit the millionaires and the CEOs are still there. They will still put in their pockets huge gifts that are paid for by the hard-working Canadians and taxpayers of our country.

This budget missed the target. That is why the NDP will oppose it. As I said earlier, when we look at it, it is clearly a budget in favour of the members of the Rideau Club and those who are working hard to join it, but not for average and ordinary Canadians.

• (1050)

Let me give some examples of that. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal said three times to the federal government that it has to invest \$155 million to close the gap for children in first nation communities. The federal government is challenging that in court. Shame.

At the same time, it has voted in favour of a motion in the House of Commons to give that money for children in first nation communities, but what do we see in the budget? We see nothing, zero. We should have expected at least \$155 million, but there is nothing. It is a broken promise from the Liberal government.

However, what we still have is the tax loophole for stock options for the CEOs of this country. It is still there, and it is costing us \$800 million per year to give that to the richest of our society. That fiscal measure, the 87% benefit goes to 1% of the population, and if we look at two-thirds of that fiscal measure, we see that more or less \$600 million benefits 75 people in this country. That is two-thirds of that fiscal measure that the Liberals have promised to abolish, but it is still there.

To govern is to make choices. The Liberals could have made the choice to help children of first nations. They have chosen to keep the measure to help CEOs and the one per cent of the richest of our society. This is not the kind of choice that a progressive or social democrat would make.

• (1055)

[*Translation*]

Here are some very straightforward examples of the shameful, appalling choices the Liberals made in their budget, choices that fly in the face of their election promises.

Number one, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal told the Liberal government to invest \$155 million in the well-being of first nations children. That is significant. Most of the first nations children in our communities live in poverty, and the tribunal says that \$155 million is the minimum needed, yet the government is challenging that in court. There is nothing in the budget for first nations children. What about the \$155 million? It is not there. Instead, the government kept the tax break for stock options for

corporate CEOs. That is still there, even though the Liberals promised to close that particular tax loophole.

In recent weeks, the NDP has been asking the Liberals to keep that promise. Why? Because it is costing our society \$800 million. Who benefits? Eighty-seven per cent of the money invested, or rather, given away, with this tax break goes to 1% of the population, the richest 1%.

If we take a closer look at this loophole, we see that two-thirds of the cost of this measure benefits 75 people, this while four million people live in poverty and children on reserves need help. The Liberals are not helping them; instead, they are choosing to maintain a measure that benefits their millionaire friends and the ultra-rich elites.

To govern is to make choices. The Liberals had the choice of helping first nations children or keeping measures that benefit the ultra-rich.

Well, the Liberals once again wanted to hang on to the measures that benefit the rich. The mask is off, and we are discovering the Liberal Party's true colours.

I have another simple example: what could be better to help people get around our communities than public transportation? It helps our economy, it helps families, and it is good for the environment because it reduces greenhouse gases. Is there anything in this year's budget for public transit? No, nothing. *Zero. Nada.*

Incidentally, the Prime Minister had promised Montreal \$775 million to extend the blue line in that city's subway system. The budget does not even mention the Montreal subway system, let alone its blue line. There is nothing. The only measure related to public transit—hold on to your hats—has to do with a tax credit that gave people who take the bus an extra \$150 or \$200 at the end of the year. This reduced people's taxes a bit and encouraged them to use public transit. What bright idea did the Liberals have? They decided to eliminate that. It no longer exists, even though it really helped families and middle-class Canadians.

Other tax measures remain, however. For example, 100% of workers' wages are taxable. The tax rate is 25%, 30%, or 35%. They do not have a choice. They get their pay every two weeks and they receive their pay stub, which shows that they paid taxes. However, only 50%, not 100%, of the capital gains that investors derive from selling shares are taxable. The Liberals could have changed this, addressed this injustice, and brought more money into the government coffers in order to really invest and help people. What did the Liberals do? They kept this tax break for the wealthiest Canadians, which costs about \$1 billion every year, but they had the bright idea of abolishing a tax credit for people who take the bus in the morning and who could have benefited from a transit credit at the end of the year. I do not know who, on the Liberal side, thinks that this is how we can fight inequality and bring about tax fairness.

The Budget

The other scandalous thing is that there is absolutely nothing in the Liberal budget to help those looking for work to get employment insurance benefits. People who work pay for that insurance, but six out of ten of those who are unlucky enough to lose their job and have to start looking for another, do not qualify for EI benefits. Does the Liberal budget include anything to improve access to EI? It does not. Did the government change the number of hours to qualify for employment insurance? It did not. Did it extend the benefit period by five weeks in regions prone to seasonal employment in order to cover the spring gap left by the economic climate? It did not.

What we do find in this budget are extremely low tax rates for corporations, that will continue to pay only 15%. Their tax rates have dropped by half over the past 15 years, which is costing us \$12 billion a year. That is a lot of money. The other thing that is still in the budget is the subsidies for the oil and gas companies.

What is in the budget for affordable housing? There is a \$10-million allocation for next year. One per cent of what was promised is being invested next year. I think \$10 million might get us three buildings: one in Vancouver, one in Toronto, and one in Montreal. In other words, peanuts.

I move, seconded by the hon. member for London—Fanshawe:

● (1100)

That the amendment be amended by deleting all the words after the word “as it” and substituting the following:

“(a) maintains the stock option loopholes for wealthy CEOs and refuses to ask large corporations to pay their fair share; and

(b) fails to allocate any of the funding needed to end racial discrimination in the provision of Indigenous child welfare services.”.

The Deputy Speaker: The amendment to the amendment is in order.

The hon. member for Laval—Les Îles.

Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite. I listened carefully to his speech and I would like to ask him what he thinks of this government and the budget.

We lowered the unemployment rate from 7.1% to 6.7%. We also created 250,000 full-time jobs for Canadians. Our priority is to invest in industry and innovation to make Canada a leader in innovation.

Would he care to comment on that?

● (1105)

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, when I was young, we used to say that culture is like jam; the less one has, the more one spreads it out.

Interestingly enough, the federal budget suggests that the less money we have, the more the government spreads it out over time. There is no money for today, but things will be great in eight to 10 years. It is exactly the same thing. That is how the Liberals are doing things, and they are hoping that people will not notice. That is exactly what is happening with affordable housing, innovation, and infrastructure. The Liberals are late in keeping all of their promises.

With regard to job creation, 40% of jobs for young people between the ages of 18 to 34 are precarious. Job numbers only hide the fact that the jobs we create are getting weaker. There is nothing in the Liberal budget to address this issue.

Many part-time and contract workers face much uncertainty. Every month, 800,000 people use food banks. Who are these people? In the past, they were people on social assistance and poor seniors. Now, we are seeing an increasing number of the working poor: part-time or minimum-wage workers who have a hard time making rent and buying clothes and school supplies for their kids. They cannot afford groceries, so they have to ask for help.

What does the Liberal budget have to offer these people? Nothing. The Liberals have expressed support for a \$15 minimum wage. It sure would have been nice if they had been consistent and come up with some way to support low-income workers.

[English]

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, much has been made about the investment in public transit. I want to refer to pages 119 and 120 of the budget and read a couple of sentences:

Through the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund, Budget 2016 focused on making immediate investments of \$3.4 billion over three years, to upgrade and improve public transit systems across Canada.

To support the next phase of ambitious public transit projects, the Government will invest \$20.1 billion over 11 years through bilateral agreements with provinces...

In my own area, the federal government has invested over \$250 million to fund the light rapid transit system in Waterloo region. While this sounds great and I am supportive of public transit, I wonder if my colleague could explain why he thinks the Liberal government would have ended the public rider transit tax credit for people who use it. We are building massive infrastructure projects, and we should be encouraging people to use those assets, and yet, at the same time, the government is actually discouraging them from getting out of their cars and on to the public transit system.

I wonder if my colleague has any comments on that.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, we have the same concerns. A lot of people in my community, in Montreal, Laval, and Longueuil, are using public transit. For some seniors, it is the only tax deduction they can use, and it has helped them with \$150 or \$200 at the end of the year. I do not know why, but the Liberals are attacking them. We should encourage people to take the bus to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Instead, the Liberals are saying there is nothing for those people, but they will continue to help the CEOs and the richest 1% in this country. By the way, public infrastructure, little by little, will be privatized and will serve private companies which will make profits with the taxpayer money. Maybe I will have the chance to discuss this point in response to another question.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member made reference to three points, and it is important that I provide some comment before I end with a question.

The Budget

The member talked about tax fairness. It is important to remind the member that when there was a special tax put on Canada's wealthiest 1%, the New Democrats voted against it. When it comes to the issue of poverty, the government brought forward a very ambitious increase for the Canada child benefit that would lift tens of thousands, going into the hundreds of thousands, of children out of poverty. The NDP voted against it. The member also spent a great deal of his time talking about corporate tax cuts. I was an MLA for a number of years and throughout those years, what I saw was an NDP government give corporate tax cuts in seven budgets.

Does the member believe there is a need for the New Democrats to be consistent with what they say?

• (1110)

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, it is rather funny to be lectured on consistency by a Liberal.

I would like to remind the House why the NDP voted against their so-called middle-class tax cut. I have to laugh at that, because the Liberals have a rather odd definition of middle class. People who earn less than \$45,000 did not get anything from the Liberal government. People who earn less than \$23 an hour will get no help from the Liberals. On the contrary, under their plan, people who earn between \$90,000 and \$210,000 a year got a tax cut worth \$270 a year. The median income in Canada is \$31,500 a year. People who earn \$30,000, people who earn the median salary, in other words the majority of workers, did not get anything from the Liberals.

The Liberals like to brag about investing in innovation for the jobs of tomorrow. Why is it, then, that the Liberals are cutting \$750 million this year from a fund devoted to creating an economy with reduced greenhouse gas and carbon emissions, and another \$500 million next year? The Liberal budget will slash \$1.2 billion from a fund that could have helped create good jobs working on new technologies and renewable energy. I do not understand that.

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before I get to my question, I just want to make a quick comment to salute the hard-working Conservative and NDP MPs on the procedure and House affairs committee, who at this very moment are beating back a dictatorial and unilateral Liberal attempt to change the Standing Orders. We have gone from sunny ways to the Sun King. We have a Prime Minister who has gone from a respect of Parliament to "*l'état, c'est moi*".

Now I will get to the question. I want to ask my friend about the correlation between the low corporate tax rates that we have seen exist for about a decade now and the continuing failure of successive governments to do anything about the federal minimum wage, and take some leadership. It seems to me that we are allowing corporations to accumulate massive profits, but we are not forcing them to pay their workers a livable wage. I would like to hear my friend's comments on whether we are subsidizing these corporations with corporate welfare and we are doing nothing for the hard-working men and women, who often need social assistance while working, which costs taxpayers even more.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

I completely understand his indignation over how utterly unfair it is that individuals in our society carry most of the weight and bear most of the tax burden while corporations keep getting annual gifts from successive Liberal and Conservative governments.

In 2002, when corporations made profits they paid 28% in taxes. Today, they pay 15%. That is almost half. Did the middle class, workers, get their tax rate cut in half? No. We have seen an increase in precarious employment, an increase in poor quality jobs, a sort of "walmartization" of our labour market.

In the meantime, as hon. members know, year after year corporations have received roughly \$600 billion in cash that is basically dead money. It has not been reinvested because the corporations were not required to report on the gifts they were given. They have not created jobs, have not stimulated our economy, and have not increased our productivity.

This Liberal plan is a failure and that is why we want to change course.

• (1115)

[English]

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the outset, I would like to note that I will be splitting my time with the member for Brampton East.

We have a youth council in my riding of Beaches—East York, chaired by two intelligent young women, Faiza and Noor. We meet once a month to talk about policy issues, about issues I should raise in Ottawa. They are helping our office host a drug policy town hall on April 19. When we last met, these young Canadians highlighted two particular issues.

The first issue was the boil water advisories on first nation reserves. There is a consensus that 150 years after Confederation, in a modern country such as ours, it is unacceptable for so many indigenous Canadians to be without access to a safe water supply.

In last year's budget, we committed \$8.4 billion, over five years, to indigenous communities across Canada. This year's budget proposes an additional \$3.4 billion, over five years, beginning next year. These investments are focused on better on-reserve housing; education, including new schools; health and, yes, clean water.

Yesterday, our finance minister noted that 18 long-term drinking water advisories had been lifted in first nation communities, with 71 still to go. Budget 2017 notes that we are on track to eliminate more than 60% of the remaining advisories within three years, and all by March 2021.

The Budget

The second issue raised was youth employment. The theme is a common one. Young Canadians cannot get work experience without a job and cannot get a job without work experience. The question is principally one of skills and experience, not direct job creation but creating the conditions for job creation.

In budget 2017, we are focused on building those skills for young Canadians, with an additional \$400 million over three years for the youth employment strategy, an ambitious goal, providing 10,000 co-op placements, an emphasis on digital skills and coding education for young Canadians, and more opportunities for STEM learning activities for Canadian youth. In the words of our finance minister, “We will help students get the skills and work experience they need to kick-start their careers.”

As an aside, it is important to note that we are investing in skills training beyond youth as well.

Speaking to the budget more broadly, our finance minister described it as both ambitious and responsible. It builds on the ambitious agenda set forth in our election platform, in the throne speech, in budget 2016, and it does so in a responsible way.

Building on our infrastructure plans in budget 2016 and the fall economic statement, this year's budget reiterates our commitment to investing in public transit and lays out a foundation for a national housing strategy and a national child care and early learning framework.

On child care and early learning, this budget provides \$7 billion over 10 years, starting in 2018-19. It will help create more quality, affordable child care spaces across the country. That is over \$500 million each year, 2018-19 and 2019-20. As a young parent, and hello to my wife and my seven-month-old Mackinlay back home, we have also made changes to help parents by making EI parental benefits more flexible. I have no idea how anyone manages to raise children in the city of Toronto without the help of parents or family. I am lucky to have parents to help with Mackinlay.

Our proposed changes will allow parents to choose to receive EI parental benefits over an extended period of up to 18 months and meet the platform commitment to do just that. EI parental benefits will continue to be available at the existing rate of 55% over a period of up to 12 months. However, if parents wish, they can take it up to 18 months at a lower benefit rate of 33% of average weekly earnings.

On housing, budget 2016 provided \$2.2 billion over two years to give more Canadians access to more affordable housing. To build on these efforts, budget 2017 proposes to invest more than \$11 billion over 11 years in a variety of initiatives to build, renew, and repair Canada's stock of affordable housing, to ensure Canadians have the affordable housing to meet their needs.

Mayor Tory has said that the 2017 budget improvements to the city's transit and housing infrastructure will ensure a stronger Toronto and that many of the funding commitments will help city council to build up a stronger and fairer Toronto. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has said that this budget's allocation-based transit plan puts cities in the driver's seat like never before and it creates a real opportunity to address the housing crises.

I have spoken before in the House of different kinds of deficits. For example, there are paper deficits and there are infrastructure deficits. When one considers how spending is allocated in budget 2017, it is important to remember that in many cases, including infrastructure spending, inaction costs more than action over the long term. Investments now are not only a matter of social progress; they are also a matter of fiscal prudence. The significant costs of inaction underlines much of budget 2017, from housing to tackling climate change to the new bilateral health agreements, and focus on home care.

● (1120)

On climate change, budget 2017 proposes to increase financing support for Canada's clean technology sector by making available more equity financing, working capital, and project financing to promising clean technology firms. Nearly \$1.4 billion in new financing on a cash basis will be made available to Canada's clean technology sector.

As I represent a waterfront riding, I note that budget 2017 clearly states that supporting clean freshwater is an utmost priority and commits \$70 million to protect our freshwater resources, to focus efforts on reducing toxic chemicals to improve water quality, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable use.

Environmental Defence has cheered measures on climate, including new energy efficiency standards for buildings. Budget 2017 would also modify the tax treatment for successful oil and gas test drilling to better reflect the reality of today's exploration technology and the principle that polluters should pay their fair share.

The government has also come to a number of bilateral health agreements with the provinces. In doing so, we seek to address the mental health funding gap; \$6 billion over 10 years for home care and \$5 billion over 10 years to support mental health initiatives. I would note, without going into detail, significant efforts to consolidate caregiving benefits will make a real difference to those looking after their elderly parents and family members.

The Budget

This year's budget, building as it does on budget 2016, ambitiously seeks to build our country's critical infrastructure and our ability to meet the added challenges of climate change, an aging population, and an economy that continues to become more knowledge based. It does so in a responsible way.

The finance minister has referenced the fiscal anchor and our responsibility to ensure a continued decline in net debt to GDP. Our fiscal health will continue to improve, alongside the critical investments I have mentioned.

We remain committed to tax fairness. In addition to the budget allocation in 2016 to the CRA, we are investing an additional \$520 million over five years to tackle tax evasion and improve tax compliance.

We have also made significant efforts to simplify the tax code.

I have had a number of constituents already raise concerns about the public transit tax credit. I would note, though, that with these tax credits, including the public transit tax credit, there is no evidence that it encourages additional participation. There is a low participation rate. I have used this tax credit. One has to save one's metro passes and file the requisite paperwork. For \$200 or \$250, it is a significant amount of effort for relatively low payoff. We are better off providing those targeted investments at the outset to make transit more affordable for everyone. It will increase participation if we did so.

We do not talk about data collection enough. In this budget, we talk about data collection with respect to housing and health. Specifically, with the health care system, there is an investment of \$53 million over five years to the Canadian Institute for Health Information. In the city of Toronto, for housing in particular, affordable housing is quickly growing out of reach for those my age and younger. Statistics are very important for us to identify the problem and tackle it properly. The budget promises to give Statistics Canada almost \$40 million over five years to develop and implement a housing statistics framework.

On data collection more broadly, it is largely about measuring success. Of course, we measure success against specific goals. This includes economic growth generally, but also the creation of economic opportunities on a more equitable basis, including by gender. To that end, a full chapter in budget 2017 applies a gender-based analysis to federal spending. This is an important step. It will help inform future budgets and spending. My youth council has highlighted gender equality, and this is one step to greater equality. Equal Voice lauded budget 2017 for its gender lens, noting it changed the way a government makes spending decisions.

There are other lenses to apply. I know my youth council is also interested in seeing a generational analysis applied to federal spending. We have done a lot for young Canadians in the budget, and we will continue to do a lot for them. A generational analysis will help us to measure how we are doing in relation to other age groups. It has been advocated by an organization called Generation Squeeze. I look forward to working with the parliamentary budget office to make it a reality.

● (1125)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about how the 2017 budget reiterated the government's commitment. It reiterates the whole 2016 budget, because there is not really a lot of additional money in there.

The member talked about the gender lens. As the chair for the status of women committee, I am extremely pleased to see a gender-based analysis having been done, and to see good words in there. However, there are four pages, from pages 217 to 221, on pay equity and the problem of the wage gap, but there are zero dollars and zero actions to address that.

If we look at other areas, like violence against women and girls, \$100 million over five years may sound like a lot. However, when we break that down by riding, we find out that is \$60,000, and one in four women are experiencing violence.

There is a lot of talk in the budget. If I look at the innovation spending, we will get a 10% increase in innovation spending. How will we get a quantum leap in innovation performance with that level of spending?

I wonder if this budget is really a lot of words and very little substance. Could the member comment?

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith: Mr. Speaker, I honestly did not expect to stand to address a Conservative question demanding more spending, but I am happy to address it. At the outset of my speech, I indicated that \$3.4 billion of new money would flow to first nations.

The idea of budget 2017 is to focus specifically on and clarify where some spending allocations set out in budget 2016 will go. Therefore, when I said a national housing strategy, when I talked about child care, these were larger allocations set out in budget 2016, which we are now properly allocating to specific initiatives.

On the gender-based analysis, I would note that this is not the end of the story. We will continue this conversation in further budgets.

I would also note, having spoken to folks at the Parliamentary Budget Office, that they are keen to assess our efforts to bring a gender-based lens to the budget, and they will be doing the same.

I am happy to work across the aisle with the member to improve efforts on pay equity and narrow the wage gap, because it is absolutely unacceptable.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I certainly would agree with the hon. member that it makes way more sense to make investments upfront with respect to the environment, because over time it will cost more, particularly when we deal with water and when we withdraw it for safe drinking water. What is deeply disappointing is the paltry amount the government has given.

The Budget

Day after day we hear the environment minister say that she is balancing environmental protection with economic development. We are happy to see there will be some money eventually for the development of clean technology, but a paltry amount for her department. One of the main things Canadians were calling for worldwide yesterday, on international Water Day, was the protection of water. There is a small amount of money, far less than used to be given, for the protection of water. Where is the money for the Inland Waters Directorate? Where is the money for the action on the UNESCO report demanding action to protect the Peace-Athabasca Delta?

Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith: Mr. Speaker, first, I outlined some funds flowing for clean water protection. I did not mention the other. There are two aspects in our budget that speak to clean water specifically. I recognize it is in the tens of millions of dollars, not the billions of dollars. There is significant funding for clean technologies, though. Also, one thing I did not get into, because I have done so many times in the House previously, was carbon pricing.

When we look at our overall strategy on the environment, everything adds up when we talk about the pan-Canadian strategy, when we talk about fuel standards, when we talk about carbon pricing, and when we talk about clean water. I represent a waterfront riding. As a 32-year-old, I care a great deal about ensuring there is a clean environment for me and my son. I agree we should do more on this file.

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate, The hon. member for Brampton—

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to speak. I want to—

The Deputy Speaker: I did not catch the first of what the hon. member for Foothills said. Is he rising on a point of order?

Mr. John Barlow: No, Mr. Speaker, I am rising to speak to the budget this morning.

The Deputy Speaker: That is not actually on my list at this point.

● (1130)

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I know you recognized the member for Brampton East. However, I did hear the member for Foothills speak. Therefore, I move:

That the member for Foothills be now heard.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1210)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 234*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Anderson	Angus
Arnold	Barlow
Barsalou-Duval	Beaulieu
Benson	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Boucher
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brosseau	Calkins
Cannings	Carrie
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Davies	Deltell
Diotte	Doherty
Donnelly	Dreeshen
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Duvall
Egliniski	Falk
Fast	Gallant
Garrison	Généreux
Gill	Glada
Godin	Gourde
Hardcastle	Harder
Hoback	Hughes
Jeneroux	Johns
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Lavardière
Lebel	Leitch
Liepert	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacKenzie
Maguire	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Motz
Mulcair	Nantel
Nater	Nicholson
Nuttall	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Poilievre
Quach	Rankin
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Sansoucy	Saroya
Schmale	Shields
Shiple	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stetski
Strahl	Sweet
Tilson	Trost
Van Kesteren	Vecchio
Viersen	Wagantall
Warawa	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Wong	Yurdiga
Zimmer — 107	

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Arseneault
Arya	Badawey
Bagnell	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Boissonnault
Bossio	Boulerice
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)

Casey (Charlottetown)
 Champagne
 Chen
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 DeCoursey
 Dhillon
 Drouin
 Duguid
 Dusseault
 Easter
 El-Khoury
 Erskine-Smith
 Eyolfson
 Finnigan
 Fonseca
 Fraser (West Nova)
 Freeland
 Fuhr
 Gerretsen
 Goodale
 Graham
 Hardie
 Hehr
 Housefather
 Hutchings
 Joly
 Jordan
 Julian
 Khalid
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 LeBlanc
 Lefebvre
 Leslie
 Lighthound
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Maloney
 May (Cambridge)
 McCrimmon
 McKay
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 Mendès
 Mihychuk
 Soeurs)
 Monsef
 Murray
 Nault
 Oliphant
 O'Regan
 Paradis
 Peterson
 Picard
 Qualltrough
 Rioux
 Rodriguez
 Rota
 Ruimy
 Sahota
 Sajjan
 Sangha
 Scarpaleggia
 Schulte
 Sgro
 Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
 Sikand
 Sorbara
 Tabbara
 Tassi
 Trudel
 Vaughan
 Weir
 Wilkinson
 Wrzesnewskyj
 Zahid— 175

Chagger
 Chan
 Choquette
 Cuzner
 Damoff
 Dhaliwal
 Di Iorio
 Dubourg
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Dzerowicz
 Ehsassi
 Ellis
 Eyking
 Fergus
 Fisher
 Fragiskatos
 Fraser (Central Nova)
 Fry
 Gameau
 Goldsmith-Jones
 Gould
 Grewal
 Harvey
 Holland
 Hussen
 Iacono
 Jones
 Jowhari
 Kang
 Khera
 Lamoureux
 Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
 LeBouthillier
 Lemieux
 Levitt
 Lockhart
 Ludwig
 MacGregor
 Malcolmson
 Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McDonald
 McKenna
 McLeod (Northwest Territories)
 Mendicino
 Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-
 Morrissey
 Nassif
 O'Connell
 Oliver
 Ouellette
 Peschisolido
 Philpott
 Poissant
 Ratansi
 Robillard
 Romanado
 Rudd
 Rusnak
 Saini
 Samson
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Serré
 Sheehan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Simms
 Spengemann
 Tan
 Tootoo
 Vandal
 Virani
 Whalen
 Wilson-Raybould
 Young

PAIRED

Members

Anandasangaree

Moore— 2

Privilege

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

* * *

[*English*]

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED ACTIONS OF MINISTER OF INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS IN CHAMBER

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today on a question of privilege about the ability for me to do my job as opposition House leader. I will explain it and then ask if you would at least review the tape from yesterday. You will recall that there was a vote that occurred just before the budget with regard to going to orders of the day. As soon as I and my opposition colleagues triggered that vote, the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, and you can review the tape, came running toward me in a very aggressive way.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Candice Bergen: Mr. Speaker, why are the Liberals laughing? Look at the tape. She was clearly upset that the vote was triggered. She has the absolute prerogative to be upset, but she does not have the prerogative to run across the aisle and physically come at me because I am doing my job.

I am going to ask you to review the tape, Mr. Speaker, and that you would please ask the Prime Minister's cabinet to not try to shut us down.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I also witnessed this incident. We have seen it happen in the House before where members have crossed the aisle and it has caused great angst for the speaker. We have even seen that done by other members of cabinet. When this happens, Mr. Speaker, it falls to you as the guardian of this chamber. We have seen that the Liberal cabinet is increasingly upset when opposition members are simply trying to do their jobs. Threatening and intimidating another member of Parliament is completely unacceptable.

I hope that you will review the tape and come back to the House as soon as possible to rule that a violation of the opposition House leader's privileges have, indeed, occurred.

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do admit that yesterday during that vote I did cross the floor and point out to the opposition House leader that the premier of Yukon and Grand Chief Peter Johnston were in the gallery, right over them, and were particularly disappointed that the debate on a very important bill, Bill C-17, did not take place because of the games that were being played in the House. I—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. There are no points of order during a question of privilege. Once she has the floor again, the minister will finish, and then I will hear from someone else.

Hon. Carolyn Bennett: Mr. Speaker, I apologize if my tone was too strong, but I do believe that the opposition House leader needed to know that the premier and the grand chief were here waiting for that debate.

The Budget

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is not a question of opinion on how things should go. The minister just admitted that she actually engaged in an intimidation tactic to try to get the opposition House leader to acquiesce to her command. In her admission that she, in her superior position, felt that somehow my colleague should not be able to undertake her role as a member of Parliament is, in fact, proof positive that this was a breach of my colleague's privilege.

I certainly hope, Mr. Speaker, that you take the minister's blatant admission that somehow, because she felt she was inconvenienced during the day, she has the right to interfere with my colleague's democratic elected right to stand up and oppose the government and that you rule in favour of my colleague that, in fact, her privilege was violated.

• (1215)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. opposition House leader for her question of privilege and the other members who intervened on this subject. I will review the tape to try to determine whether or not there is a prima facie breach of privilege.

* * *

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government, and of the amendment and of the amendment to the amendment.

Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in this House to speak to the government's second budget, entitled "Building the Middle Class".

My constituents elected me to serve as part of a government that will help the middle class and those working hard to join it. To be able to represent these priorities of the residents of Brampton East in this House is a privilege.

I am lucky to be a member of the Standing Committee on Finance, which has kept me quite busy thus far. Recently the finance committee concluded a study on tax fairness for all Canadians. It studied tax evasion and tax avoidance. The committee's report contains 14 recommendation for the government on topics such as conducting a review of the voluntary disclosures program and requiring all tax advisers to register their tax products with the CRA.

I am proud to share that in response to the finance committee's recommendations, the government affirmed its support for all 14 recommendations. Additionally, the government shared the work that has already been done or is currently being undertaken to ensure all Canadians pay their fair share of taxes to our great nation.

Paying our fair share of taxes is an essential part of financing measures that enhance all Canadians' quality of life. When certain individuals and companies find ways to cheat the system, it is the middle class that usually picks up the tab. That is totally unacceptable and counterproductive to our country's goals. That is why making the tax system more fair is an ongoing priority of our government.

In support of this objective, budget 2017 proposes to invest additional resources to combat tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance. Budget 2017 also proposes legislative changes to the tax rules. These changes would close tax loopholes that result in unfair tax advantages for some at the expense of others, invest additional resources to crack down on tax evasion and combat tax avoidance, make existing tax relief for individuals and families more effective and acceptable, eliminate ineffective and inefficient tax measures, and provide greater consistency in the operation of tax rules.

Going forward, we will continue to eliminate poorly targeted and inefficient tax measures and make our tax system more fair and efficient. The government is committed to taking these steps because we know and understand that fairness is essential to ensuring Canadians have confidence in their tax system.

Last year in budget 2016, our government committed to undertake a wide-ranging review of increasingly complex tax expenditures that now exist. This review of federal tax expenditures has highlighted a number of issues regarding tax planning strategies using private corporations, which can result in high-income individuals getting unfair tax advantages. A variety of tax reduction strategies are available to these individuals that are not available to other Canadians. An example of such a strategy is the use of private corporations to reduce taxes through sprinkling income to family members.

Budget 2017 sends a strong signal that the government is taking action to ensure that high-income individuals cannot use strategies involving private corporations to gain unfair tax advantages. The government will release a paper in the coming months setting out the nature of these issues as well as proposed policy responses. In addressing these issues, the government will ensure that corporations that contribute to job creation and economic growth by actively investing in their businesses continue to benefit from a highly competitive tax regime.

A fair tax system requires constant attention. Ongoing legislative adjustments are needed to ensure that rules are functioning as intended, and they do not result in some taxpayers paying less than their fair share, for example, through complicated tax planning arrangements.

To ensure the tax system operates as fairly and effectively as possible moving forward, the government will continue to study, identify, and address tax loopholes and tax planning schemes. Tax evasion and avoidance is unfair to the vast majority of Canadian individuals and businesses that play by the rules.

• (1220)

The measures in budget 2017 will build on previous investments to support the Canada Revenue Agency in its continued efforts to crack down on tax evasion and tax avoidance. To do this, the CRA is increasing its verification activities, hiring additional auditors and specialists with a focus on the underground economy, developing robust business intelligence infrastructure and risk assessment systems, and improving the quality of investigative work that targets criminal tax evaders.

The Budget

Budget 2017 will invest an additional \$523 million over five years to support these efforts. As CRA has a proven track record of meeting expectations from targeted tax compliance, budget 2017 accounts for the expected additional revenue of \$2.5 billion over five years from these measures that crack down on tax evasion and combat tax avoidance.

We know that in a globalized world it is not enough to simply concentrate our efforts here at home. We need to have an international focus as well. To this end, Canada is part of a coordinated international effort to address what is known as base erosion and profit sharing or BEPS. BEPS refers to tax planning arrangements used by multinational enterprises to unfairly minimize their taxes. Canada has implemented, or is in the process of implementing, agreed international standards under the BEPS project.

This includes recently enacted legislation which requires large multinational enterprises to provide information about the international distribution of their activities. This information will enable tax authorities to better assess tax avoidance risks. We will continue to work with our international partners to ensure a coherent and consistent response in fighting tax avoidance through BEPS.

Over the past year, we have worked to build a fairer tax system that benefits the middle class. Our review of tax measures identified opportunities that make existing tax measures more effective, equitable, and accessible to all Canadians. Specifically, budget 2017 proposes to simplify and improve existing tax measures for caregivers, persons with disabilities, and students.

Right now, Canadians who are caring for loved ones face a caregiver credit system that is complex and difficult for families to navigate, so we have simplified it by introducing the Canada caregiver credit. This new non-refundable credit will provide greater support to those who need it the most and will apply to caregivers whether or not they live with the family member who is receiving the care. This measure will provide \$310 million in additional tax relief over the 2016-17 to 2021-22 period and will support families struggling to take care of loved ones.

Canada is a country founded on the belief that with hard work comes success and that with success comes a responsibility to help others. Canadians share the understanding that success as a nation is only as great as the success of our most vulnerable. They know that challenging the barriers that persist is a necessary part of moving our country forward.

Budget 2017 takes the next step in the government's long-term economic plan, understanding that in the face of unprecedented change, a confident Canadian middle class will always be the beating heart of our country and the engine of our economy.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member's enthusiastic speech addressed some of the minutiae of the budget, but seemed to miss the main point of the budget which is that we have racked up a huge deficit, \$23 billion last year and \$28 billion in the year to come. The whole point of that was to create well-paying jobs and to try to grow the economy. However, the budget 2017 figures clearly show that GDP growth is less than before we spent all of that money.

We are a year and a half into the government's mandate and really no progress has been made on many of the government's promises. The Liberals have not been able to get the infrastructure money going out the door quickly enough, so construction jobs in our country are down by 16%. They have not been able to create well-paying jobs for youth and they are telling them to get used to precarious employment. I could go on. There is no electoral reform, no home mail delivery, no action on pay equity.

The point is that the 2016 budget with all of its spending accomplished nothing. Would the member agree that the 2017 budget with even less spending will achieve less?

● (1225)

Mr. Raj Grewal: Mr. Speaker, let us look at the facts. Our government is not going to take any lessons from the Conservative Party of Canada on the economy. The Conservative Party had 10 years in government, and what did it have? Let us look at the facts. It had the lowest job growth under any prime minister who served for 10 years. It had the lowest economic growth of any prime minister who served for 10 years.

Let us see what our government has done. We have created 220,000 jobs, mostly full-time jobs, in the last six months. We have decreased unemployment from 7.1% to 6.6%, and it has continued to decline. Our investments are working. We reduced taxes on the middle class. We increased taxes on the wealthiest one per cent of Canadians.

I encourage the member opposite and the entire party to look at the facts and to go and knock on doors, because our investments in the middle class are working and are making the lives of Canadians better.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we asked the government several times, here in the House, for its definition of the middle class. We now realize that it refers to those earning \$90,000 or more a year.

We have also often heard that the definition of "middle class" includes those who work hard. Then why is there nothing in budget 2017 for all those working hard? There is nothing at all for the forestry workers. We have been asking the government for several months to protect our forestry industry by providing a loan guarantee program. There are more than 11,000 forestry jobs in Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean. That represents a lot of work and good jobs. In Quebec, this industry employs 60,000 people. They are mothers and fathers who are putting food on the table.

If the middle class consists of people who work hard, why is there absolutely nothing in this budget for the forestry industry?

*The Budget**[English]*

Mr. Raj Grewal: Mr. Speaker, what I never understood about the NDP is its ongoing rhetoric about the working class. Working-class families work in all different sectors, whether they be forestry, aerospace, taxi driving, or truck driving. Do members know what they are benefiting from? They are benefiting from the middle-class tax cut that we implemented last year. They are also benefiting from the Canada child benefit that we implemented last year. They would also benefit from the \$7 billion that we would invest in 2017 in affordable child care spaces.

Every time the NDP had an opportunity to help the working class, what did it do? Surprise, surprise, it voted against it. Why do the New Democrats not change their own track record, follow their rhetoric about helping the middle class and helping the working class, and support this government's work of ensuring that all Canadians across the country, if they work hard, are able to achieve success?

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to stand in the House and debate the issues that governments and Canadians face, and that Canadians have to deal with.

There was great anticipation about the budget around the country. People were looking forward to a second fiscal strategy put forward by a government that failed, most people would say, with the first one. When we look at the growth rate, the job numbers, and all those, certainly there was failure. There was a hope: I think an expectancy among Canadians that they would see something in the budget that would give them a degree of optimism and hope.

We know some of the problems Canadians are facing. They are facing high household debt. Their hope was that perhaps there would be something in the budget that would help in that regard. We know they are facing skills and training deficiencies, and perhaps there would be something in that regard. We know that Canadians are not saving to the degree they should be, and perhaps there would be something in the budget that would help them. The day after the presentation of the budget, I think all of us would agree there is great disappointment out there. For Canadians, there is no increased hope, no increased optimism, and no increased drive because of things they find in the budget.

What do we know about the budget? We know there is a \$23 billion deficit from last year. It was originally projected to be higher, but because the Liberals were unable to get much of their money out of the door, it is a little lower. We know the budget is again written in red ink. It takes Canadians deeper and deeper into national debt. It will increase our debt service charges. It will increase revenues that will go only to service debt, which the government continues to pile up.

Being involved somewhat in former budgets, I can say that we put in place strategies to bring us back to balanced budgets. When the world went into a global recession, Canada was the last to enter into that recession and we were the first to leave it. Why was that? It was because we had a strategy to come back to balanced budget. We understood the importance of keeping our economic house in order, of taking fiscal responsibility for our country. We understood that Canadians expected that of us.

It seems that, even with this budget, Liberals do not seem to care if the federal books are balanced anytime soon. They have gone beyond “budgets will balance themselves”, a quote our Prime Minister gave Canadians, to a frame of mind that is not even concerned about the debts that are being amassed and left to our children and grandchildren to pay off.

I want to be clear. In our 10 years in government, in the first two years we paid down national debt. We took surpluses and paid down just under \$40 billion to our national debt. When the entire world went into the worst downturn and recession since the Great Depression, many countries were in massive trouble. We saw that their currency was failing, that their banks were failing, and that their whole plans were failing. We know about Greece and many of those countries, like Iceland and others. There were massive problems. However, Canadians knew they had people at the rudder who understood economies and knew what they had to do.

Although we were opposed to debt and deficit spending, we realized that in the worst recession since the Great Depression we would invest to kick-start the economy, and we did, as every G7 country did. We make no apologies for that. The largest infrastructure spending, the largest infrastructure program in Canadian history, was brought forward by a Conservative government to kick-start the economy. Therefore, the question should be asked, and it is fair to ask because we will ask it of the Liberals. Did that strategy work? The answer is obviously an unequivocal yes. It did work.

● (1230)

We saw that Canada was the first to leave that recession. Out of all the G7 countries, Canada was the very first to leave that recession and come back to growth. We saw that those investments were in long-term infrastructure that would be around for decades, that would help grow economies, and it worked. We know that we came back to our surplus and balanced budget, as we had promised. In fact, some would say it was a year earlier than we had promised. We paid down that \$40 billion and went on to watch our economy grow.

I listen to questions being posed by Liberals here, and many of them are new, as the Liberals had 30 seats before and they have 160 now. The Liberals have a majority government, but many of them are first-time MPs. They say we ran up a big deficit; we ran up debt. The answer is yes, we did, but we had the plan to come back.

The Liberals had a plan to come back. They spent, went into deficit and massive debt, but they had a plan to be back to a balanced budget in 2019. However, now our parliamentary budget officer is saying that it is going to be 2030 or 2035. It will be 30 years down the road before we see any kind of plan that can feasibly bring us back to balanced budgets.

The Budget

We cannot do that. We cannot fall into that trap. We cannot become a country that has that type of massive debt, and we must do what we can. I think in the next election, the very first main plank in coming back to balanced budgets will happen, and I am very optimistic going into that.

On jobs, our focus as a government during the recession was how we would hold on to the jobs we had and how we would create new ones. We invested in innovation and skills development. We invested in making sure we had the best labour force in the world.

However, we did something more than that. We said we had to make sure our tax regime was such that we could be competitive around the world, first of all. We need to sell our goods into a global market, and we have to be certain that we could be competitive. There is no use trying to have a job, make a gadget, and try to sell it if it was so over-priced that nobody would be willing to buy it. Therefore, we made sure that our taxes kept going down. In fact, we lowered our taxes more than 160 times. We had the lowest tax rate among the G7 countries. Bloomberg said that we were the second-best place in the world to do business. That is why we came out of the recession early.

We sat down with employers and business and asked what it would take to have them hold the jobs they had or create new ones. They were very clear. They said not to do things like raise payroll taxes or increase their level of taxation. Therefore, with what I thought was agreement of all parties, we said we would lower the small business tax rate from 12% to 11%, and we did, and then from 11% to 9% phased in over three or four years. We were committed to that. In fact, all parties were committed to that. However, right after the current Liberal government was elected, it made sure that was one promise it would not keep. The Liberals would say to our small business sector, "Why would we ever lower taxes?"

We consulted with Canadians. We consulted with businesses. We hoped to save jobs and secure economic growth during that difficult time. This is why we incurred budgetary deficits. It is also why we created opportunities for young Canadians and saved jobs during an economic recession.

There was a very fragile economic recovery that followed the recession around the world. Too many nations had a difficult time recovering from the recession. It was painfully slow. However, our government immediately pursued getting back to balanced budgets, showing Canadians and the world confidence in our dollar, showing Canadians and the world that we were getting our fiscal house in order, and our dollar reflected that.

●(1235)

Canadians understood that the difficult economic times were over. By 2015, we had brought forward a surplus in the federal budget. Canada was ready to confront another global crisis.

Governments normally only go into deficit if there is a crisis confronting their nation. Governments with budgetary surpluses or balanced budgets have the ability to combat something new. I really fear that with the level of debt we are seeing the Liberal government piling on Canadians, we would not have the capacity to react effectively if there is another massive crisis or global downturn.

In the last budget, the Liberal government said it would be investing in infrastructure. I think all Canadians know the story. During the election the Liberals promised that there would be an itty-bitsy deficit of \$10 billion. The Prime Minister said, "We can do a lot with \$10 billion. It sounds big, but we can do a lot with \$10 billion." Then when he came to power, we found that the \$10 billion had grown to nearly \$30 billion. That was the concern then.

That money was supposed to raise growth. It was also supposed to get the jobs market and the building sector going. It has been a failure all around. The government has had a hard time getting the money out, and the growth has not been there. In fact, there has been less growth. Growth is happening in the United States and all around the world, but it is certainly not happening very quickly here in Canada, in spite of all the measures that the Liberals took in their 2016 budget.

Why would Canadians have hope in this budget? What is in the budget that they could find some hope in? Well, we can listen to the media. I am not one to encourage people to do that too often, but even the media recognize that the budget is probably one of the weakest budgets ever. I spoke to a former Liberal member of Parliament yesterday; he said that this is the most nondescript budget that he has ever seen. That was coming from the Liberals' own benches.

Where should Canada be? Canada should be in its third year of budgetary surplus. This year the Government of Canada should have a surplus of tax dollars to spend without borrowing. The interest payments on Canada's national debt should be decreasing, but the budget book shows us that the interest Canada will have to pay is increasing. We know that when we service debt to the degree that the Liberals will have to service debt down the road, that money is not going to go anywhere else. That money is not going to social programs. That money is not going back into education or health care. The Liberals seem to feel that they will just print more money or that they will just go deeper into deficit.

There are consequences to the actions we take. I warn the Liberal government that there are massive consequences to not having a plan to come back to balanced budgets. There are consequences to increasing deficits and national debt. This generation may not face those consequences, but for our children and grandchildren it will be difficult.

The 42nd Parliament should be in a position now to pay down Canada's national debt. Instead, the Liberals are not spending money to create jobs or grow Canada's economy. They are actually adding to the national debt instead of paying it down. They are leaving their debt for future generations.

The Budget

The Liberal government has even failed to achieve the economic and employment objectives presented in its last year's budget. Budget 2017 needed to include no further tax hikes on Canadian families, businesses, seniors, or students, but instead needed immediate measures to encourage companies to hire young Canadians and to address the youth unemployment crisis. It should have included a credible plan to return to a balanced budget by 2019, as promised to Canadians. This budget has failed Canadians. The Liberals have failed Canadians with their second budget. There are no new job creation incentives. There are only more education opportunities.

• (1240)

Young students I know are coming out universities and colleges hoping for a job, but the government says, "We'll see if we can get you to take more education after that."

There is no plan to balance the budget.

According to the parliamentary budget officer, budget 2016 did not meet employment targets because infrastructure investments were delayed, and there were many other reasons. The Liberals get an F. They get an A for announcements, always—Liberals are great at that—but when it comes to delivery, they are looking at a D or an F, because Canadians end up paying the costs.

In Alberta, the new Building Canada funding that was promised to municipalities was withheld by the NDP provincial government. Five rural municipalities have been told to wait or have been left behind altogether. I will even give it to the Liberals in that I think when they sent that infrastructure money to the province, they expected the province would send it out to where the priorities were, but the provincial NDP party said, "No, we're putting it into our general revenues, and then we will pick the priorities sometime down the road." I think even the Liberals would shake their heads at that one.

No wonder there is no growth. No wonder there is no incentive. No wonder there are no kick-starts in Alberta. The province has the latitude to use the large majority of those infrastructure dollars as it sees fit, but the funds did not go where they were expected to go. It is a massive loss of opportunity for those municipalities, and in some cases the rural municipalities seem to be having the majority of the problems in that respect.

The Liberals also failed to grow the economy with their budget. The economy grew by 1.4% in 2016, which is 0.5% lower than what they had anticipated and claimed it would be in their 2016 budget. They believed it would grow by over 1.8%. They would kick all this money into it and see this massive growth. The previous Conservative government had economic growth of 1.8%, so the Liberals thought they could at least count on that with these extra massive spending measures. When we were investing in infrastructure, the Liberals claimed that we were not investing enough, that we were not spending enough money. They spent a lot more and they realized a lot less growth in the economy. They got less bang for the buck. They had less success. They had lower results. That is the record of the Liberal government.

What did the Liberals do with the \$30 billion? What did they accomplish? Well, it is not in jobs and it is not in new revenues coming in.

I want to conclude with two things.

First, I want to talk a bit about our neighbours to the south, the United States. I want to talk about our relationship with them. I think the Liberals backed off on a lot of measures and I think they would have put it to Canadians even more than they have with this budget if it were not for the Trump administration and the knowledge that the U.S. is going to very quickly lower its corporate tax rate.

When we came into power, we lowered our corporate tax rate from 22% to 15%. That created jobs. Our business sector said, "We will create jobs", and it did, coming out of that recession. Now the Americans are talking about taking it down from 35% to 15%.

We need to be very concerned about businesses making the trip back to the United States, businesses settling down again in the United States. We need to have a plan.

When we lowered that tax rate, we saw head offices and companies, especially in manufacturing, coming into Ontario and across Canada. We need to be cautious. The Americans are here and they are going to compete, and we need to be certain that we are competing at an equal level. We cannot compete at an equal level if we continue to raise the tax burden on them. We cannot increase our manufacturing sector and our business sector if we increase EI and CPP and say, "Here are some extra taxes for you to pay." Then there is the carbon tax and things like that.

• (1245)

The Americans are competitive. We had better be competitive. The Liberal government's budget nickels-and-dimes Canadians, but it really hits business.

Mr. Speaker, I see my time is up. I thank you for the opportunity to speak, and I look forward to some questions.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest and respect. I recognize the member opposite's focus is on one part of the debt, that being the government debt, the public debt. However, the infrastructure deficit in this country is close to \$600 billion. It impacts competitiveness. It impacts the ability of businesses to get products to and from their market. It impacts the ability of people to get to and from work, and students to get to and from school to get training for the jobs they need.

This budget makes unprecedented, historic investments in municipal infrastructure. We hear it from mayor after mayor across this country. In light of the fact that our other partners in government, at the local level in particular, are celebrating this budget, does the member opposite not recognize that the investments in infrastructure are what is producing the GDP growth in this country to a great extent, in spite of very tough headwinds coming out of the resource sector, and that this is critical to the future of this country? If we do not have the infrastructure, we cannot build an economy. We cannot balance the books without good infrastructure.

The Budget

• (1250)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, infrastructure is very important. That is why we brought forward the Building Canada fund when we were in government. We brought forward a number of infrastructure programs that were the largest at that time.

Yes, the Liberal government has piled on more infrastructure funding—or should I say announcements? The announcements have been made, but the funding is not happening. The announcements have been made, but the shovels are not in the ground. The announcements have been made, and remade in some cases, but people are not being hired to fill the jobs for that infrastructure.

Do we have an infrastructure deficit in this country? I think we do. We have an aged and growing infrastructure deficit, unquestionably, but in all fairness, we have to make sure that it is not only the federal government that is providing for infrastructure; we have to make sure that we are also including the private sector in the infrastructure deficit. The private sector needs to be involved to add funding and provide efficiencies so that projects can be completed on time and on budget.

I do not know if the current government has a plan on its infrastructure, other than being Santa Claus. I am not certain there is a strategy on how it wants to do it, unless it is a political one. However, I do not see a lot of money being put into a driving economy where there would be that growth that we need. My home province of Alberta is a prime example. Ontario has its manufacturing sector, but Alberta is a driving economy that needs to be kick-started again.

We have problems with the provincial government there. We need something that will get people working again. There are over 100,000 oilfield workers out of work. That is totally unacceptable, yet we see infrastructure dollars going here, there, and everywhere. In fact, in the oil sector we see some of the incentives for exploratory drilling being taken away.

In a downturn, we should incentivize jobs and job creation. However, the Liberals take them away. I am not going to go into this long list of the bad things that they have done in this budget, but I can say that when we are not including infrastructure dollars or helping create exploration in the oil sector, we cannot expect to get new jobs in that sector. Maybe that—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Questions and comments. The hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the member's speech, he alluded to the fact that the Liberals are masters of the long promise. When we get past the flowery language and all the hope and optimism contained in that language and we look at the real numbers, a lot of this funding is back-ended and would be contingent on the Liberals being re-elected in 2019. We can see right now that the Liberals are building a budget today for the 2019 election, and we still have another two and a half years to go.

My specific question for the hon. member is regarding a good program that was set up by the previous Conservative government, the eco-energy retrofit program. The Liberals love to talk about how

the environment and the economy go hand in hand. It seems to me that if there was one program that lived up to that phrase, it was the eco-energy retrofit program, a program that, during its course of action, helped 640,000 Canadians. The number of dollars invested in it had incredible spinoff effects in local economies, in builders, and so on, and we reduced our energy consumption. It seems to me that if we are trying to get serious about protecting our environment and reducing our energy use and putting people to work, such a program would be a natural fit.

I would like to hear the member's comments on having some hope sometime in the future of getting that program started and on how useful it was to Canadians.

• (1255)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, the member's question is a good one. It is twofold. First, he correctly observed that many of the promises in this budget are back-loaded. They are loaded down the road. We will see very little benefit in the very short to medium term, but we will see this investment in the long term.

I was speaking to our member who is our defence critic, the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, and he said that for some of the defence spending, although the Liberals announced a big amount, when we look at the small print, it will be over 30 years. I have been here when we have done budgets, and if we did something over five years, members would say, “That is not for this year, that is over five years.”

The Liberals have said two things. First, for much of their budget today, we would see benefits just before the next federal election. It was announced today, and it will be re-announced maybe in 2018 and again in 2019, just before the federal election. Again, the Liberals back-load these things. They make promises so far down the road that we may not be here 30 years down the road. That is the Liberal plan.

On the program my friend from the New Democratic Party talked about, the eco-energy retrofit program, it was a program to encourage Canadians to have upgrades in their homes or other places, and the government would help with some of those costs. I had, and I am sure other members had too, constituents, seniors, who said that maybe they could get a new furnace or better windows and really save some money and save some energy. In my riding, they were more concerned about saving money in their pocketbooks than about the energy thing, but we all want to save where we can. When we start hitting people in the pocketbook, that is when they really are incentivized to do something.

Again, we see nothing, really, in this budget. In fact, I heard one Liberal member say that the last budget was the economy budget and this one is not. I think we would all agree that there is very little here for anyone in this budget.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have heard from farmers and ranchers in my riding, a rural riding in Alberta, about the impact the carbon tax will have on their farms and ranches. We are hearing between \$10 and \$15 per acre and \$30,000 per family farm. I wonder if my colleague could talk about the impact this budget would have on farms and ranches in Canada.

The Budget

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, it should not surprise anyone that the Liberal government's budget is not a budget that will help agriculture, and it will certainly not help farmers. In fact, it gives nothing new to agriculture or farmers except by taking something away that they have already.

On page 28 of the Liberals' tax measures document, they talk about a consultation process they are now doing to take away the cash purchase tickets for grain. When a farmer delivers a listed grain, whether it is wheat, canola, barley, oats, rye, or anything, they can sometimes deliver it in the fall to beat the winter rush and not get a cheque but have it deferred to the new year. The government says that farmers may be avoiding some taxes by doing that.

Farmers are delivering grain. They are not getting the money yet but are having the grain company hold the grain. We call it deferral. We need to discuss this, because if they paid it in the last year, they may have been in a high-tax year. Of course, the Liberal government is trying to grab every tax dollar it can. The Liberal government does not get it when it comes to agriculture.

There was a slight mention in the budget of the Alberta beef farmer. That is what the minister said, and then he said nothing else about agriculture. Shame on the Liberals. Agriculture feeds our country, and the Liberals have abandoned it.

● (1300)

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today proudly to support this budget. I think it is everything one would expect of a good Liberal budget. In 2016, the budget looked at how we would help the middle class and those hoping to join it get more money in their pockets. The child benefit and the lowering of taxes for the middle class facilitated that. If we look at the data a year later, we find that there was an increase in spending on household items and in general retail spending. It achieved what it wanted to achieve.

Budget 2017 is focusing on jobs, focusing on how people in the middle class can get good, solid, permanent, well-paying jobs and how industry and sectors that create jobs can actually create more of those permanent, well-paying jobs for people to get. This is a budget that builds on the last budget. This is a budget that says that here is how we move people into that place where they get such jobs.

We know it is not enough just to say that we want to create new jobs. We know that government in itself does not create new jobs. However, we can create a climate. We can foster and give initiatives to businesses and industries to create jobs. We know that in Canada we have good education and good workers who are intelligent and understand the issues. We need to move into the new sectors of work, the global economy. We know that innovation is where we are going to get Canadian citizens to find jobs.

In speaking to that, we also needed to look at a gendered budget. How do women fare in this new world of work? How are women going to get opportunities? We saw with infrastructure that only 2% of women work in infrastructure projects and construction. We know the reason they do not. They have told us over and over that this kind of work needs flexibility. It needs the ability to sometimes spend long hours working, and sometimes not working because of the weather. Therefore, being able to put \$7 billion over 10 years into fostering not just child care but good learning and development for

children for the next generation is the most important thing we can do in helping women get into the workforce and the well-paying permanent jobs we are talking about.

By the way, I am just reminded that I am splitting my time with the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

It is not only child care. It is looking at how we can help families adjust to the world of work so that they can be more flexible. It is allowing women who are pregnant to have another four weeks of maternity leave if they choose, and I add that everything is if they choose, and also ensuring that we move from 12 months to 18 months of parental leave that is flexible. Parents can decide who wants to stay at home and who wants to balance that world of paid work and that world of helping to raise their children. We have set a standard kind of formula for people to make a decision on how they do that.

The second part of getting people to work is to create ways in which people can have access to skills training and post-secondary education. It is to facilitate a clear way of getting adults who are already in the workforce but only have part-time work and are not in that world of good-paying jobs to go back to university. We are suggesting student grants that would let people who are working part-time get access to that kind of training.

We also know that EI has been changed so that if people are working in particular jobs, but they are not long well-paid jobs, they may be able to get training at the same time they are working on that older job.

We are also looking at how student loans can become a flat-rate student loan system. In the old days, people could not qualify if they owned a home or if they were working part time. We are now saying that if people own a home and are working part time and have children, they can have access to an expanded flat-rate student loan program. This is about getting people into the workforce.

Now we have to talk about how to get those jobs created. Helping industry and businesses move into this new world of work is something we are going to do.

● (1305)

We are talking about innovation in areas in which Canada already has a strong reputation in those sectors. We are focusing on five sectors. This is not the end of it. We are starting by focusing in areas.

There is agri-food. This is good news for my province of British Columbia. We are looking at advanced manufacturing, which is good news for people in Ontario and in Quebec.

The Budget

We are also looking at clusters in biotech and health sciences. British Columbia biotech and health sciences are creating clusters and hubs of new innovation in health sciences. Of course, we are looking at pharmaceuticals and creating hubs for delivering that. We have Triumpf in British Columbia. All these groups are going to benefit in creating these new kinds of jobs.

There is also clean tech. The Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development recently came to British Columbia. British Columbia has only about 13% of the Canadian population, but we are creating 33% of the high-tech jobs. Helping us to move forward into those areas, looking at innovation and clean technology, will not only benefit my province but every province.

One thing that has always been a priority for British Columbia is housing. Housing prices are going beyond anyone being able to afford a home. By putting what I consider to be a good amount of money in these areas, the federal government is getting back in to national housing, working with provinces and territories, municipalities, NGOs, groups that create housing, the private sector, and other areas where housing is being created. However, we know we cannot do everything in one, two, or even three years. What the minister heard when he did his consultation on national housing, was that we should focus on the most vulnerable.

The budget will do exactly what the minister heard. It focuses on seniors, on mental health and addictions, veterans, and housing for aboriginal people. We have a huge urban aboriginal population in the city of Vancouver. The west also has a huge urban aboriginal population, as well as on reserve, that need access to good housing.

We are also back again to this gendered budget, in which we say that a lot of women fleeing violence are going to be on that list of priorities.

We also recognize that we cannot make good public policy unless we have good data. We are putting \$40 million in to Statistics Canada to develop to a housing statistic framework to look at how we get data and not just perception, perception that says foreign buyers are driving the prices up, etc. We need good data to find out who is doing what, where, when, and what is needed, how mortgages are affecting first-time buyers.

Then we are looking at that full spectrum of housing by putting in extra money. We are expanding the homelessness framework, with \$2.1 billion. We are looking at the full spectrum of needs, from homelessness to SROs, which are single room occupancies, to affordable rental housing, which at the moment is where the bottleneck occurs. Being able to help young people and first-time buyers to buy a little starter home, working with CMHC and core housing is the kind of spectrum and partnerships we are building in creating housing.

How does housing help? Housing is a human right, the ability for a family to have a safe place to bring up their kids, an ability for those kids when they grow up to get a good education and skills training. We are looking at that whole continuum of how we help Canadians achieve the kinds of opportunities they need to fulfill their potential, to get work, to find good jobs, to spend money, which helps the economy. We are looking at how businesses in this new world of work actually get that work to the people.

I am so proud of the budget. On transit and getting people to and from work, the Broadway line that will be built in my riding and extended into Vancouver Quadra is great news. Our mayor has already issued a press release saying how pleased he is with some things in the budget, which will fulfill the needs of the people in Vancouver, and the needs of other mayors and people in British Columbia.

● (1310)

This budget not only serves British Columbia well, it not only serves the city of Vancouver well, it serves the whole country well. I am proud of this good, well-thought-out, comprehensive Liberal budget.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure it will come as a surprise, but I really agree with the first part and the last part of what my colleague said. She said that this was the kind of Liberal budget she was proud of and would expect, the kind of Liberal budget that would produce higher taxes, bigger deficits, all the while nothing to show for it.

My concern is with the middle of the speech where she talked about the early learning and child care program. She used the phrase, “if they choose”. I wonder if my colleague recognizes that there are hundreds of families in the country, even if they chose institutional child care, would not be able to access it. People in northern and remote rural villages are not able to access this kind of child care, yet they are obligated to pay for it.

On page 234 of the budget, it states, “More accessible and less costly child care will help all children get a better start in life”. Really? The Liberal government is saying that the better start in life for all Canadian children is institutionalized child care. What about the moms or dads or the grandpas and grandmas who choose to care for their children or grandchildren? Are they getting less than good child care or early learning experience? Does my colleague agree this is the only way to give children better care?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, the term “selective hearing” is an interesting one, and that is a prime example of selective hearing. I did not say that child care was available for those who chose to take it. I said expanded maternity leave and expanded parental leave for those who chose to take it. I did not say child care was the choice. However, we always know that child care is a choice.

The Budget

My colleague talked about increased taxes. This Liberal budget did not increase taxes. The Liberal budget showed that in 2016, by decreasing taxes for the middle class, we put an increased amount of money in their pockets. Retail spending and spending for household appliances increased. Spending fosters work. Spending expands business. That showed it worked.

Finally, on the issue of early childhood development and learning, the member should read Fraser Mustard, and every book that has been written about the early brain and the childhood development of the early brain in early learning.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech.

I would like to make a comment about day care. One of our campaign proposals had to do with day care because there is a desperate need for action in that area. In Quebec, we are lucky to have a good child care system, but elsewhere in Canada, families have to pay a lot of money to send their children to day care.

Right now, the government is offering mere peanuts to meet families' child care needs, and these measures will not take effect for another year. Once again, we can see that the government is planing its budget in preparation for 2019. There are no practical measures for 2017 and 2018.

I would like to draw a parallel with SMEs. My riding of Jonquière is home to many small businesses, and they had high expectations. The Liberals campaigned on the promise to lower the tax rate for SMEs. That should therefore be part of the budget in order to help our small businesses.

[*English*]

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, I go back to what I originally said, that this was a good Liberal budget.

Liberals do not tend to say they will do everything in one year, damn the consequences and spend as much money as they want. We have to look at the balancing of budgets, bringing down deficits, while at the same time increasing the ability of businesses and others to spend more money so we are building the economy while waiting over a period of time so we can get to do the things we want to do.

I draw the attention of the House to past Liberal budgets under the Right Hon. Jean Chrétien. Every year, while we would say we would do this in certain years, we would add to the amount in the past because we would have gained that ability to bring down deficits and debt so we could say that we could now add to this.

While the member says that \$11 billion over 10 years is not enough money, it is a start. It puts down the marker that says we will do this and we will build on it. We will also have to work with provinces, and Quebec's best practice is always a good one at which to look. Nobody has said that we will reinvent the wheel.

• (1315)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to rise to speak to budget 2017. This budget is the next step in our government's focus to ensure a brighter future for all Canadians with what I call a three-pronged approach: a focus on innovation, infrastructure, and skills

training. This budget deals with the global realities and certainties that Canada faces, but meets head on the exciting opportunities that we as a nation must grab hold of, and charts a course in which Canadians can be proud and confident.

As someone who spent over two decades working in the global financial markets of New York City, London, and Toronto, I can state with expertise that budget 2017 is fiscally responsible and undertakes strategic investments that will strengthen and grow Canada's middle class, while taking the responsible approach to fiscal management, cemented in a stable and declining debt-to-GDP ratio. Canada's fiscal strength rests on its load-debt burden, and protecting this source of strength is of paramount importance.

On a personal level, as a father of two young daughters, Natalia and Eliana, this budget is not just a plan for the future of this generation but of successive generations. I know budget 2017 will make a positive difference in the lives of the residents I have the privilege of serving in the dynamic and growing riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge.

Earlier this year, I announced a multi-million dollar investment in a new inter-regional transit terminal in the city of Vaughan, which will connect with the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension project, due to be up and running in later 2017. This investment by our government, in partnership with the other levels of government, will benefit not only my community but all communities in York Region and the GTA. As I like to say, a better place to live, learn, and work.

We have already begun to see the green shoots in the Canadian economy, including a labour market characterized by having the strongest job growth since 2012, spending by consumers supported by gains in disposable income and the Canada child benefit, and a robust housing market, that are attributed to budget 2016. The transformational Canada child benefit will provide over \$20 billion of direct tax-free payments to Canadian families this year.

Strategic investments in infrastructure, the lowering of taxes for over nine million middle-class Canadians, and pursuing trade policies that saw Canada complete a progressive and standard-setting agreement with the European Union are all providing a solid foundation for a brighter economic future for all Canadians for years to come.

Let us examine the specific measures in budget 2017 that focus on what I called our three-pronged approach: innovation, infrastructure, and skills training. In our fall 2016 economic statement, the government announced that it would invest \$81 billion in infrastructure for the next 11 years. I am proud to announce that within budget 2017, we see those details. This will include nearly \$21 billion to support social infrastructure in Canadian communities, including \$7 billion over 10 years to support and create more high-quality, affordable child care spaces across Canada.

I wish to highlight this specific investment in Canadian families with a quote from Marni Flaherty, chair of the Canadian Child Care Federation, as follows:

The Budget

We are pleased that Canada's federal government has taken this significant first step in committing to a multi-year funding plan. Moving forward, creating fundamental changes in how Canada supports the middle class – and all families – in accessing high quality and affordable child care will require increased funding, planning and coordination.

Over \$11 billion will be invested over 11 years for an inclusive national housing strategy. There will be \$1.8 billion invested over 10 years for cultural and recreational infrastructure. An additional \$10.1 billion will be invested in trade and transportation projects from coast to coast to coast. We need to get our goods and services to market to export and we need to break down bottlenecks.

I applaud the strategic investment of \$152 million to provide consistent and effective security screening of travellers and workers. Air Canada commented as follows:

Air Canada today said it welcomes funding in the Federal Budget that will improve airport security screening processes at Canadian airports. This will benefit travellers by reducing wait times and should enhance the overall travel experience.

Airports are key economic drivers with, for example, in Toronto, GTAA, a key economic cluster as the second-largest employment zone in the country.

Canada also faces a rapidly changing global economy and for us to succeed, we must foster citizens to be global leaders in their fields and have our creative and entrepreneurial citizens propel the economy forward. Our plan on innovation and skills training meets this challenge and will position our citizens and companies to succeed not only at home but also on the global stage.

● (1320)

Budget 2017 contains a number of measures on innovation. We all know that Canada is positioned for innovation with the most highly skilled and educated workforce and one of the best places for openness in trade and investment.

Briefly, there are three I wish to highlight, which will help companies scale up and identify those with the greatest potential. These measures include establishing Innovation Canada, a new single window at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada for business innovation programming to help coordinate and simplify innovation programs. Second, \$950 million will be invested over five years to support business-led innovation superclusters that have the greatest potential to accelerate economic growth, and up to \$400 million will be invested in the Business Development Bank for a new venture capital catalyst initiative.

I am proud of our commitment and the compassion we demonstrated for Canadian families. Our commitment to Canadian families is steadfast. We understand that Canadians face a job market that requires lifelong learning, and we are there to help. As an old proverb states, if you give people a fish, you feed them for a day; but if you teach people to fish, you feed them for a lifetime.

Our government will invest \$2.7 billion over six years to help more unemployed and underemployed Canadians access the training and employment supports they need to find and keep good jobs. Additionally, \$225 million will be invested over four years to identify and fill skills gaps in the economy, to help Canadians be best prepared for the new economy.

Our budget follows through on a promise to parents. Our budget will let parents, at their choice, extend their parental leave for up to 18 months versus the 12 months currently. This is important as it will provide enhanced flexibility to families, particularly in areas where there is a current shortage of child care spaces or where there is a prohibitive cost for child care spaces. As we all know, the gap between 12 months and 18 months in child care is great, because a lot of child care centres do not offer the service for kids between those ages, or younger.

Additionally, there is a new employment insurance caregiving benefit of up to 15 weeks to cover situations where individuals are providing care to an adult family member. As well, expectant mothers will be allowed to claim EI maternity benefits of up to 12 weeks before their due date versus the current standard of eight weeks. Taken together, these measures are smart investments to assist Canadian families.

A few other measures that I believe are noteworthy include an initiative for better data collection in the Canadian housing market, with a \$39.9 million investment to establish a housing statistics framework to address housing data gaps identified by the federal, provincial, and municipal housing working group. Our government's actions to date on the housing market are to ensure a sound housing market for all Canadians. Better data collection will strengthen our ability to ensure that home ownership remains robust and that our housing market remains sound.

Finally, a measure on which I hope to comment in the future is the introduction of the new Canada caregiver credit, which will vastly simplify the current system. It will replace the caregiver credit, the infirm dependent credit, and the family caregiver tax credit. With a single new tax credit, we will be better able to support those who need it the most. It will apply to caregivers, whether or not they live with their family member, and help families with caregiving responsibilities.

It is this type of measure that reflects the values of this government, and it will make a real and positive difference in the lives of Canadian families. It makes me proud to be part of a government that introduced budget 2017 with those types of principles and values.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see the government taking action on child care, because we heard a lot of testimony as we studied the economic status of women in Canada, which said this is a key thing that needs to be done. However, I was concerned to see that only 40,000 spots were being created, which is about 120 per riding. It is really not that much, and it does not start until the 2018-19 year.

The Budget

Some of the other things that I liked philosophically, such as skills training for youth, etc., are also not starting until late in the mandate, and there are a lot of projections of things that go past the government's mandate.

Why did the government decide to delay all of these initiatives that are really critical to creating jobs and getting women into the workforce?

• (1325)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, I will take a holistic approach and look at all the pieces we have put in place to support families across Canada. There is the introduction of the Canada child benefit, and the investment of funds for child care spaces across Canada. We need to sit down with our provincial counterparts and ensure that the money is being delivered for child care, which is very important. Also, there is our Canada summer jobs strategy for youth, and a number of programs we have put forward for innovation. These will all make a difference not only for our economy but, more importantly, for Canadian families.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, some of the things that are found in the Liberals' election platform are missing from their budget. It is as though they were forgotten along the way.

I would like my colleague to answer the following three questions.

First, why did the government not lower the tax rate for small and medium-sized businesses, as promised? Second, why did the government not close the tax loophole for stock options for CEOs, as promised? Finally, why did the Liberals not abide by the decision of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal and invest \$155 million to help first nations children?

[English]

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the tax loopholes or tax advantages that people or organizations may wish to gain, we have again committed substantial funds to the Canada Revenue Agency. I believe it is over \$500 million, so we can ensure that all Canadians, all organizations, are paying their fair share of taxes. We will continue on that track and we are committed to that track.

We also need to ensure that we have a competitive tax system. Reviewing tax expenditures and reviewing the tax code is something that we as a government should continuously be doing, and we are doing that. We need to ensure that entrepreneurs that take risks, that move forward, that put capital forward, and that put people to work are rewarded, but we also need to ensure that everyone is paying their fair share.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague covered off all of the issues that matter to many Canadians when it comes to building a strong nation. The foundation of a nation always goes back to families and children and what kind of support we provide for them.

Over and above all of my colleague's great comments about the things we are doing, the housing issue is a critical one, because if people do not have a roof over their heads, it makes life very

difficult. Many families in the Toronto area are truly struggling with this very issue.

I would like to hear more comment on the housing strategy and the commitment of dollars for housing. What are those dollars meant to be for, specifically?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that our government is investing over \$11 billion in a new housing strategy, which will assist those Canadians who need it the most: our seniors, disabled veterans, and low-income families. It is of paramount concern within the GTA that individuals have access to affordable housing, and our government is putting down a large investment to ensure this happens.

We have also undertaken measures within the housing market to ensure that it remains stable and sound for Canadians. Houses are Canadians' biggest investment. They are their homes. We need to ensure that remains sound.

I am very excited to announce those measures. I am proud to reiterate the message that we are undertaking, for the first time in a very long time, a national housing strategy from coast to coast to coast that will benefit Canadians who really need it the most.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure for me to rise in the House, but obviously I am very disappointed.

I am very disappointed today to speak on this budget that, unfortunately, keeps going down the wrong path that the Liberal government wanted to take a year ago. The government has completely lost control of public spending. It is living beyond its means, it is leaving spiralling debt for our children, our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren who, unfortunately, will have to pay for the current government's mismanagement.

It was not surprising, three days ago, to see the Minister of Finance all happy and proud, as is the tradition, to be able to launch his budget with a photo session, what in the business is called a photo op, surrounded by a group of children. What is clear is that he was surrounded by those who are going to have to pay later for today's mistakes. That is the defining mark of the current Minister of Finance's second budget.

The government got elected, we sadly recall, almost two years ago on a formal commitment: to run very small deficits for three years of a maximum of \$10 billion and to return to a balanced budget in 2019.

Basically, this was not a good election promise. However, we are democrats. We respect public opinion. The people spoke in October 2015 and elected the Liberal Party, which promised to run very small deficits. Had they run very small deficits, we would not have been happy, but we would have at least respected those who kept their word.

The Budget

However, that is not the case here. Within months of getting elected, here we have them wallowing in a spending spree, completely breaking their election promise to run very small deficits. In the first year, we saw this government run a deficit that according to the books is \$23 billion.

Let us not be fooled: the reality is that this government took the \$6 billion financial cushion, which was to provide the necessary flexibility for unforeseen circumstances, not to deal with emerging economic issues, but to deal with its mismanagement. The reality is that the first year of this government resulted in a \$29-billion deficit. This is three times worse than expected.

The government's latest budget does not deviate from that path: deficits, deficits, and more deficits. This year, \$28.5 billion; next year, \$27.4 billion; \$23.4 billion in 2019-20; and \$21.7 billion and \$18.8 billion in the years after that. How very typical of this government: deficits in the tens and tens of billions of dollars.

The Liberal plan was to balance the budget in 2019-20. That is what millions of Canadians voted for. Instead, the Liberal Party will be partying it up with a deficit approaching \$24 billion. That is typical Liberal government, and we will not stand for it.

When I say “we”, I do not mean just the Conservative Party, the party that balanced the books and left Canada on sound financial footing, the party that, under the leadership of the Right Honourable Stephen Harper and experienced ministers including John Flaherty and Joe Oliver, made sure that Canada emerged from the worst financial crisis this country has seen since the 1920s faster and in better shape than any other country.

We left the house in order and a \$2.9 billion surplus. When I raised this point a few days ago, the Prime Minister refused to answer my question and spouted a bunch of nonsense about how it was not true. It is. If he cannot see that, could he at least believe the parliamentary budget officer who, at the request of Senator Larry Smith, determined that our government left a \$2.9 billion surplus? We were careful about that. We were careful with government finances.

Should we be surprised by the Liberal government's lack of vision and finesse with respect to financial responsibility? Mr. Speaker, I do not know where you were and, honestly, I do not remember where I was on October 10. What I do know is that the Minister of Finance was in his office.

• (1330)

What did he have on his desk on October 10, 2016? He had a report signed by his own officials that concluded very clearly on page 14 that if Canada did not change course, the budget would not be balanced until 2055 and we would be \$1.5 trillion in debt by 2050—incidentally, \$1 trillion is \$1,000 billion. In other words, the Liberals missed their mark by 36 years. Even worse, they have absolutely no plan to balance the budget.

Mr. Speaker, in your personal life, if you exceed your budget and go into debt, year after year, do you think that one day someone might knock on your door and tell you to get your act together? I know you are an honourable man, but it could happen to anyone.

How is it that the people who control a budget of \$330 billion could lose sight of what all parents and Canadians know? That is what does not make sense. Even worse, the Minister of Finance was so proud to have that report on his desk, a report written by his own officials that said that if nothing changed, we would not return to a balanced budget until 2055, that he kept it all to himself for 10 whole weeks.

If such a damning report were written about me, I too might want to stick it in a desk and pretend that it did not exist. The Minister of Finance's primary responsibility is to face facts and to face the 35 million Canadians who pay his salary. That proves he did not have a clear conscience. It is hard to have a clear conscience after getting elected on a promise to return to a balanced budget by 2019 only to have that turn into 2055.

Worse yet, the government squandered an opportunity to turn things around with this budget. It chose to stay on the same path, the path to deficits, the path to debt, and the path to transferring debt to our children and grandchildren, who are going to pay the price for this mismanagement.

The Conservative Party is not alone in crying foul. Yesterday, on RDI, a Radio-Canada/CBC station, René Vézina, an economist, said, “The fact remains that there is quite a bit of red ink. There is no end in sight.”

It makes no sense, we need to know that much. What if the minister had told us that, well, we are spending quite a bit, but in seven, eight or nine years, we will be back to a balanced budget. That would not have been great, but at least there would have been a game plan, a vision, an action plan. We would know where we were going. This is not the case. There is no vision about the future of public finances, nothing. This is completely unacceptable.

That is what led Mr. Vézina to say that this is nonsense. That is also what led Carl Vallée, spokesperson for the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, to say that it does not make sense and that “the fact there is no sign of returning to a balanced budget soon is very troubling and certainly the most disappointing aspect of this budget”.

This is the reality and that is why we have to be careful.

What about Michel Girard, economist and analyst with Quebecor's QMI, LCN and TVA? He said that this is a big spending budget, that “the federal debt is out of control” and that we are lucky we currently have low interest rates. However, sooner or later, interest rates are likely to rise and each percentage point increase means an extra \$6 billion or \$7 billion.

François Pouliot of *Les Affaires* wrote that “the goal of any government should be to protect its credit rating for the future and to get on a better financial footing for the next generation”.

The Budget

That is exactly the opposite of what this government is doing. It makes no sense. There is a complete loss of control when it comes to taxpayers' dollars.

There are other worrisome aspects, such as tax increases that will be borne by taxpayers and the elimination of certain tax credits put in place by our government. First, the government decided to come up with the Friday and Saturday night tax. The government is now charging a new additional tax on alcohol, tobacco, and the like, so when a Canadian worker, who has worked hard all week, seeing half of his paycheque going to taxes, wants to have a cold beer with his friends on Friday night, he will have an extra tax to pay, thanks to this good government.

• (1335)

On Saturday evening, hard-working fathers or mothers who want to enjoy a good meal with their spouse and go buy a nice bottle of wine will now have to pay more thanks to this government. That is because of the Friday and Saturday night tax that this government just imposed. I am not the one saying it, it is an economist. I did not come up with that phrase.

It is not a good idea to raise taxes on alcohol and tobacco. According to the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, this is a major tax increase for consumers. It is a way for the government to take money out of the pockets of those who are going to use these completely legal substances regardless.

The government needs to be very careful about doing that.

What is more, there are dozens of tax credits. If someone had told me two days ago that I was going to say what I am about to say, I would not have believed it possible because we are talking about the Liberals. However, the Liberals are indeed directly attacking people who use public transit. Who would have thought?

This government goes on and on about how much it cares about the environment, unlike the big, bad Conservatives who could not care less. This government says it wants people to use public transit instead of cars. It has even said crazy things about the oil industry, but that is another story. Now it is eliminating the tax credit for transit riders, a tax credit created by the Conservative government.

Who would have thunk it? The Liberals are doing away with a green policy implemented by the Conservatives. That makes no sense.

Who is this move going to hurt? Cash-strapped students who have to scrimp and save. Seniors and people who cannot afford a car. People with modest incomes. People who want to be part of the solution, people with an environmental conscience who care about the planet and want their footprint to be as small as possible, who choose public transit over cars. Those are the people the Liberal government is hurting here. Those are the people the Conservative government protected. It was not a flashy measure, but it was a good one that should not have been axed.

Again, it is not just us big, bad Conservatives saying that. Who else? Our friend Denis Coderre, mayor of Montreal, and former Liberal member and minister is saying the same thing. Denis Coderre is criticizing the Liberal government. I am sensing some scepticism across the way. Allow me to quote an article by Boris

Proulx, updated on March 22, 2017, at 6:15 p.m. to be precise: “[Denis Coderre] is disappointed that the budget eliminates the tax credit for transit passes. He sees this as a contradictory measure from the Trudeau government.”

That was Denis Coderre, former minister, former Liberal member in this place, and a good friend of the current Prime Minister, the hon. member for Papineau, as everyone knows. “How can the government fund mega projects in public transit and then stop encouraging Canadians from using it?”, the mayor asks.

I have the same question for the governing party. They do not have to answer me if they do not want to, but let them at least answer their friend Denis Coderre who is questioning their unacceptable contradiction.

The same goes for public transit users, who simply do not understand. On TVA yesterday, people in the street were asked what they thought of that measure. They said it makes no sense. Sure, that tax credit was not going to change the world, but still, it was a little extra incentive. It gave people a bit of breathing room, and they were excited about that. Now the Liberals have decided to punish people who use public transit. It is just ridiculous.

I would point out that there were some other Liberals who were not too happy, either, namely the Quebec provincial government Liberals, under the leadership of the Hon. Philippe Couillard, the Premier of Quebec. We know that there is no link between the provincial Liberal Party and the federal Liberal Party, ever since Jean Lesage in 1965, but they are Liberals nonetheless. Yesterday, the Quebec minister of finance and the president of the Treasury Board were “extremely disappointed”. Here is exactly what senior ministers in the Couillard government said yesterday: “We are extremely disappointed and concerned that there's no clear signal in this budget.” There is nothing in this budget to address Quebec's needs. Pierre Moreau called out his federal counterparts:

• (1340)

I would have liked to hear the Quebec caucus speak up on matters relating to the province's major infrastructure projects.

I am therefore once again asking my government friends from Quebec where they were when it was time to stand up for Quebec at the cabinet table. I have a lot of respect and regard for the member for Louis-Hébert, and he knows that. However, the president of the Quebec treasury board, the hon. Pierre Moreau, believes that the 40 federal MPs from Quebec were mostly silent, restrained, and sidelined during the preparation of the budget. I am therefore calling them to order.

Many people who believed in what this government could do were disappointed by this budget. We, on the other hand, knew full well that the government's approach to managing public funds was wrongheaded.

• (1345)

[English]

Now let me talk about innovation.

The Budget

The current government is very proud of innovation. The Liberals say that this is the budget of innovation, and they talk a lot about innovation. *The Globe and Mail* reported that the Liberals used the word “innovation” more than 250 times in the budget. This is the key issue of this budget, is it not? The reality is that we are talking about \$1 billion for the next five years. It is not bad, and we are not against it, but is it really an innovation budget that they are talking about? Not so much.

More than that, I just want to say something for the members. Yesterday we were around the table with some colleagues working on that, and I had the privilege of sitting with great personalities, great people who served this country well for the past 10 years as ministers. Among them, close to me, was a former minister. She said, “Look at that. They are talking about innovation, but there is nothing new there. We did exactly the same a few years ago, when I was a minister.”

The former Conservative government tabled a plan called “building Canada’s innovation economy”. That is exactly what it was. We created that too, and we were not the first government to table that kind of issue, because every government has to address the issue of innovation. Year after year, in the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s, all governments tabled innovation platforms. This is good. We did it, and the Liberals are doing it; fine, but is that worthy of being called brand new? Not at all.

This is why I just want to say to the cabinet minister that we do agree on some issues, especially about innovation, because it is the reality of Canada and the reality of every country that governments have to address the issue of innovation instead of looking at others and doing what they do.

However, the way to help businesses is to lower taxes. With the current government, there is no indication that it wants to address the reality of the Trump administration, which has said day after day that it is going to lower taxes in America. If we do not do that, our companies and businesses will not be able to respond appropriately to our most important partner and our most important competitor.

[Translation]

However, I still want to be a good sport and recognize the good things that this government has done, particularly in this budget, such as the support for family caregivers. This is a sensitive issue that cuts across party lines, and our government made investments. When my colleague from Richmond Centre was in government, she made some good proposals in the area.

We are pleased that the government has decided to implement these measures and to group them in a single program that will move things along. Well done. It is the right thing to do.

Unfortunately, this government missed an historic opportunity to turn things around. It had a golden opportunity to admit that the plan it implemented one and a half years ago has not yielded the desired results. If it does not turn things around and take control of spending we are going to hit a wall and our children and grandchildren will be footing the bill. Unfortunately, this government failed on that account.

[English]

The government had a golden occasion to say it would get back to controlling public spending, but unfortunately it failed. It has only created a budget that is a manufacturer of deficit. This is why we urge all the members here to reject this bad budget.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a major part of the member’s speech was about innovation. Here is a direct quote by the president and CEO of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, Dennis Darby, in regard to innovation:

This is a budget that puts innovation where it belongs—as a driving force behind strategies for long-term growth in manufacturing and trade to build a better future for middle-class Canadians.

Manufacturers are pleased to see government following through on our recommendation for an industry-led super cluster strategy that will focus efforts of the federal government to support advanced manufacturing and help Canadian companies to compete head-to-head in markets around the world.

The difference between the Prime Minister and prime minister Harper is that we actually listened to what Canadians had to say. We understood what it took to advance our economy. We are a government that is investing in Canadians and our economy. That is what is going to make a difference for today’s middle class and those who are aspiring to be a part of it. This budget is part two of the first budget, which puts Canada on a road that many countries around the globe are very envious of.

Why does the Conservative Party continue to be out of touch with Canadians on what really matters? The creation of jobs and providing quality health care are the types of things that matter to Canadians. The Conservatives continue to want to be out of touch with reality and Canadians.

● (1350)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Before going to the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent, I want to remind the members that the protocol in the House is that usually one member speaks at a time. I am sure the hon. member for Winnipeg North appreciated the coaching he was getting from across the floor, but I do not believe it is necessary, and I am sure the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent will not need any coaching from the other side either.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I know that I am a real example to respect the protocol in the House, especially with my colleagues.

Let me take four words: building Canada’s innovation economy. That was the program that our government tabled. We had that. We believe in innovation. We believe the success of the future of this country belongs to those who create wealth, who create jobs, and who create new technology. We believe in innovation. Let me talk about innovation in my province and the Quebec City area.

*Statements by Members**[Translation]*

The National Optics Institute, a technology innovator and economic development tool created in the 1980s under the Mulroney government, has always had the support of our government and is backed by the current government. We were expecting funding announcements. In Quebec, the National Optics Institute is asking for an additional \$25 million. Where is it? There is nothing at all in the budget about this.

For the Quebec City region, we find nothing for the port, the Institut nordique du Québec, the third road link, the bridge, BRT, or the National Optics Institute.

I have to acknowledge that the member for Québec was right: Quebec City does not have a minister in cabinet.

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

We must be here in the House to make sure that the decisions we make improve the quality of life and living conditions of the people we represent. In yesterday's budget, I really had trouble finding what will be an improvement for the people I represent.

My colleague is very familiar with my concerns about poverty. The government talks a lot about the Canada child benefit, but we know that it is not the answer to everything. Taking a closer look at yesterday's budget, I was extremely disappointed to see that, for example, when it comes to employment insurance, not one penny has been added for women to maternity or parental benefits. For example, preventive withdrawal is now going from 8 to 12 weeks. Yesterday, I figured that there is going to be an extra four weeks, but no, the total is still 50 weeks. They will be able to start it earlier, but it will end earlier. It is the same thing for parental benefits; they will be shared differently, but there will not be any more.

We know that right now 60% of the people who pay into employment insurance each week do not have access to it. There is nothing to improve access to employment insurance.

I did not see anything that would alleviate poverty or help small and medium-size businesses in the riding I represent.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about that.

• (1355)

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I have a positive attitude, so I will play along. As I said, additional support for family caregivers is one of the good things in this budget. I would like to acknowledge that this is an issue that really matters to my colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

However, she and I both know that there is absolutely nothing in the budget in the way of help for the most vulnerable members of our society. Worse still, the government eliminated tax credits that helped businesses be more generous to their employees.

Also, on the subject of day care spaces, we had a plan to give businesses a tax credit for setting up workplace day cares, but the Liberal government got rid of that.

The member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, who represents thousands of farmers, also knows that the government abolished

the tax credit for insurance for farmers and people in the fishing industry. There is precious little in this budget for farmers.

True, the government is going to do agriculture research. That is fine, and we are not against it, but there is nothing at all in this budget in the way of actual help for farmers in the field, so to speak. Plus, the government is eliminating a tax credit for insurance, which means that farmers will pay even more tax because of this big, mean government.

[English]

Mr. Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent is one of our great orators in the Quebec caucus, possibly one of the greatest. He is not only a great orator, but he is also an excellent critic for finance. We all respect his intense knowledge about financial matters, and he touched on one aspect, which is the enormous debt that we have accumulated, to which the current government is not only adding but adding at an alarming rate. The fact is that today we have historically low interest rates. We know that these rates will not continue. As a matter of fact, they are manipulated. Therefore, I wonder if he could expound, and he did that to some degree, and give a really clear picture to this House, and especially to the Liberal government, of just how critical that is and what that would mean if the interest rate were to rise by one point, let alone two or three.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to accept those comments from my dignified colleague. The reality is that a debt is a bill that we will be sending to our children and our grandchildren. Today we have to pay for the debt that was created during the seventies. If we put aside the war, there was no deficit in Canada. However, the deficit was created by the Trudeau Liberals in the seventies, the old Trudeau, I would say. I am sorry to say it, but that is the history.

Today we are talking about \$30 billion that we have to spend to pay the debt. If there is a margin of 1%, we are talking about \$7 billion more to pay just 1%. That is \$7 billion less in the economy, less to help people, and less to give tax credits to people or businesses. It is less money that we can invest or that people will have in their hands to create wealth and jobs. Therefore, this is a very serious issue. When we do that, we are thinking first and foremost of our millennials. Those who are young today will have to pay for the bad administration of the current bad government.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[Translation]

INCIDENT AT U.K. PARLIAMENT

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, terror has struck once again.

Statements by Members

There are no words to express how disgusted and sickened we all feel every time terrorists strike. There are no words to express how angry we feel following these life-destroying acts of barbarism and cruelty. There are no words to express the profound sadness and sorrow we feel in the wake of such tragedies. We are so fed up, disgusted, and outraged, but also incredibly saddened. Terror will not win. Terror cannot win.

Our thoughts are with the people of Great Britain, who today are still reeling from this terrible tragedy.

The Bloc Québécois offers its sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims of the attack in London.

* * *

● (1400)

[English]

WINTER FESTIVALS IN EDMONTON

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to talk about Edmonton's winter city initiative. Thanks to the City of Edmonton's winter city initiative, Edmontonians are finding creative ways to embrace the winter months with community-wide light-ups, sparkling ice castles, and winter festivals, such as Ice on Whyte, Bright Lights Festival, and Candy Cane Lane. There is always something to do in Edmonton, even in winter.

[Translation]

Having lived most of my life in Alberta, I know one thing is certain.

[English]

As sure as radiant blue skies will fill our summer, and as sure as the green and gold of Edmonton's river valley will announce the arrival of autumn, the winter winds will howl once again. The energetic, enthusiastic Edmonton response will be to spin that wicked winter weather into festival gold for all to enjoy.

Thank you, winter festivals, for getting us through this past winter. We look forward to seeing you again soon, but not that soon.

* * *

YOUTH PROGRAMS IN CENTRAL ALBERTA

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Red Deer Youth and Volunteer Centre has a new name. Youth HQ is a network of services available to youth in central Alberta, which includes Big Brothers Big Sisters of Red Deer, Boys and Girls Club of Red Deer, 49th Street Youth Shelter, and Camp Alexo.

Youth HQ empowers youth in a safe environment where they can learn and grow. The mentorship programs offered deliver outcomes such as youth who are 45% less likely to use substances, are more active, and maintain healthier lifestyles; 80% of youth involved in mentorship programs have higher literacy rates and are more likely to graduate and pursue higher education.

Since its opening in 1984, Camp Alexo has supported more than 22,000 youth who may not otherwise have had the opportunity to attend camp.

Central Alberta is enriched by these programs, and I would like to acknowledge the founders for their vision and leadership and thank the staff, volunteers, and community partners who continue to build on their legacy.

I ask all my colleagues to help me congratulate Youth HQ. Youth are the future, and Youth HQ is for them.

* * *

RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, the parliamentary community bids a reluctant farewell to Normand Gagnon, coordinator of the parliamentary Press Gallery Secretariat.

[Translation]

For 30 years now, Norm has been a key ally, a friend, and sometimes even a therapist to the hundreds of journalists who have covered Parliament Hill over the years. I would even go as far as saying that he has been a media adviser to us members. He first came to the Hill with CBC/Radio-Canada. Norm then joined the extended parliamentary family, and I wonder how many journalists, members, and House staff he has known throughout his career.

[English]

However many people he has met, mentored, and befriended over the years, I know they all join with me in congratulating him on his retirement and wishing him all the best in the next chapter of his life.

[Translation]

Thank you, Norm.

* * *

[English]

APPOINTMENT TO SASKATCHEWAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the achievements of a constituent of Saskatoon West, Mr. Michael San Miguel.

Mr. San Miguel has been an active member of the Filipino community in Saskatoon and is the former president of the Filipino-Canadian Association. Mike has worked to build support for community initiatives to increase cultural awareness and diversity, youth engagement, neighbourhood safety, and access to affordable housing.

In 2010, Mr. San Miguel was awarded a leadership award by the Saskatoon Community Foundation for his volunteer efforts. Seven years later, Mike has still not stopped giving back to Saskatoon.

I am pleased today to congratulate Mike on his appointment to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

Statements by Members

Please join with me in recognizing Mr. Mike San Miguel for his many years of service to the people of Saskatoon. We are proud that he will continue to serve in his new capacity at the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

* * *

[Translation]

SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD WINTER GAMES 2017

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from March 18 to 24, Team Canada will participate in the 2017 edition of the Special Olympics World Winter Games in Austria. Canada will be competing in six events: alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, figure skating, floor hockey, snowshoeing, and speed skating.

[English]

This is the largest Team Canada to ever go to a Special Olympics World Winter Games.

[Translation]

Canadians across the country would like to thank all the members of Team Canada for their hard work and dedication and congratulate them for reaching the highest level in their sport.

[English]

They reflect the transformative power of sport to foster more active individuals and inclusive communities.

• (1405)

[Translation]

On behalf of all Canadians, the Government of Canada would like to congratulate the athletes, coaches, and support crew members who will don the maple leaf as part of Team Canada.

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[English]

RED DEER REBELS

Mr. Earl Dreesen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I am honoured to stand to congratulate our hometown Canadian major junior hockey team, the Red Deer Rebels, on solidifying a spot in the WHL playoffs again this year. Of course, last year Red Deer was host to one of the best Memorial Cup competitions ever. Hockey fans know how difficult it is to stay competitive year after year, so we are very proud to see that the Rebels have remained a top-tier team following the 2016 Memorial Cup appearance. The Sutter family and their entire leadership team deserve a tremendous amount of credit.

I would also like to acknowledge one of my former students, Dave “Radar” Horning, who has been with the Rebels since 1995 and in the WHL since 1991. Radar will be marking his 25th season as a trainer for the Rebels this year.

On behalf of the constituents of Red Deer—Mountain View, congratulations to Radar and to the entire Rebels team for their accomplishments, and good luck in the first round against the Lethbridge Hurricanes. Go, Rebels, go.

ABBOTSFORD COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Mr. Jati Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Abbotsford Police cite that there have been about 50 significant violent gang-related incidents in Abbotsford since 2014, five of which were homicides.

The Abbotsford Police have developed a sophisticated approach to tackling gang violence. There are also commendable front-line efforts to steer at-risk youth away from crime, including the Abbotsford Community Services' In It Together program and the Mission Community Services Society's My House project.

Our government is pursuing a comprehensive approach by improving access to education, housing, and economic opportunities for young people while working with communities and law enforcement in British Columbia to ensure that they are receiving the necessary federal support to make it harder for criminals to acquire handguns and assault weapons. It is crucial that we continue to support our provincial and municipal partners.

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[Translation]

MADAWASKA—RESTIGOUCHE

Mr. René Arseneault (Madawaska—Restigouche, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this year, we are celebrating Canada's 150th birthday.

I have the privilege of representing the beautiful and proud riding of Madawaska—Restigouche, which has become what it is today thanks to all of its founding communities: the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Acadians, Irish, Scottish, and British. Today, they are joined by immigrants from other places who are looking for a fresh start.

Madawaska—Restigouche covers 12,000 square kilometres in northern New Brunswick. Officially, it has a population of roughly 62,000, which works out to five people per square kilometre. Despite the challenges it faces because of its rural nature, Madawaska—Restigouche is home to many innovative entrepreneurs and hard workers.

[English]

This great country was built with the ingenuity and sweat of people in rural Canada. As we celebrate our 150th anniversary, let us remember our history and the debt of gratitude we owe to those who still, today, embody that pioneer spirit.

[Translation]

Although rural Canadians live far from major centres, they are doing more than ever to contribute to our country's vitality.

Statements by Members

[English]

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if the government is interested in super catalytic venture capitalistic innovation projects, it might look no further than SunTech Tomato Greenhouses in my riding, which has actually learned how to produce tomatoes in Canada in the winter. In fact, it just installed LED lights over an acre of its greenhouses, costing a million dollars.

Unfortunately, after the \$40,000 one-month hydro bill, it had to turn the lights out for the rest of the winter. The carbon tax in that month cost \$6,200. That is a lot of innovation that will go dark as a result of high taxes and high Liberal hydro fees that are being used to subsidize innovative Liberal friends.

If the government wants more innovation, it should stop taxing innovators, or else it risks this whole thing turning into a gigantic cluster something.

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RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to read some lines from a poem written by a young Muslim woman from Oakville, Amal Ahmed Albaz. It is about fighting discrimination. It is called *Unmet Friends*.

Fear happens when people fail to see,
That you're actually just like me.
We have to see each other for who we are,
We eat the same food, drive the same car.
We both have kids who drive us crazy,
We all have weekends when we're lazy.
We follow the same shows on our TV,
We like reading a book beneath a tree.
We dread shovelling when the snow hits hard,
We have barbecues in the backyard.
You see, you and I, we're a lot alike.
I may be Mohammed, you may be Mike.
Our lives are more similar than you think,
Our humanity is our common link.
We have the same pleasures and the same fears,
The same things make us happy, the same things bring us tears.
So no, I am not a security threat,
We're just friends who haven't met, at least not yet.

I thank Amal.

* * *

● (1410)

[Translation]

PURPLE DAY

Mrs. Bernadette Jordan (South Shore—St. Margarets, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every year on March 26, people around the world recognize Purple Day to raise awareness about epilepsy, a condition affecting 300,000 Canadians and 50 million people worldwide.

[English]

I have watched people close to me struggle with epilepsy and recognize the immense importance that awareness and knowledge play in dispelling the myths and in supporting those with this condition.

This Purple Day, let us send a message to all those affected by epilepsy that they are not alone. I invite all my colleagues to wear purple on March 26 and to continue the conversation to increase awareness and to support those struggling with epilepsy.

For more information, I encourage everyone to go to www.epilepsy.ca to find out how they can help.

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STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, simply put, the Prime Minister is waging war on democracy. He is using the budget as cover to force changes to the rules of the House. He wants to cancel Friday sittings, cut off debate in committees, eliminate discussions on committee reports, and severely limit debates in the House.

The custom of this House is that before any major changes are made to the rules, they are agreed upon by all parties. This tradition must be honoured. Liberal MPs need to look at each other and ask themselves if this is the reason they came to Ottawa. I hope that during their caucus retreat they will stand up to the Prime Minister and tell him that what he is doing is wrong and is harmful to our democracy.

Over the past 150 years, millions of Canadians have fought hard, and too many have died for our freedoms to be silenced. Today we fight for them.

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WILLIAM ROMPKEY

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I rise in the House today to honour a dear friend, a former member of Parliament, and a senator for Labrador for nearly four decades, Mr. William Rompkey, who died on Tuesday.

Mr. Rompkey served tirelessly as the member of Parliament for Labrador for 23 years and as the first and only Labradorian in the Senate of Canada for 16 years. He was an educator, an author, and an elder statesman. Mr. Rompkey served with tremendous integrity, loyalty, and care for the people who sent him to this House.

Mr. Rompkey's footprints remains forever in the lands of Labrador. He secured the first-ever investment for the first links of the Labrador highway. He secured investment for the first airports in remote north and south communities. He also invested in the changing times in the fishing industry and the mining industry.

He was a close friend and mentor throughout my life, since my first travels with him as a young teenager.

Today I would like to ask all colleagues in the House, as I know all Labradorians and Canadians would, to share with me in offering our condolences to his wife Carolyn, his children Hilary and Peter, and all of his friends.

*Oral Questions***VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last night I met with a number of veterans who are angry and frustrated. Sadly, not a single MP from the government side bothered to attend, and it was a message from our veterans the government needed to hear.

Key issues included pensions for medically releasing veterans; the need for a transition that ensures that no CF member is released from the military until all benefits, pensions, and supports are in place; more support for families of veterans; and that Veterans Affairs use evidence of successes in allied countries to approve beneficial treatments here in Canada. We also heard that those with military sexual trauma are still fighting for access to benefits that other veterans receive.

Enough is enough. We need the political will to make changes. What veterans are calling for is not expensive. It is common sense, and they have been asking for years. Tragically, the budget does not ensure that any of these simple requests will be honoured.

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• (1415)

JIM HILLYER

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a year ago today, this House was shaken and overcome with sadness by the sudden and untimely passing of Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner MP Jim Hillyer.

Being a member of Parliament is what Jim dreamed of all his life. He proudly represented his riding and held fast to his convictions, relentlessly advocating on behalf of his constituents. People mattered to Jim. Having experienced highs and lows throughout his life, Jim understood the issues faced by regular, hard-working Canadians. He was a neighbour to all, open, honest, and humble. A man devoted to his faith and family, Jim drew his strength from God, his wife Livi, and their four children.

I would encourage all members of this House to take some time today to reflect on the memory of our former colleague, Jim Hillyer.

Well done, Jim. He served his family, southern Alberta, and this nation well.

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THE BUDGET

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, budget 2017 is a budget of opportunities for women in Canada. For the first time ever, it includes a comprehensive gender statement showing how this budget impacts women differently than men. In fact, over 60 measures in our budget have a differential impact on women and men. This information allows us to make better decisions that will help advance gender equality for all Canadians.

Our government has taken more action than any other previous government to ensure that gender-based analysis is central to our decision-making. Building on our first budget, budget 2017 continues to invest in concrete actions to reduce gender inequality,

including in housing, child care, and addressing gender-based violence.

I am proud to be part of a government with an unshakable commitment to gender equality that follows its words with real action for Canadian women.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

THE BUDGET

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about what this budget means for a hard-working taxpayer. Let us call him Joe.

Joe takes the bus to work every day, and at the end of the day, he likes to go to the pub with his buddies for a beer. He is a responsible guy, so he always uses Uber to get home. What does this budget do for Joe? First of all, it taxes his bus pass. It takes away his tax credit for his bus pass. It taxes the beer he has at the pub. It even slaps a tax on his Uber ride.

What exactly does the Prime Minister have against people like Joe?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we built our agenda, our plan, based on Joe. What we have done for Joe is we have reduced his taxes. If Joe is a single guy, we have reduced his taxes by \$330. If Joe has a family, he has more money for his family because of our Canada child benefit. Most importantly for Joe, our investments in transit mean he is going to get to and from home more rapidly. What Joe knows is that he is going to have, over the long term, the ability to have a great job, an exciting job, because we are going to invest in Canada.

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's budget raises taxes on people like Joe, whether it is for beer, wine, or spirits, but that is really ironic, because that same budget contains the tab for \$1,700 worth of drinks and snacks during the Prime Minister's three-hour flight to a private island getaway over the holidays.

What message does the Prime Minister think he is sending to a taxpayer like Joe when he raises Joe's taxes while helping himself to free drinks on the house?

• (1420)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Finance has shared so well, it was this government that lowered taxes on middle-class Canadians by increasing taxes for the 1% of wealthiest Canadians. It was this government that introduced the Canada child benefit to give more money to his family and the children who need it the most to ensure that they get the most.

Oral Questions

When it comes to the travel that the member opposite is referring to, one of the first things we did after taking office was to ask the Clerk of the Privy Council to develop guidelines surrounding reimbursement of travel by sitting prime ministers, their families, and their guests as well.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nobody is questioning the Prime Minister's need for security and no one has questioned his right to take a vacation. Everyone knows when the Prime Minister does things, it costs a lot of money.

What taxpayers are questioning is why, when he knows that everything he does costs taxpayers money, he chose a vacation to a remote exclusive island. He knew that this would be very expensive for taxpayers. Why did he do it?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the first things we did after taking office was to ask the Clerk of the Privy Council to develop guidelines surrounding reimbursement of travel by sitting prime ministers, their families, and guests. Prior to our taking office, no such policy existed.

This government is working hard for middle-class Canadians and those working hard to join them. This government has had unprecedented levels of public consultations to ensure that we can respond to the very real challenges that Canadians are facing. This government will continue to work hard for all Canadians.

* * *

STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have seen the Prime Minister's arrogant attitude with how he spends tax dollars, but now this behaviour is starting to creep into the House of Commons. He has proposed a plan to limit his attendance in question period to once a week, which in fact, is actually only one hour a week, and give all of his colleagues Fridays off.

I just want to remind the Prime Minister that while he was campaigning he said, "Sunlight is the world's best disinfectant." My question is, what dirt is he trying to hide?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow me to set the record straight. The discussion paper talks about the better use of our time as members of Parliament. On Friday our schedule here is only half a day, so let us talk about moving those hours to other days of the week. We talk about working hard just like Canadians do. Hard-working Canadians in most offices in Canada start their day at 9 a.m. or even earlier. Why can the House of Commons not consider that?

Let us talk about doing that so that we can be back in our ridings to not only serve Canadians but to be able to engage with them and listen to their concerns, listen to their constructive feedback, so we can better serve them in this place.

[Translation]

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is trying to rush through permanent

changes to the rules of the House of Commons. These changes will undermine the opposition's ability to hold the Prime Minister to account and will allow him to be here only once a week.

In the House, we represent the views of our constituents and all Canadians. It is an honour and a privilege to be here, not an inconvenience.

Will the Prime Minister stop avoiding accountability and immediately abandon his plan to change the rules?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight for Canadians.

We have proposed a number of ideas in a discussion paper in order to modernize Parliament. Some of these ideas have been misinterpreted. Let us be clear: the Liberals are not recommending that the Prime Minister come to question period only once a week. We are trying to encourage a debate on how to improve accountability in the House. Let there be no mistake: our Prime Minister will be more accountable, not less accountable.

[English]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, sunny ways are indeed gone. They have been replaced by an attempt to unilaterally and quietly ram through changes to the rules that govern our democracy. This is nothing less than a massive government power grab, which is only meant to help the Prime Minister avoid accountability.

Is there anyone on the Liberal benches with the courage to stand up and tell the Prime Minister that this is not why they came to Ottawa?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the discussion paper that I shared with members of Parliament as well as Canadians was to encourage us to have a conversation, a discussion. What I have recognized is that there are many misconceptions in regard to the discussion paper.

I will share information in regard to Friday sittings. We know that on Fridays the House of Commons sits for only half a day. We are saying why not reallocate that time to other days. The House of Commons starts at 10 a.m. on some days. Most Canadians start their day at 9 a.m. or earlier. Why can the House of Commons not do that? Let us have that important conversation.

● (1425)

[Translation]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the same Liberals who regularly attacked Stephen Harper for his use of the gag are now flat out resorting to the guillotine to shut down debate.

Amending the rules that govern how our democracy works should never be done by just one party, no matter the party.

Oral Questions

Thus, will the Liberal government commit, here and now, to not changing the rules unilaterally, yes or no?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is not the case. Our government recognizes that the work members do here in the House and in their ridings is important.

During the election campaign, we vowed to modernize Parliament and turn it into a 21st-century workplace.

Our objective has always been to ensure that Parliament is relevant to Canadians and that the House is accountable, predictable, efficient, and transparent.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the budget has clearly laid bare the Liberal government's choices.

While, exactly two weeks ago, the Liberals voted to close the tax loophole for CEOs, they did not do so in their budget. No, instead they scrapped the public transit tax credit and cut \$1.25 billion from the fund to combat climate change.

Here is a simple question: why have the Liberals chosen to protect wealthy CEOs instead of the environment?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our plan is clear. We strengthened the middle class by reducing their taxes while asking the wealthiest Canadians to pay a little more. That continues to be our focus, because we know it is very important to have a fair tax system. We will continue with our plan.

We found expenditures that must be reviewed so we can ensure that our system continues to be fair. There will be consultations in the coming weeks and months to explain our programs.

[English]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, closing the CEO stock option tax loophole would have generated \$725 million every year, and as a bonus it would have helped the Liberals keep one of their promises. What a concept that is. Instead, what the Liberals are doing is they are refusing to give \$155 million to finally end discrimination against first nations children.

The question is simple, and please can the Liberals deliver the response for once without their pre-written talking points. Why protect rich CEOs instead of protecting first nations children?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud to continue on our plan to make a real difference for our country over the long term. What we started with was dealing with middle-class anxiety. What we talked about yesterday was a second chapter in our plan: how we can create great long-term jobs in sectors where Canada can be globally competitive. We are going to do this in a way that will ensure that Canadians can go for great opportunities in the future, and we will ensure that we deal with the most vulnerable as we can.

[Translation]

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of being seated next to a finance minister who reluctantly

ran a deficit to stimulate the Canadian economy while it was going through the worst economic crisis since the Second World War. He did so reluctantly.

This week, the minister talked about success in business. I am very happy for him and his success. If he had run a deficit in his business the way he is doing here in government, that would have been disgraceful.

The government is doing away with the public transit tax credit. It portrays itself as all green and environmental. Why did it get rid of that credit? They say it was small and underutilized, but that seems like one more reason to keep it around.

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our predecessors did not make the investments they should have, which resulted in excessively slow growth. Now we have to invest in Canadian families and infrastructure to boost our growth rate. This is very important to our fiscal position. These investments will put Canada in a better position in the future.

● (1430)

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the one comment I would like to make, once again, has to do with how Canada's regions have been abandoned, especially our forestry regions. The Quebec National Assembly reminded us of this today.

The agricultural sector is going to have to fight with six high-tech sectors for additional funding for its own development, even though all Canadians eat every day, and food security is extremely important. In my view, the choices this government is making go against the well-being of our society.

Does the Prime Minister want to punish farmers and all Canadians?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we decided that it was very important to make decisions in sectors where Canada has a comparative advantage.

One sector that is very important to us is the agri-food sector. We decided that we should be a global leader in this sector. That is why we decided to focus on that sector and to ensure that people have the training needed to lead the way.

[English]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the children and grandchildren of Joe, because the grandchildren of Joe will have to pay for the bad administration of that Liberal government, which uses deficits and makes debt. This is totally unacceptable.

[Translation]

That party got elected on talk of small \$10-billion deficits and a return to balanced budgets in 2019. The reality is that the deficits are three times greater than expected and there is no plan to return to balanced budgets.

I have a very simple question for the minister. I know that the minister and I speak the same language and I would like him to understand me. In what year will Canada return to a balanced budget? In what year?

[English]

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us think about children and grandchildren for a moment. As we worry about children and grandchildren, what we think about is this: How can our country be a world leader? How can we be successful? What we can do is be optimistic and make investments in the future growth of this country. That is exactly what we are going to do. We are focused on places where our country has a comparative advantage. We are focused on how we can give our children and our grandchildren the education, training, and skills to be successful. That will lead to a higher rate of growth. That will lead to good economic outcomes.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, do not get me wrong, Joe sounds like a great guy, but I want to ask about Peter. Last night, Canadians watched Peter Mansbridge flat out ask the finance minister why he refuses to come clean on when the Liberals will finally balance the budget. As always, the finance minister refused to answer his simple question of “when?”

Why has the term “balanced budget” become a dirty word to the government and to the finance minister, and when will Peter and Joe and all of us see a balanced budget here in this country?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Humility and tranquillity. I'm pretty sure I had a full head of hair yesterday morning.

The hon. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Bill Morneau: Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about what Sally and Joanne and Mary-Ann will see in the future. I want to talk about the fact that what we are doing is taking the very best balance sheet among the G7 countries, the lowest net debt to GDP, and we are making investments that an optimistic country needs to make.

Unfortunately, the people before us were focused on austerity. We are focused on growth. We are looking at how we can make investments to make a difference. That growth is what is going to make sure that our country stays successful over the long run.

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NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what the Conservative government was focused on. That was on balancing the budget. For Canada's beleaguered energy workers, yesterday's budget was a kick in the teeth. While our biggest competitor, the United States, is cutting red tape and taxes and making its energy sector more attractive to job creators, the Liberals are jacking up taxes and punishing oil and gas exploration. It is almost as though they want to phase out the energy sector.

Our energy sector employs those middle-class Canadians that the government pretends to care about. Why did the Liberals go out of

their way in this budget to kick energy workers in the teeth when they are already down?

• (1435)

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government has gone out of its way to approve three pipelines. Those are decisions that will put energy workers in Alberta and Saskatchewan to work. What this government could accomplish in one year, that government could not accomplish in 10 years. That is what we have been doing, because we care about putting energy workers to work.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal budget was nothing but bad news for the Canadian Armed Forces. The Liberals have cut another \$8.5 billion, which means they have cut a total of \$12 billion in just two years. Major investments have been punted down the road for two decades, and there is not enough money to buy the equipment our forces need. This is worse than the Liberals' decade of darkness. Today they are dragging our troops back into the Dark Ages.

When will the minister start serving the brave men and women in uniform instead of being a patsy to the Prime Minister?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every single day when I come to the Department of National Defence, it is about serving our men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces.

We are committed to making sure that the Canadian Armed Forces have all the tools necessary to do their work. We have planned increases that we are committed to. This is about flowing the money and making sure that the money is there for the projects that we have committed to in the years that it is required. We have an defence policy that is going to be coming out shortly, and I look forward to launching that and showing to all Canadians our commitment to the Canadian Armed Forces.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this Liberal budget is full of bluster and baffle-gab. A few gems include innovation through superclusters, or this one about offsetting derivative positions in straddle transactions, or even better, capping stock options for the super-rich—oh, wait; that did not make it into the budget. That was in the Liberal platform.

This is nothing but a backloaded, baffle-gab, better-luck-next-time budget. Way back on page 150 is a \$1.2 billion cut to fighting climate change. To all those Canadians who believed the Liberals in Paris were serious about fighting climate change, how can they betray their commitment to them now?

Oral Questions

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me just clarify to the member opposite that we are absolutely committed to tackling climate change, and if he looks at the budget, he will see the numbers are there. We are putting in place the measures that are necessary to do our made-in-Canada plan on climate change. We put in money to enhance opportunities in clean tech.

However, let me quote others. Clean Energy Canada said, “We're pleased that the new federal budget makes smart investments for clean energy and climate action in Canada.” Équiterre said that today's budget puts in place the necessary resources to implement the new climate plan. Climate Action Network said, “Today's budget provides the financial backing we need to begin the serious work of implementing Canada's climate framework...”

We are getting it right. We are taking action on climate change, and I hope the member will support us.

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THE BUDGET

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, the Liberal budget just sounds like a *Seinfeld* show. It is about nothing.

[*Translation*]

The Liberals had a choice. They could have eliminated the tax loophole that is costing us \$800 million a year and benefits only the wealthiest 1%, but no, they decided not to keep that promise. Instead of going after and taking down their millionaire friends, who did they go after? They went after people who take the bus in the morning.

Why are the Liberals getting rid of this tax credit that helps families and promotes public transit while maintaining the gifts for their millionaire friends?

Mr. Marc Miller (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in budget 2017 we propose to help make communities healthier and more inclusive, invest in faster and more efficient public transit, and build more cultural and recreational centres and affordable housing.

Our government is investing more than \$180 billion in neighbourhoods and modern and resilient communities, and these projects are well under way with more than 1,400 projects approved totalling over \$15 billion.

In my riding, 6,000 families are better off thanks to this budget. Millions of families throughout Canada are better off. That makes me very proud.

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● (1440)

STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals want to give the Prime Minister four days off a week, prevent members from doing their job in committees, and limit the speaking time of all members. Motion No. 6 was nothing compared to this attempt by the Prime Minister to take total and permanent control of Parliament.

The Leader of the Government in the House of Commons claims she wants to discuss this, but at the same time has ordered her MPs to pass these changes in committee in a backroom on Parliament Hill.

When will the Prime Minister put his house in order? When will he finally show some respect for Parliament?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again allow me to set the record straight for Canadians.

The discussion paper talks about a better use of members' time. On Fridays, we are only required to be here for half an hour. It would be realistic to move those hours to other days of the week. Most offices in Canada start their workday at 9 a.m. The House of Commons could as well.

The goal behind this option is to enable us to be in our ridings on Fridays so that we can meet with our constituents.

The Speaker: It is the responsibility of all members to exercise self-restraint, and I am asking the member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix to do so.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to set the record straight.

Contrary to what the Liberals think, Parliament belongs to Canadians. They elected all of us to represent them. Contrary to what the Prime Minister thinks, not everyone likes him. Most Canadians do not approve of the deficits he is running. Most Canadians find his insatiable appetite for spending taxpayers' money unacceptable.

Why does the Prime Minister want to silence Canadians who do not think like him? Why does he want to muzzle the opposition members and his own backbenchers?

We will not let him do that.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am taking part in a discussion that includes all members and all Canadians because we want to work with them and we want them to participate in this discussion.

Our government knows that the work members do here in the House and in their ridings is important. During the election campaign, we vowed to modernize Parliament and turn it into a 21st-century workplace. Our objective has always been to ensure that Parliament is relevant to Canadians and that the House is accountable, effective, and transparent.

Oral Questions

[English]

Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister said that he would not interfere in the work of committees, but that is exactly what he is doing. The Prime Minister's staff, over the last number of days, have been at the procedure and House affairs committee, telling the Liberal backbenchers to block the opposition's simple and reasonable request that we have collaboration and consensus on changes to the rules. Will the Prime Minister back off and let the Liberal members do their job, as he promised that he would do?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is this government that actually increased funding to committees so that they could do the important work that they need to do. We actually believe in the committee process because it is the committee that can actually study legislation and study ideas way better than we do in this place, and that is exactly what we have asked the committee to do.

With respect to the discussion paper, I have asked the committee to broaden the scope of the study they already have in place in regard to the Standing Orders. I believe it is a meaningful conversation that all members need to have. I encourage all members, as well as all Canadians, to participate.

Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the House leader is in on this charade too, and the Liberal members even know it. They know this is not a discussion paper. They know this is an edict from the Prime Minister's Office. The House leader just said that she asked the committee; she is asking it to do her dirty work.

My question is for the Liberal members of Parliament. I know there are some hard-working people with integrity on that side. Will any of them stand up, show some independence, and say no to the Prime Minister and no to the House leader, who has completely botched this for all of you?

The Speaker: I must remind all members to direct their comments to the Chair.

The hon. government House leader.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is clear is that this place needs to be modernized. We need to have this conversation. We need to have this discussion. Every single member of Parliament has a role and responsibility. I recognize that members on both sides of this place have responsibilities, and we want to ensure that we have important conversations.

Within this place, members of Parliament have the opportunity to hold the government to account. We believe that within the ridings, constituents have the ability to hold their members of Parliament to account, and that is why I believe that important work is done here in the House as well as in the ridings.

• (1445)

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Since when does a cabinet minister or House leader give orders to a committee anyway, Mr. Speaker?

The government House leader is ignoring the long-held tradition of getting all-party agreement for an overhaul of the way that democracy works in this place. If the House leader's argument that the government of such a warm and loving Prime Minister could not possibly harm our democracy with the power grab now under way, I wonder if she might speculate with us what the majority government of a prime minister like, say, Kevin O'Leary would do with all that power?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is exactly these hypotheticals and these speculations that the committee has the ability to deal with. That is why we are saying let us have this conversation, let us have this discussion. It is because these are important concerns that Canadians are facing, and we are saying let us have this discussion. That is why I had introduced a discussion paper.

I know the committee members sat late once again yesterday. I did visit the members of the committee to thank them for their work. I believe that they are having a meaningful conversation and I think it is important that they continue that conversation. My door will remain open so that we can all work better together.

Mr. David Christopherson (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this goes well beyond an innocent discussion paper. The government House leader should not insult our intelligence by claiming otherwise.

However, if she is serious about that, if she is really truly sincere that her motives are pure, will she now stand in her place and tell this House that she accepts that her government has no mandate to change the rules of democracy over the united objections of the opposition? If she will not, then it is pretty clear that her protests of innocence are even more shallow than they sound.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I really do believe that we can have more meaningful conversation and debate in this place. I believe that when it comes to challenging the integrity of individuals, that is for the member to choose to do. I believe that is not needed in the conversation that I would like to have, and that is why I am saying let us have a conversation, let us have a discussion.

The member knows very well, as I told him last night, that I actually appreciate a lot of the work that he does. I hope that we can continue working better together, because I believe this place needs to be modernized. It is a commitment we made to Canadians in the electoral campaign. It is something on which Canadians agree that all members in this place need to work better together.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House, the Minister of Finance presented the government's plan. It is an ambitious, visionary plan that makes middle-class families the priority, both in Bourassa and elsewhere in Canada.

Oral Questions

Can the Minister of Finance tell us why he only chose certain sectors of the economy in his budget?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is very important to be an optimistic country and to make investments in the future, but we also need to know in which particular sectors we have a comparative advantage. That is exactly what we have done.

We decided to be the world leader in very important sectors where there will be high-quality jobs in the future. We chose six sectors that are key to our children's and grandchildren's future. We will consider ways of providing the necessary training for the good jobs of the future.

* * *

[English]

STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I noted that the government's attempt to give itself carte blanche to unilaterally rewrite the Standing Orders is opposite to the practices of most recent Liberal and Conservative administrations, but the tradition goes back much further.

On December 28, 1867, our first set of Standing Orders was adopted by unanimous consent. Consensus for major changes to the Standing Orders was good enough for prime ministers from Sir. John A. to Stephen Harper.

Will the current Prime Minister not acknowledge that consensus is still the right approach even though it is 2017?

• (1450)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government and Prime Minister really does believe we can work better in this place. Just today, I have Sarah, who is my University of Toronto women in House program person, who is shadowing me on the Hill. She has seen a lot of the stuff that has taken place here. She has asked me some tough questions with regard to some of the stuff that went on yesterday and today.

It is important that we have this meaningful conversation. I am sure she, too, will be reading the discussion paper and be a part of it. I know many members have women following them today so one day they too can occupy even more seats in the House.

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are trying to force changes to how the House operates through the procedures and House affairs committee without all-party support. This is wrong. I feel bad for the talented and principled backbench members opposite who are also uncomfortable with this.

Why is the Liberal backbench willing to watch the Liberal front bench betray years of tradition of the House and integrity of their party?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have shared many times in the House, yes, a discussion paper was released to all members of

Parliament, and it was also released to Canadians, so we could have a meaningful conversation, a substantial discussion on Standing Orders and how we govern in this place. It is unfortunate that a lot of the ideas within the paper have been misrepresented. This is why I encourage all people to be part of the conversation so we can find a made-in-Canada solution for Parliament and the House of Commons.

* * *

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the government House leader tried to defend the Prime Minister's use of the Privy Council Office to help him on a trip to Alberta for the Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner by-election. She claimed it was to help prepare the PM for government business, but that is complete nonsense. The trip had only one purpose: for the Prime Minister to appear at Liberal Party campaign events. There was no government business.

Why does the Prime Minister believe it is okay to use public servants to campaign for the Liberal Party?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is prepared in advance of all events and is afforded the same support as previous prime ministers. Irrespective of his schedule or planned events, the Prime Minister must always be in a position to carry out official duties.

As has been the case for previous prime ministers, the Prime Minister is always in contact with his office and is routinely provided with briefing materials during all travel, domestically and internationally, and whether on personal or government business. The Prime Minister is the prime minister after all.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, documents show that in October, the Privy Council Office was directed by the Prime Minister to produce a regional backgrounder on Medicine Hat during the by-election. The Prime Minister had no government events in Medicine Hat. He was only there to campaign. The PCO was also ordered to provide tech support and uploaded a video from the campaign stop with the PM and the Liberal candidate.

In light of the actions of the Prime Minister in Medicine Hat, today, when the Prime Minister is campaigning in Markham—Thornhill, will PCO staff be ordered to campaign with him yet again?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have just shared, the Prime Minister is prepared in advance of all events and is afforded the same support as previous prime ministers. Irrespective of his schedule or planned event, the Prime Minister must always be in a position to carry out official government duties.

As has been the case for previous prime ministers, the Prime Minister is always in contact with his office and is routinely provided briefing materials during all travel, domestically and internationally, and whether on personal or government business.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, budget 2017 was an opportunity to meet the needs of Canadian seniors, but the Liberal government told them to keep waiting. The Canadian Medical Association said, “Budget 2017 fails Canada’s seniors”. CARP said, “financial security for seniors not on the agenda”.

Divide and conquer deals with the provinces are not the solution. We need a national seniors strategy. Why did yesterday’s budget leave Canadian seniors wanting and waiting?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this question because it gives me an opportunity to talk about the fantastic news in our budget yesterday, as it relates to health, and that includes the health of seniors. We were able to announce additional investments in the order of \$11 billion that would go to home care, including palliative care, that would go to mental health, and that includes seniors’ needs, like dementia, so we would be able to support them. It included things like \$11 billion for housing that would include social housing to support seniors.

There was so much good news in the budget. I look forward to working with colleagues to put that work into place.

* * *

● (1455)

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, while the government’s gender budget sounded good, the budget lacks real action for women: not a penny to legislate equal pay for work of equal value; not a cent for child care this year; zero new money for shelters for women fleeing violence; nothing to make birth control more affordable; and only a fraction of what is needed for a strategy to end violence against women. Once again, women are being asked to wait.

If gender equality really matters to the government, why were women shortchanged again?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise in the House on this traditional territory the day after a feminist budget was tabled in the House, with the first-ever gender statement acknowledging that our policies and our actions in the House affect women and men and people of different genders differently. One hundred million dollars was committed for the gender-based violence strategy, the first Canada has ever had; \$7 billion for child care; \$11 billion for affordable housing.

We have many priorities and much work to do. This was a great budget for women and girls everywhere and—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, while this Prime Minister is being paid to dig us deeper into debt and to go sunbathing with his family on the taxpayers’ dime, the Minister of Canadian Heritage is out in the cold launching the celebrations for the 150th anniversary of Confederation. Like the Prime Minister, she is favouring her Liberal cronies.

Can the Prime Minister, who has once again increased the tax burden of Canadians, justify spending \$127,000 on a vacation paid for by taxpayers, who will be paying back his deficit for decades to come?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the vision we have put in place for the Canada 150 celebrations. Four themes will be celebrated throughout the year: young people, the environment, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and diversity and inclusiveness. We will make sure that in funding the celebrations and various projects across the country, there will be an equitable regional distribution.

Of course, I hope all Canadians across the country and of all political stripes will join in the celebrations.

[English]

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has lost touch with average Canadians. I can imagine it is easy to miss the challenges that everyday Canadians are facing when he is busy jet-setting to billionaire island, but \$127,000. Even the most out-of-touch Hollywood celebrity would blush at this type of spending, and 17 hundred bucks to feed a family of five on a three hour flight.

Why does the Prime Minister think taxpayers should be on the hook for this type of extravagance?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected our government on a plan to grow the economy and strengthen the middle class. We are delivering on that commitment. Over the last seven months, almost 250,000 jobs were created, the majority of which were full-time jobs. This is the most job growth we have seen in over a decade. This is evidence that our plan is working.

Yesterday, we continued to build off those investments, good work we are doing for Canadians. One of the first things we did after taking office was to ask the Clerk of the Privy Council Office to develop guidelines surrounding the reimbursement of travel by sitting prime ministers, their families, and guests. Prior to our government taking office, no such policy existed.

Oral Questions

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is the first time the PCO has needed private island guidelines.

The Prime Minister has increased taxes on Canadians who use Uber or public transit to get to work, because the Prime Minister has made it very clear he needs the extra cash to pay for his caviar and champagne when he travels to private islands. The Prime Minister is so out of touch that he is raising taxes on struggling Canadians to fund his lavish lifestyle, and Canadians are getting fed up.

Will the Prime Minister actually stand and answer questions of behalf of struggling Canadians or will he just sit there with a smug look on his face, while he daydreams about his next vacation?

• (1500)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government and Prime Minister held unprecedented levels of public consultation so we could actually respond to the very real challenges they face.

It was this government that lowered taxes on middle-class Canadians by increasing taxes on the wealthiest 1% of Canadians.

It was this government that introduced the Canada child benefit to give more money to families with children who needed it the most so they could actually do what they needed to do for their families.

What was consistent throughout it all? The Conservatives voted against it every time.

* * *

THE BUDGET

Mr. Kyle Peterson (Newmarket—Aurora, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one thing is clear to all of us in the House. Canadians are ambitious and seek new opportunities every day. Whether they are looking to start their own businesses, to export to new markets or to scale up their operations, they need our support.

While we have been working hard to open doors and create opportunities for Canadians, it is clear that the global economy continues to change.

What new commitments has the government made in budget 2017 to help Canadian businesses flourish in this changing economy?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Newmarket—Aurora for his work on trade and his interest in innovation.

It is a great budget for Newmarket—Aurora in terms of innovation. Through our innovation and skills plan, we will create jobs, we will help our companies and our economy and citizens thrive in a rapidly changing world.

That same innovation and skills plan also aims to help 10,000 more young Canadians to get the skills and training they need in today's economy through work integrated learning and co-ops.

There are \$1.26 billion in a strategic innovation fund that will create a one-stop shop and a more efficient and coordinated way for us innovate.

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, Manitoba saw the largest weekend influx of illegal migrants entering the province from the U.S. so far this year. Dozens continue to pour into border communities like Emerson, and the numbers are only growing.

To make matters worse, the Prime Minister's reckless tweets have led many to believe that entering Canada through the proper channels is just a suggestion.

Will the Prime Minister stand up for the rule of law, stand up for our border communities and condemn this illegal activity, or will he continue to encourage it?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman can be absolutely assured that every Canadian law is being enforced by the RCMP and by the CBSA. As well, we are honouring all of our obligations under international law.

The hon. gentleman should know that when people cross the border in irregular fashion, they are apprehended, they are identified, they are fingerprinted. Their biographical and biometric information is collected. That is checked against every Canadian database and the appropriate international databases for immigration or criminal activity. If it is warranted, suspects are detained.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP): Mr. Speaker, not only is there nothing in the budget for the dairy industry, but also there is still no news on granting tariff quotas under CETA.

We now hear talk about a proposal to resolve the softwood lumber issue by sacrificing our supply management system. That is completely unacceptable. The Liberals already hurt our industry during the negotiations and have yet to come up with fair and equitable compensation. My question is simple:

Can the government confirm today that it will not sacrifice our supply management system or our forestry industry?

[English]

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is well aware that we support supply management. She is well aware that I announced \$350 million for the dairy sector, \$250 million for the farmers, \$100 million for the processors.

Oral Questions

Along with it, yesterday's budget announced \$70 million for agricultural science and innovation, \$950 million for super clusters, \$200 million for clean technology.

This government supports supply management and the agricultural sector.

* * *

[Translation]

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, technological change has shown us that we must continue to encourage innovation in our country. In order to provide tangible help to those who are worried about being left behind, the government has already stressed the importance of giving Canadian workers the tools they need to succeed in the new economy.

[English]

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour explain to the House what this government is doing to make sure that Canadians can get the training they need to find and keep good, well-paying jobs?

• (1505)

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday's budget would invest \$2.7 billion to help unemployed and underemployed Canadians get the skills they need for their next and better job, and \$470 million for adult workers so they can go back to school, upgrade their skills, and upgrade their credentials. We would make changes to the EI system so that, when Canadians take self-funded training, they do not lose their EI benefits. This would help Canadian workers—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Edmonton—Wetaskiwin.

* * *

HEALTH

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in Alberta there has long been significant government support for people with autism. Other Canadian families have not had the same experience, some mortgaging their homes to get help they desperately need. In 2015, our government appointed a dozen world-leading Canadians to develop a Canadian autism partnership. After two years' work, they presented the health minister with a strong plan and a relatively modest budget ask. As the government continues to spend with such reckless abandon, can the minister please explain why the Liberals decided to take a hard line toward Canadians with autism?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier this afternoon, this budget was the best news on health that we have seen in a decade, with fantastic news in so many areas; not only the new investments that I referred to earlier, but we have a growing Canada health transfer that would give to the provinces more than \$200 billion over the next five years. As we work with the provinces and territories in delivering health care, they would be able to do advanced care for Canadians of all particular needs. We also have new money for early learning and child care in

the order of \$7 billion that would be of great assistance to families affected by—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères.

* * *

[Translation]

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, ever since Quebec managed to pry labour matters from the hands of the Canadian government, we have created the best labour market training system in North America.

However, once again, Ottawa is going back on its word. The government cannot be counted on. After the Harper government, which tried to make us fit into the Canadian mould, now it is the Liberals who are renegeing on the labour market agreement, which was so hard to reach.

Why is it that whenever something is working well, Ottawa has to stick its nose in and tear everything down?

[English]

Mr. Rodger Cuzner (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to working with all the provinces. I know that with the Province of Quebec we have spoken with the minister responsible for education, and the provincial government is very pleased with the investments that have been made by this government. We will continue to invest in all Canadians so that they are given the skills they need to work in tomorrow's economy, as well as to develop well-paying jobs for today.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers are not happy that an agreement that was working very well is being scrapped.

The Quebec National Assembly has just unanimously passed a motion expressing its great disappointment with budget 2017. There is nothing for forestry, for transportation, or for cheese producers, and nothing is done about tax havens. When Ottawa calls the shots, Quebec will always be left wanting.

Instead of swallowing this nonsense and acting like doormats, for goodness sake, would the 40 Liberal members from Quebec stop undermining the interests of Quebecers?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the measures in our budget are very important for all of Canada, including Quebec. It is very important to invest in affordable housing and in our health care system, in Quebec and across the country.

Routine Proceedings

We will continue with our program to improve the level of economic growth. It is important to create jobs. At present, the unemployment rate is lower than when we came to power. It is currently 6.6%, and it was 7.1% at the outset. Our program—

The Speaker: Order, please.

* * *

[English]

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of the 2017 Indspire Award recipients: P. Jerry Asp, Jan Kahehti:io Longboat, B. Doreen Spence, Nathan Matthew, Tekasi:tsia'kwa Cook Barreiro, Kimberley R. Murray, Cece Hodgson McCauley, Duncan McCue, Heather Kashman, Thomas Dymond, Maatalii Okalik, Josh Butcher, and the Honourable Senator Murray Sinclair.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

• (1510)

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED ACTIONS OF MINISTER OF INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS IN CHAMBER

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in relation to the question of privilege, I want to add my two cents to the question of privilege raised by my hon. colleague the House leader of the official opposition, and I will conclude my remarks by asking for unanimous consent for a motion.

There is no doubt that the minister's actions were inappropriate, but more to the point, they were entirely misplaced. The lack of respect in dealing with the bill in question firmly rests on the shoulders of the government House leader, not the Conservatives. The government made the decision to try to shoehorn the debate on Bill C-17 into the tiny 30-minute window before the budget. It was not the opposition that did that. Perhaps the minister should just march on down the front bench and channel her anger where it actually belongs. She should demand that the government House leader call it for debate this afternoon or maybe even for all day tomorrow.

I would like to ask for unanimous consent for the following motion: that the order of the day for tomorrow, Friday, March 23, 2017, shall be Bill C-17, an act to amend the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act and to make a consequential amendment to another act. Let us just get on with it.

The Speaker: I would like to thank the member for Victoria for his intervention in relation to the question of privilege.

Does the hon. member have unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is a well-known rule that committees are meant to be masters of their own domain, and we have all been told that the motion to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs that was presented by the hon. member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame is not being coordinated by the government. However, in question period today, the government House leader said, "I have asked the committee to expand the scope of the study", and she went on from there.

I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to enforce the well-known rule on committee independence and tell the government House leader to stay out of it before she makes matters even worse.

The Speaker: This would appear to be a matter of debate.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HUMAN RESOURCES, SKILLS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

The Speaker: It being 3:14 p.m., pursuant to order made on Friday, March 10, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion to concur in the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities concerning the extension of time to consider Bill C-243.

Call in the members.

Before the taking of the vote:

* * *

• (1540)

INCIDENT AT U.K. PARLIAMENT

The Speaker: Order. There have been discussions among representatives of all the parties in the House, and I understand that there is consent to observe a moment of silence for the victims of the attack at the Parliament of the United Kingdom. I invite hon. members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

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

(Division No. 235)

YEAS

Members

Aboultarif
Albrecht
Alleslev
Ambrose
Anderson
Arseneault
Ashton
Bagnell

Albas
Aldag
Allison
Amos
Arnold
Arya
Ayoub
Barlow

Routine Proceedings

Barsalou-Duval	Baylis	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Beaulieu	Beech	McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Bennett	Benson	Mendicino	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)
Bergen	Bernier	Monsef	Morrissey
Berthold	Bezan	Motz	Mulcair
Bibeau	Bittle	Murray	Nantel
Blaikie	Blair	Nassif	Nater
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Nault	Nicholson
Block	Boissonnault	Nuttall	O’Connell
Bossio	Boucher	Oliphant	Oliver
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard	O’Regan	O’Toole
Bratina	Breton	Ouellette	Paradis
Brison	Brosseau	Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Caesar-Chavannes	Calkins	Peschisolido	Peterson
Cannings	Caron	Petitpas Taylor	Philpott
Carr	Carrie	Picard	Poilievre
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)	Poissant	Quach
Chagger	Champagne	Qualtrough	Rankin
Chan	Chen	Ratansi	Reid
Choquette	Christopherson	Rempel	Richards
Clarke	Clement	Rioux	Ritz
Cooper	Cormier	Robillard	Rodriguez
Cullen	Cuzner	Romanado	Rota
Dabrusin	Damoff	Rudd	Ruimy
Davies	DeCoursey	Rusnak	Sahota
Deltell	Dhaliwal	Saini	Sajjan
Dhillon	Di Iorio	Sangha	Sansoucy
Diotte	Doherty	Sarai	Saroya
Donnelly	Dreeschen	Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Drouin	Dubourg	Schiefke	Schmale
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Schulte	Serré
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault	Sgro	Sheehan
Duvall	Dzerowicz	Shields	Shipley
Easter	Egliniski	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Ehsassi	El-Khoury	Sikand	Simms
Ellis	Erskine-Smith	Sopuck	Sorbara
Eyking	Eyolfson	Sorenson	Spengemann
Falk	Fast	Stanton	Ste-Marie
Fergus	Fillmore	Stetski	Stewart
Finley	Finnigan	Strahl	Stubbs
Fisher	Fonseca	Sweet	Tabbara
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)	Tan	Tassi
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland	Tilson	Tootoo
Fry	Fuhr	Trost	Trudel
Gallant	Garrison	Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Généreux	Gerretsen	Vandal	Vandenbeld
Gill	Gladu	Vaughan	Viersen
Godin	Goldsmith-Jones	Virani	Wagantall
Goodale	Gould	Warawa	Warkentin
Gourde	Graham	Waugh	Webber
Grewal	Harder	Weir	Whalen
Hardie	Harvey	Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Hehr	Hoback	Wong	Wrzesnewskyj
Holland	Housefather	Young	Yurdiga
Hughes	Hussen	Zahid	Zimmer — 292
Hutchings	Iacono		
Jeneroux	Johns		
Joly	Jones		
Jordan	Jowhari		
Julian	Kang		
Kelly	Kent		
Khalid	Khera		
Kitchen	Kmiec		
Kwan	Lake		
Lametti	Lamoureux		
Lapointe	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Nil	
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Lebel		
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier		
Lefebvre	Leitch		
Lemieux	Leslie		
Levitt	Liepert		
Lightbound	Lobb	Anandasangaree	Moore — 2
Lockhart	Longfield		
Ludwig	Lukowski		
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacGregor		
MacKenzie	MacKinnon (Gatineau)		
Maguire	Malcolmson		
Maloney	Masse (Windsor West)		
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)			
Mathysen			
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)		
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McCrimmon		
McDonald	McGuinity		
McKay	McKenna		

NAYS

PAIRED

Members

Moore — 2

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

HUMAN RESOURCES, SKILLS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

*Private Members' Business***PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[English]

INCOME TAX ACT

The House resumed from March 9 consideration of the motion that Bill C-323, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (rehabilitation of historic property), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: Pursuant to an order made on Friday, March 10, 2017, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at the second reading stage of Bill C-323 under private members' business.

• (1545)

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

*(Division No. 236)***YEAS**

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Aldag
Allison	Ambrose
Anderson	Arnold
Ashton	Bagnell
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Bernier
Berthold	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)	Block
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boucher	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brosseau
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Carrie
Choquette	Christopherson
Clarke	Clement
Cooper	Cullen
Davies	Deltell
Diotte	Doherty
Donnelly	Dreeshen
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
Duvall	Eglinski
Ehsassi	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Falk	Fast
Finley	Fisher
Gallant	Garrison
Généreux	Gerretsen
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Harder	Hardie
Hoback	Hughes
Jeneroux	Johns
Jordan	Julian
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary)	Lebel
Leitch	Liepert
Lobb	Ludwig
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McKay
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Mendès
Motz	Mulcair

Nantel	Nater
Nault	Nicholson
Nuttall	O'Toole
Paul-Hus	Paupé
Poilievre	Quach
Rankin	Ratansi
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Rota	Sansoucy
Saroya	Scheer
Schmale	Schulte
Serré	Shields
Shiple	Simms
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Ste-Marie
Stetski	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tilson
Trost	Trudel
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vaughan	Vecchio
Viersen	Wagantall
Warawa	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Weir	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer — 150

NAYS

Members

Alleslev	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Bratina	Breton
Brisson	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cornier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Easter	El-Khoury
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fonseca	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fuhr
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jones
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Longfield	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinity	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Érables)
Socurs	
Monsef	Morrissey
Murray	Nassif
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Peschisolido	Peterson

Private Members' Business

Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Robillard
Romanado
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sarai
Schiefke
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandenbeld
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

Philpott
Poissant
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Sgro
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Vandal
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid— 140

Dhaliwal
Di Iorio
Drouin
Duguid
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Easter
El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith
Eyolfson
Fillmore
Fisher
Fragiskatos
Fraser (Central Nova)
Fry
Garrison
Goldsmith-Jones
Gould
Grewal
Harvey
Holland
Hughes
Hutchings
Johns
Jones
Jowhari
Kang
Khera
Lametti
Lapointe
LeBlanc
Lefebvre
Leslie
Lightbound
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
Mathysen
May (Cambridge)
McCrimmon
McGuinty
McKenna
McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendicino
Soeurs)
Monsef
Mulcair
Nantel
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Qualtrough
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Sangha
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sorbara
Stanton
Stewart
Tan
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Weir
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid— 201

Dhillon
Donnelly
Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseault
Dzerowicz
Ehsassi
Ellis
Eyking
Fergus
Finnigan
Fonseca
Fraser (West Nova)
Freeland
Fuhr
Gerretsen
Goodale
Graham
Hardie
Hehr
Housefather
Hussen
Iacono
Joly
Jordan
Julian
Khalid
Kwan
Lamoureux
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier
Lemieux
Levitt
Lockhart
Ludwig
MacGregor
Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)
May (Saaneich—Gulf Islands)
McDonald
McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
Mendès
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Morrissey
Murray
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Pescholido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Quach
Rankin
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sansoucy
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sgro
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Simms
Spengemann
Stetski
Tabbara
Tassi
Trudel
Vandenbeld
Virani
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

PAIRED

Members

Anandasangaree

Moore— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

SYSTEMIC RACISM AND RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

The House resumed from March 21 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Friday, March 10, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on Motion No. 103, under private members' business, in the name of the member for Mississauga—Erin Mills.

The question is on the motion.

• (1600)

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

(*Division No. 237*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Amos
Arya
Ayoub
Baylis
Bennett
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Bossio
Bratina
Brisson
Caesar-Chavannes
Caron
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Chagger
Chan
Chong
Christopherson
Cullen
Dabrusin
Davies

Alleslev
Arseneault
Ashton
Bagnell
Beech
Benson
Bittle
Blair
Boissonnault
Boutin-Sweet
Breton
Brosseau
Cannings
Carr
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne
Chen
Choquette
Cormier
Cuzner
Damoff
DeCoursey

I do not want to go on at any great length, but as members know, there are times when we know that there will not be regular procedures here, regardless of what they are. Over and over again, we had the assurances from the people responsible that one of the first things they would do is always ensure that the constitutional right of members of Parliament to have access to the House, especially when there is a vote, would be paramount, yet time and time again, we find ourselves right back here again. In the incident case, the security argument can be made, but our problem is that we keep saying that, if this is planned ahead of time, and we are told they do plan, then we would not have these incidents.

I will not go on, except that I want to shore up the arguments of the hon. member and add my voice and support to having this matter go to PROC where, yes, once again we will go through this, and we will keep doing it until we finally have the 100% guaranteed access that the Constitution provides for every member of the House.

• (1605)

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Hamilton Centre for his intervention. I appreciate his determination to be persistent on this important matter.

I will be coming back to the House with my ruling on the question of privilege.

I believe the hon. opposition House leader will be rising on the usual Thursday question.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am normally very quick and direct in asking my Thursday question, but I will just say today that, with everything that has gone on, the big issue that the opposition is facing in terms of how we want to be able to speak and be part of some of the discussions that are going on at committee does relate to what is going on in the House and in the future of the House. It is almost at the point where I wonder if it is worth my asking the question, because I wonder if the government House leader truly does want to know what the opposition thinks.

I will just leave that there and ask the House leader if she could please tell us what business the government has for the rest of this week and the week we return.

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said in this House time and time again, of course, I want to work with all members of Parliament. I know that we each have a role to play. I want to work better together, and that is why I will continue to communicate.

I appreciate the opportunity to answer the hon. member's Thursday question.

[Translation]

This afternoon, we will continue with the budget debate. Tomorrow, we will begin third reading of Bill C-22, an act to establish the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians and to make consequential amendments to certain acts.

Privilege

Next week, members will be working in their ridings.
[English]

We will continue with the budget debate on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

I wish everyone a good constituency week, next week.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

ALLEGED ACTIONS OF MINISTER OF INDIGENOUS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS IN CHAMBER

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my comments to the question of privilege raised by the opposition House leader earlier today.

Caught on video was the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs' attempt to intimidate the opposition House leader. This outburst was intended to prevent the opposition House leader from doing her job.

The House leader of the official opposition moved a motion that put into the spotlight of the nation waiting to hear the presentation on budget 2017 the fact that the government was attempting to use the budget presentation as a shield to hide its underhanded attempt to change the rules of this House, changes that would cripple the opposition's ability to hold the government to account, give backbenchers an extra day off a week, and require the Prime Minister to only show up in the House once a week. She was successful in exposing the government's skulduggery, and I understand why the minister would be angry.

It should be noted that responding to threats is the first matter of parliamentary privilege dealt with in Canada. Page 198 of the second edition of Joseph Maingot's *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* tells us of an incident in 1758, where the Nova Scotia House of Assembly proceeded against someone who made threats against a member.

In a ruling on September 19, 1973, by Speaker Lamoureux, at page 6709 of *Debates*, stated that he had:

...no hesitation in reaffirming the principle that parliamentary privilege includes the right of a member to discharge his responsibilities as a member of the House free from threats or attempts at intimidation.

Mr. Speaker Bosley, on May 16, 1986, at page 13362 of *Debates*, ruled that the threat or attempt at intimidation cannot be hypothetical but must be real or have occurred.

On March 24, 1994, at page 2705 of *Debates*, Speaker Parent stated:

Threats of blackmail or intimidation of a member of Parliament should never be taken lightly. When such occurs, the very essence of free speech is undermined. Without the guarantee of freedom of speech, no member of Parliament can do his duty as is expected.

I can go on and on, but the point is that, just because a government is given a majority, it does not mean that cabinet ministers have the authority to intimidate members of the opposition. The Liberal backbenchers should grow a backbone and understand that cabinet is subordinate to this House and there are more of us than them. We could actually do something about their dismissive view of Parliament.

The Budget

Liberal prime ministers are notorious for describing members of Parliament in quaint ways: Pierre Trudeau with his “nobodies” slur and Jean Chrétien with his insult about terracotta soldiers. Almost immediately after the slogan “sunny ways” was out of the box, the passing of Parliament’s role into the shadow of the Prime Minister’s agenda began. We had Motion No. 6 last—

• (1610)

The Speaker: Order. My hon. friend from Flamborough—Glanbrook is getting into matters of debate rather than the question of privilege. I have the impression that he may have finished, and I thank him very much for his intervention.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, of the amendment, and of the amendment to the amendment.

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, government orders will be extended by 29 minutes.

[*Translation*]

Resuming debate on the subamendment, the hon. member for Don Valley East.

[*English*]

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Winnipeg Centre.

I would like to take the time today to talk about the government’s budget 2017, and specifically, the historic investments in infrastructure.

In budget 2016, we invested the first tranche of funds for infrastructure to support the repair of our aging pipes and roads, the building and refurbishing of affordable housing, the upgrading of public transit, and the improvement of indigenous communities. With the fall economic statement, we built on these efforts by targeting public transit, green and social infrastructure, as well as projects in northern and rural communities, and ones that facilitate trade.

The total federal investment in infrastructure now tops \$180 billion over 12 years. These infrastructure investments will help ensure a cleaner environment for our children and grandchildren, while serving as a driver of economic growth.

The 2016 infrastructure investments are already making a difference in communities across Canada. In my riding of Don Valley East, we have benefited in the areas of repairs to the housing stock, bike lanes, and walking trails. With budget 2017, we plan to do even more.

We plan to invest in faster, more efficient public transit systems that will help people get to work on time, and at the end of the long

day, back home faster to their families. In my riding, and in many urban ridings, constituents tell us that this is very important to them. That is what constituents told us in our budget consultation processes. They want better infrastructure. They said that commuting times were taking away from their productivity.

In our consultations, we heard as well about cleaner sources of energy. Therefore, our budget proposes to help build communities that are cleaner and less reliant on sources of energy that pollute the air, harm the environment, and compromise our health. Constituents who suffer from asthma and other breathing issues are thankful that our government is so keen on cleaning the environment.

Hard-working Canadians also need decent, affordable places to live. I am glad our government listened to the people and is investing \$11.2 billion in this area.

In the area of a clean growth economy, I would like to expound on some things. Canadians understand that a clean environment and a strong economy go hand in hand. The government agrees. That is why our government is further investing \$21.9 billion in green infrastructure. This is on top of the \$5 billion it invested in the previous budget.

The investment of \$21.9 billion in green infrastructure will support the implementation of the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. We will support projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, deliver clean water, safely manage waste water, help communities prepare for challenges that result from climate change, and help build a cleaner, better connected electricity system. This is welcome news to my young constituents who are focusing their sights on jobs of the future.

• (1615)

I would also like to talk about how social infrastructure can help transform communities and help overcome social economic barriers to a truly inclusive society. From early learning and child care for our children in their first years, to home care that supports us in our final years, social infrastructure helps Canadians at every stage of their lives. Building on an initial investment of \$3.4 billion over five years announced one year ago, the government will invest \$21.9 billion over 11 years to support social infrastructure in Canadian communities, including early learning and child care, affordable housing, cultural and recreation infrastructure, and home care.

In my riding of Don Valley East, there are many families who have to choose between one parent working or both parents working. If both parents are working, they have to look for affordable child care. Child care spaces are expensive or unavailable. It is a question of supply and demand. I am very proud that budget 2017 provides \$7 billion over 10 years toward the creation of child care spaces. This will greatly help not only my constituents, but Canadians who are aiming to join the middle class. The investment of \$7 billion is over and above the investment we made in 2016.

The Budget

The government will work in co-operation with provinces, territories, and indigenous partners to provide help to families most in need. A portion of the investment will be dedicated to improve access to culturally appropriate early learning and child care programs for indigenous children both on and off reserve.

Finally, safe, affordable housing is a cornerstone of sustainable, inclusive communities and a prerequisite to middle-class prosperity, yet too many Canadian households struggle to find affordable housing. To address this challenge, budget 2016 invested \$2.2 billion over two years, starting in 2016-17, in the affordable housing sector. We also provided funding for low-cost loans and new financing tools to encourage municipalities, housing developers, and not-for-profit housing providers to develop more affordable rental housing units, and we launched nationwide consultation on a new, inclusive national housing strategy to help guide the way forward.

Thanks to the overwhelming participation of provinces, territories, indigenous and other community stakeholders, and the public over the past several months, we will now commit more than \$11.2 billion over 11 years to a variety of initiatives designed to build, renew, and repair Canada's stock of affordable housing. This investment is a blessing for the constituents in my riding. We have seen the affordable housing stocks shrink. We have seen it in dire need of repair and renewal. Many Canadians in urban centres know how difficult it is to buy or rent properties.

Our strategy will provide a road map for governments and housing providers across the country. As housing needs vary greatly by community, the government is committed to working with the provinces and territories to ensure that the unique needs of communities all across Canada can be met.

The unprecedented investment in infrastructure that we are making in budget 2017 is about more than improving public transit and repairing aging roads and sewer systems. It is also about building better communities by providing Canadians with cleaner water to drink and cleaner air to breathe. By increasing access to child care, affordable housing, and other key social infrastructure, our budget will strengthen and grow the middle class.

Our 2016 investments have already created good, well-paying jobs to the tune of 250,000 jobs. This ensures that we have a burgeoning middle class.

The trajectory is positive. If we wish to be economic engines, we need to have an inclusive growth strategy. That is what budget 2017 is doing.

• (1620)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in terms of the infrastructure spending that has been announced, one of the things that really concerns me is that out of the more than \$80 billion over 10 years, only \$2 billion is for rural communities. I have a lot of rural communities within my riding of Sarnia—Lambton, and they are really struggling to keep up with all their infrastructure.

I wonder if the member would comment on what the government's reasoning was on disproportionately giving rural communities only \$2 billion out of that \$81 billion.

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi: Mr. Speaker, as far as I can see in the summary of the budget, there is \$20 billion plus that is being

invested in this budget, and that investment is because the Federation of Canadian Municipalities talked to the federal government and insisted that the provinces and the municipalities decide how these funds will be distributed. We are talking to them, consulting with them, and it is important that this money, with the help of all the MPs, go to the right place and benefit all the communities.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, an important thing that I did in my copy of the budget document, which I think all Liberals should do to sort of help speak truth to this budget, is I drew a line just before the next election, because any of the promises that fall in the fourth, fifth, sixth, or 11th year out from this budget are not worth the paper they are written on. The Liberals do this constantly. They put up some large figure and say they will invest x billions of dollars in something, and it is all back-loaded. Of the money that the Liberals just talked about in their budget, and which my friend referred to, 85% falls after the next election, as if somehow the Liberals could promise money five, six, or seven years out.

My friend talked about child care. This is an important thing. During the last campaign, the Liberals were very critical of the NDP plan because they said we rolled it out too slowly, even though our plan is ten times more generous than the first year the Liberals get to spend money on child care. I have the budget document here. If I look through the budget and look at spending on supporting families through early learning and child care, that is their money. In 2016-17, the Liberal budget says zero, and for 2017-18, the Liberal budget says zero.

If this is so important—and it is; we know affordable child care for families is critical not just for families, but also for the health of our economy—budgets are about choices. The Liberal Minister of Finance and the Liberal government made the choice to spend zero dollars allowing Canadians to access affordable, safe child care for their families.

Why pretend at this? Why back-load this? Why put the hope out there to all those Canadians, to all those single working moms, and I was raised by one, that somehow there is something coming when there is not? Maybe there will be in two years. We will see in next year's budget the number three years from now is actually real, but with the vast majority of child care money spent after the next election, one could only take away the conclusion that this is all about politics and not about families. Why spend zero dollars this year and zero dollars next year when it comes to helping families access child care? It is a simple, straightforward question.

The Budget

● (1625)

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi: Mr. Speaker, as an accountant, I do not know how the member opposite is calculating the figures, but if one looks at the \$3,600 per child that was given to families, the child care spaces are above and beyond the Canada child care benefit, which has lifted 317,000 kids out of poverty.

Coming back to child care spaces, I was part of the Paul Martin government, and I remember clearly that when the budget was presented and 250,000 child care spaces were given, members of the NDP got into bed with the Conservatives and rejected that budget. Now, 10 years later, they have zero to show for it.

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we gather here to debate the merits of the 2017 budget, let us recognize that we are here on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people. It is a meeting place of first nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. It is also the national capital of all Canadians.

This budget is about investing, not just in traditional budget items like bridges and roads, but in people, because they have become la raison d'être. They are the most important thing in this budget.

As I was rereading the throne speech from December 4, 2015, I read the words of Governor General David Johnston, which state:

First and foremost, the government believes that all Canadians should have a real and fair chance to succeed. Central to that success is a strong and growing middle class.

We can see that this budget goes a long way to deliver on that ideal. It makes a great difference in the lives of many people. For instance, we are significantly boosting federal support to provinces and territories by \$2.7 billion over six years to help more unemployed and underemployed Canadians access the training and employment services and supports they need to find and keep good jobs.

We are also investing \$225 million over four years to identify and fill skill gaps in the economy to help Canadians be best prepared for the new economy.

Also, there is the Canada caregiver credit, which is a new credit that will provide better support to those who need it the most, and will be given to caregivers whether they live with their family members or not. It will help families with caregiving responsibilities. This new Canada caregiver credit will provide tax relief on an amount of \$6,883 in 2017 in respect of expenses for care of dependent relatives with infirmities, including persons with disabilities.

The forces of inertia, of immobilization, of standing still, of 10 years of darkness characterize what happened in the past decade of the ancien régime. It may give voice to an opposition, but as the Governor General has said on December 4, 2015:

Let us not forget...that Canadians have been clear and unambiguous in their desire for real change. Canadians want their government to do different things, and to do things differently.

Budget 2017 proposes to increase financial support for Canada's clean technology sector by making available more financing to clean technology firms. Nearly \$1.4 billion in new financing, on a cash basis, will be made available to help Canada's clean technology firms grow and expand.

Budget 2017 also proposes to invest \$400 million over five years, starting in 2017, to support projects that develop and demonstrate new clean technologies, that promote sustainable development, including those that address environmental issues, such as climate change, air quality, clean water, and clean soil.

Budget 2017 also proposes to adopt clean technology in Canada's natural resources sectors, with \$200 million over four years, starting in 2017, going to Natural Resources Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

This is not all. In housing, budget 2017 proposes to invest more than \$11.2 billion over 11 years in a variety of initiatives designed to build, renew, and repair Canada's stock of affordable housing, and help ensure that Canadians have affordable housing that meets their goals.

I think about the 1,500 homeless people who I find in my riding. They are asking for housing not just in the suburbs, but in their neighbourhood where they can receive supports so they can be successful as well, where they do not have to end up in a prison or the emergency wards taking up valuable resources, but where they can find the resources that society should provide them and they can be housed and healthy as well.

This is what our plan and our budget propose to do.

Our Governor General goes on to state:

Because it is both the right thing to do and a certain path to economic growth, the government will undertake to renew, nation-to-nation, the relationship between Canada and indigenous peoples, one based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.

● (1630)

This is perhaps one of the greatest budgets we have ever seen for indigenous peoples, and perhaps for all Canadians, \$828.2 million over five years to improve health outcomes for first nations, Inuit people, and communities, including mental health services. The opposition should be excited about this.

In education, we have invested \$165 million over five years to support post-secondary education and skills training for indigenous peoples. We have also increased funding to the post-secondary student support program by \$90 million over two years beginning in 2017. There will be \$25 million over five years to Inspire. This will fund bursaries and scholarships for 12,000 Métis, Inuit, and first nations youth in our country, ensuring they can get the education so they can build communities, their families, and a life they deserve.

It is not even done. There will be \$18.9 million over the next five years and \$5.5 million every four years thereafter to support indigenous youth and sport programs. When we have crises in many of our communities among our youth, we need to ensure they are healthy. To be healthy, they need to do sports. We need to ensure they are active, that they have good mental health. We know from empirical studies that if we are active, our mental health is often better.

The Budget

That is not all. There will be \$225 million over the next 11 years to improve housing for first nations, Métis, and Inuit people who live off reserve; \$4 billion over 10 years on social and green infrastructure funding to build and improve infrastructure in first nations and Inuit communities; \$21.4 million over four years to support the development of renewable energy projects in indigenous and northern communities that rely on diesel for electricity and heating, by continuing the northern responsible energy approach to community heat and electricity programs. That is good for the environment because diesel is not a clean fuel. We need to ensure people have access to clean technology.

There will be \$83.8 million over five years to integrate traditional indigenous knowledge of our elders, to build better understanding of climate change, and inform adaptation actions and to enhance indigenous community resilience through infrastructure planning and emergency management. In communities where even the risk of flooding has not been truly evaluated, we will ensure we can evaluate it so if there is flooding or environmental change, we can do it in a good way.

There will be \$26.4 million over five years, starting in 2017, to support indigenous collaboration on climate change and \$18 million over five years to implement a climate change and health adaptation program for first nations and Inuit communities, including support for surveillance and monitoring activities, risk assessment, laboratory diagnostics, as well as health profession education and public awareness campaigns.

One of the things I love so much about the budget is the fact that we are starting to talk about culture. Culture is so important to me as a traditional indigenous person. There will be \$89.9 million over the next three years to preserve, protect, and promote indigenous languages and cultures. That warms my heart. When I go to my sun dance, I can look my brothers and sisters in the eye and tell them that this Canada will represent them and will ensure they have a place in our country.

There will be \$25 million over five years to launch a pilot indigenous guardians program, a program which I supported in the finance committee and ensured was in our pre-budget report.

There will be \$250 million over five years to renew and expand Pacific and Atlantic integrated commercial fisheries initiatives and to augment indigenous collaborative management programming.

There will be \$8.6 million over four years to develop the indigenous tourism industry. So many of our young people do not have the education they need, but they often have skills. It might not be a diploma, but perhaps they know to do a very good powwow dance. They can entertain people, but they never get paid for it.

There are so many things we can do.

I remember a story about a man I met just last weekend at a powwow, Gordon Kent. He has been homeless for many years, and it was very hard for him. It would have been easier if he had received these supports earlier on. He would have been able to get off of the streets and his drug addictions. I met him at the powwow where he was dancing, where he was trying to rehabilitate himself and become a better person. The thing he wants to do most of all is to ensure that our young people do not follow the path that he chose, that they can

choose the good path right when they are young, so they can look to him sometimes to see what not to follow, but what they should do later on in life. This budget is truly for Gordon. Hopefully, we will be successful for many more of our young people.

Tapwe akwa khitwam hi hi

• (1635)

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Kootenay—Columbia, The Environment; the hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, Ethics; the hon. member for Lévis—Lotbinière, Ethics.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the member's perspective on the budget.

The one line item I did not see in the budget was \$155 million that the court ordered be paid for indigenous children's welfare. Will the government be honouring that order?

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, when I speak to the minister, I know she is very concerned about the child welfare system. Right now the system is completely broken, but throwing more money at it will not make the system better. Often it is not a question of more money. For instance, we could put more money into the system, but there is the great chance we would take more children from their parents because we would provide incentives for doing that. There would be more incentives and more money to take those children.

Currently in Manitoba, 11,000 kids are in care of the state. I have been pushing for a total reform of this entire system. I have members of my staff working on this. I have cases on child and family services. We all care about this, but we will have to sit down as indigenous peoples and have a deep and profound conversation about how we raise our children, how we look after them, who is supposed to look after them.

Our children in many communities have become a natural resource, our greatest natural resource, but not in the good way we often use in the House. They have become a natural resource in the sense that they are a product passed from person to person who can generate money. I do not want to imply that foster families are not doing a good job, because there are many great foster families.

We really need to be thoughtful and considerate about the direction in which we move. I hope one day we will have the funding that goes along with it, but we have to really reform the system beforehand.

The Budget

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on this line of questioning with my friend. Just so we understand this, the Liberals yesterday were in court fighting the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on what it had ruled on twice was a racist policy in Canada perpetrated by the federal government in that a first nations child would get less money than a non-first nations child for support.

Thirty-five per cent to 40% of the people I represent in northern British Columbia are first nations. Many of those first nations and communities have been working on the reforms about which my friend has talked. One of the things they consistently tell me is that as they work to incorporate their children in culture, in the community, there is a lack of funds coming from Ottawa, and we know exactly how much that is. Cindy Blackstock has been an incredible champion on this.

I am confounded that the Liberal Party, the government right now, has said that it believes in the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. It has rejected the tribunal's orders multiple times and is today spending money on lawyers in court fighting to make child welfare equal for all Canadian children, regardless of race.

This court order is very specific. It says that the government's policy on first nations children's welfare is racist and wrong. It is \$155 million. Meanwhile the Liberals are blowing \$80 million on a stock option loophole for CEOs. I just do not understand how this can be a decision point. Of course we want the reform, but to say that the money is not important, that a racist policy must be undone is wrong. The Liberals had the opportunity to undo it and make it right, and they chose not to. Why?

•(1640)

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, in January and February I had the opportunity to visit 41 first nation communities throughout Saskatchewan and Manitoba, where I not only skied but also walked over 900 kilometres. On that trip I had the opportunity to have discussions with chiefs, council members, elders, youth, and people who were running child and family services systems. I discovered that in fact there are things that are being built in communities, such as water treatment plants and new schools. There are things that are happening, such as more educational opportunities and economic development.

When I was talking with the CFS workers, agencies, and authorities, I discovered that money is flowing and they have seen a funding increase, but obviously we are at the start of a conversation about this. I wish we could snap our fingers and fix all the wrongs of the past, but unfortunately that is just not going to be the case.

The member suggested that we are blowing an opportunity. However, the way budgets are often looked at is that people will criticize us if we spend money on certain people. For example, I do not consider spending, or blowing, \$89.9 million over the next three years to preserve, protect, and promote indigenous languages and cultures as giving money away or as something that is not good for the Canadian state.

This is actually part and parcel. We cannot isolate things by themselves. We have to take a holistic view, which is an indigenous view. It is the ideal of the one in a unified sense. When we consider

the spending, it must be taken as a unified whole, and what we do here has an impact over there.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate. The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

[*English*]

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise today on the subject of the budget, and the things I like about it and the things I do not like about it.

I will start with the things that I like. I always like to—

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I clearly heard you say that it would be the member for Mégantic—L'Érable. I love hearing from my hon. colleague for Sarnia—Lambton as well, but I am a bit confused.

Therefore, I move that the member for Mégantic—L'Érable now be heard.

•(1645)

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for his intervention. I did note that the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable had not started his remarks prior to the point of order.

In this particular case, the hon. member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola had proposed that the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable should have the opportunity to speak. Indeed, the hon. member was recognized to speak, but a different hon. member rose and took the spot.

The issue around a member now being heard would not be applicable in a case like this. Had the hon. member indicated that another member be recognized to speak, other than the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable, perhaps the outcome would have been different. In this case, the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable was recognized; he chose not to rise in his place, and another member of the same party took that spot. In this case, the motion is not applicable.

[*Translation*]

I see that the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable would like to add something on this point of order.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Actually, Mr. Speaker, I rose to speak. Since my colleague also rose and began talking, there was some confusion. I had risen, but then sat down again to yield the floor to my colleague, who seems to have a thrilling speech prepared. However, I think it would be appropriate for me to sit back down, given that I have yielded the floor to my colleague.

The Deputy Speaker: I appreciate the comments of the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable. In that case, the decision remains the same and we will resume debate.

The hon. member for Sarnia—Lambton.

The Budget

[English]

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, as I said, I want to have the opportunity to comment on the things I like and do not like about the budget. I will start with the things I like.

I was very pleased to see \$11 billion for home and palliative care and mental health care. I was really pleased to hear the Minister of Health comment on that again today. With my private member's bill on palliative care coming forward, I am happy to see money in the budget that would be used in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

Let us start with some of the things in the budget that concern me.

First, the whole point of the budget and the Liberal campaign promises was to run a deficit to grow the economy, to get infrastructure money in place and create jobs, and so we saw a \$23 billion deficit last year.

However, the infrastructure money, according to the parliamentary budget officer, was not flowing at a very good rate, so we really did not get the growth in GDP we expected. In fact, if we look at budget 2017, it is projecting a deficit next year of \$28 billion, and still the growth rate for GDP that is projected is not above what it was before we talked about spending all this money. We are spending a huge amount of money and going into a huge deficit, and it is really not producing the results we intended.

That gives me great concern. Once we start with a structural deficit—and it appears to me that the deficit is intended to run on and on, because I think I heard the member for Saint Laurent say 2055, and it was not contradicted—we get into paying interest on it every year. It will start off with \$10 billion of interest that could be used for other things, such as paying down the debt, and then it becomes \$50 billion by the time the deficit is the \$1.5 trillion that has been suggested.

This is a bad direction for Canada. We are not getting the results we want out of it. We really need to focus on things that are going to create jobs.

With regard to job creation, one of the key drivers of employment in Canada is the energy sector, the oil and gas sector. The budget does absolutely nothing in this area. In fact, by removing some of the incentives for oil well drilling and things like that, the Liberals are killing the oil and gas sector. The carbon taxes that are going to be applied under this budget will just crucify the oil and gas sector.

I know this absolutely from my own riding of Sarnia—Lambton. We produce about a third of the petrochemicals that are produced across Canada. We have three oil refineries, we have a number of chemical plants, and we are the hub where the Marcellus natural gas is coming through, as well as the Utica gas. These companies create various kinds of jobs and all kinds of employment in our community. Now we have to think about companies like NOVA Chemicals, which has a \$2-billion plant in the offing. It can decide to build it here or build it on the gulf coast. The carbon footprint will not leave the planet, but 3,000 Canadian jobs will go to the U.S. because a carbon tax like this is not competitive.

There is another energy company that is looking to build three energy facilities in Canada at \$1 billion each. It also has the option to go to the U.S.

Again, I think that we have created an environment in this budget that will kill jobs and move our jobs from Canada to the U.S. It will not accomplish what Canadians want.

We have created a bad environment for small businesses. If we think about small businesses creating 90% of the employment in Canada, then it is certainly of concern that the Liberals did not come through on their promise to reduce the small business tax rate. In fact, they have increased the costs that small businesses have to pay through the CPP and EI payments they will have to pay for each employee. The combination of all these factors is creating problems for small business. That also is not going to result in jobs.

● (1650)

One of the other comments in this budget is about skills and training and the importance of having the right skills and training so that we can put people into these well-paying jobs. I really do applaud skills training, and I think we need to match the skills and the training of people to the job opportunities that exist. However, if that is a priority, I have no idea why the government, in this budget, has delayed the funding for skills training until nearly the end of its mandate. That makes absolutely no sense to me.

Some of the other concerns I have are with the amount of money going into this infrastructure bank and the whole discussion about foreign ownership of what I would consider to be critical secure assets for Canada. If we think about our airports and our harbours and some of the folks who potentially could be buying a foreign interest in our airports and harbours, that causes me great concern. There does not seem to be oversight in the infrastructure bank of who determines who gets that deal. That is very concerning in every way.

Let me talk a little bit about the gender equality part, and again, I will say something nice and then I will talk about the things I think are missing. As a woman, I am pleased to see that the Liberals have actually dedicated pages in the budget to talk about women, that they have done a gender-based analysis, and that they have 60 measures that are intended to help women here in Canada. That said, we know that senior women are some of the most impacted, the ones who are struggling the most in terms of making ends meet and living from day to day. There is absolutely nothing in the budget for seniors, and certainly nothing for senior women, so that gives me pause.

I was lucky enough to be on the pay equity committee. We studied and we made recommendations, and a large number of recommendations were made. One of them was about legislation, but there were many other things that could be done. Although I see that pages 217 to 221 are devoted to pay equity, there is absolutely no action taken immediately to address some of the things that could be done within the government. That is disappointing for me.

The Budget

I was pleased to see child care as something brought forward in the budget. Again, this is a huge issue that is keeping women from entering the workforce. If I look at the 40,000 spots that are planned, they are not planned until 2019. That does nothing to address the issue right now. If we work out the math, divided by the ridings it is only 120 spaces in each riding. We have ridings across the country where there are waiting lists of two years to get children decent child care. Again, that is a little disappointing.

On violence against women and girls, we have talked about how important this is. There have been lots of words said. We do not see much progress on the murdered and missing aboriginal women effort, other than consulting with 90 victims. However, if I look at the amount of money the Liberals have put for violence against women and girls, it is \$100 million. Let us measure that and how that stands up against some of the other priorities in the budget. There is four times as much money to have Statistics Canada collect data as there is to address violence against women in Canada. That, to me, is totally the wrong priority. I am not saying that it is not good to collect data, but in relative terms, one in four women are experiencing violence. We have an incidence of date rape on campus where 29% of young women in their first eight weeks will experience sexual assault. That is a huge priority, and I think it is not reflected in the budget.

Finally, I want to talk a little bit about innovation, because this budget is supposed to be an innovation budget, and I am a fan of innovation. I think that is definitely where we need to go as Canadians to figure out where we can succeed. I am all for that.

To have innovation succeed in Canada, there are three elements we really need. We need good ideas, so again, I want to say good things about the budget in terms of the science budget. I work very well with the Minister of Science, and I am pleased to see that good ideas will be fertilized in this budget.

We then need good support to commercialize, and unfortunately, although I see some funding with the Business Development Bank, I do not see enough funding that is really in the right risk portfolio to get the kind of commercialization we will need to create jobs.

Finally, we need a good business climate for those ideas to flourish and become companies in Canada. I have already spoken about the high taxes, the carbon tax, all the CPP, and the regulatory regime in Canada. It is really unsuited to creating entrepreneurial business in Canada, and I would like to see the government address that.

With that, I will conclude. That is the good and bad on the budget.

• (1655)

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Samia—Lambton for her passionate speech and for the hard work she does for the people of her riding.

She mentioned the enhanced Canada pension plan payroll deduction for people to have a better pension when they reach retirement age. Most people, as we well know, who are working in a small business or are in the middle-class rankings, cannot afford to take part in an RRSP. They do not have a company pension plan. They cannot afford to take part in a tax-free savings account plan. What is it that the member and her party opposite have against a

small weekly deduction, only dollars a week, to give people a secure pension at the end of their working days so they can live better, be better prepared for what retirement will bring to them, and have a decent income when they reach that time?

• (1700)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, what I have against the plan for the CPP that was proposed is that I, and every other Canadian who is working, am going to be paying about \$1,200 out of my pocket every year for the next 40 years, and nobody in the next 40 years is going to see any benefit from that, because the program does not start paying out benefits until after 40 years. We have people who are struggling today. We could easily have increased the GIS, and that would have provided immediate relief to seniors who are struggling and living on fixed incomes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. I agree with her. Disappointment abounds.

The budget is a real letdown. The Liberal members made so many nice promises. They voted against the food strategy presented by my colleague from Berthier—Maskinongé, claiming there would be a different food strategy. They made me that promise on two separate occasions when I decried the rising number of people dependent on food banks. More needs to be done to combat poverty, but in the end, there is nothing in the budget to combat poverty and improve food security.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about that.

[*English*]

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe there is quorum in the House. Can we check?

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, I believe we have quorum. Thank you.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, one of the things that is very troubling to me is that when we look at the plight of the poor in Canada, we really have done nothing in this budget to address those people who make less than \$80,000 a year. They got nothing in terms of tax cuts. They got nothing in terms of advantage in the budget, and they are really struggling. The carbon tax is going to disproportionately impact them. I do not know by how much, because the report was blacked out when it was given. I agree that food certainty and poverty are going to be growing issues under this budget.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I first want to acknowledge my hon. colleague and her approach to the issue of the budget. She uses it as an approach on many other things. As always, the member looks for what is good, recognizes the positives, and then says where she would like to see some additional improvements.

I would like to suggest that certainly the issue of housing is an important issue in the member's area, as it is throughout Canada. There is a real need for serious renovations in social housing, but more importantly for seniors housing. I would like to hear more comments from the hon. member.

The Budget

Ms. Marilyn Gladu: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for all the great work she does. Certainly infrastructure for social housing is key. Affordable housing is one thing.

With respect to seniors housing, there is a huge need for long-term care facilities, especially in my riding, and I think that would be true across the country. I would hope that the government would consider in its fall budget perhaps devoting some of the infrastructure money to long-term care facilities for seniors. This is infrastructure that will create jobs, but at the same time, it is going to address a real need. We are in a horrible position in my riding, because the average age in Sarnia—Lambton is now 55, and with the aging demographic, it is projected that we are going to have another 10,000 people over the age of 65 in the next four years, and we simply do not have the infrastructure to house them. I appreciate the question.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to finally have a chance to speak in the House to the budget tabled by the government.

I would like to do something a little different. For the past three days, I have been fortunate to have at my office two interns from the École de politique appliquée of Sherbrooke University, Stéphanie Bourque and Pascale Salvail, who are studying law and international relations respectively. I have to say that they are excellent representatives of Quebec's future politicians. I congratulate them for their passion, their interest, and the work they have done in just three short days. They have been fantastic.

They have experienced a memorable week in the House, where all sorts of things happened. They have had the opportunity to see members rise to defend the right of MPs and Canadians to speak and to participate in debates. They have also had the good fortune, or misfortune, to witness the tabling of a budget. They would have been fortunate had it been a Conservative budget. However, unfortunately, it was a Liberal budget with everything that goes with it. They shared with me their concerns regarding the Liberals' second budget. Therefore, I asked them to write part of my speech about yesterday's budget.

They are particularly concerned about the future of small and medium-size businesses. Growing deficits will affect their generation for many years to come, even though they are already facing the loss of many full-time jobs, specifically 42,000 jobs over the past year.

The Minister of Finance began this year's budget presentation by saying that he wanted to promote a more innovative and competitive economy. In the present circumstances, we think it is unthinkable to even consider achieving such objectives if the government does not plan to make tax cuts and get back to zero deficits.

According to the *Huffington Post*, the government broke its promise to lower taxes for small and medium-size businesses by 0.5% per year, as originally planned by the previous government and promised by the Liberals in 2015, during the election campaign.

The government's failure to come up with a clear and concrete plan to help small businesses makes it difficult to envision ever having an environment ripe for economic development, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Support for such measures promotes economic diversification and job creation, which could benefit

young Canadians. What the Liberals do not seem to understand is that today's deficits are tomorrow's taxes. Again, let me remind you that this speech was written by two interns who worked with me.

We are therefore asking the government how small businesses are supposed to grow in the absence of tax relief. We believe that creating the right conditions for businesses to hone their competitive edge is the only way to help Canadian businesses hold their own against U.S. competitors. Here is what the vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business had to say:

Economic stimulus is vital to Canada's continued collective prosperity. Let us hope the government will send signals that give small business leaders the confidence to grow their businesses.

My interns did a great job because they found quotes to support their assertions.

The government likes to talk about its massive investments in public transit, but it is also planning to cut the 15% non-refundable tax credit for transit passes, which means a bigger expense for young Canadians. My interns spotted the government's contradictory message themselves, a message that makes it clear the government does not really care about transit riders. Two hundred dollars can have a noticeable impact on a student's budget.

In conclusion, Pascale and Stéphanie think it is time the Liberal government got public finances under control and stopped ratcheting up the tax burden. Stimulating the economy and supporting job creation are the only ways to tackle the unemployment crisis plaguing 15- to 24-year-olds. We expect nothing less than concrete measures from the government, assuming it cares about young Canadians, many of whom are our future entrepreneurs.

• (1705)

Our two interns deserve a round of applause. This was their first experience here in Parliament and they were able to put their finger on some real flaws in the budget in no time at all.

On another note, but on the same theme, I have to say that now that the government has presented its second budget, not much is going to change in our lives. Life will go on for the federal government, which continues to spend our money. It has not managed to get any deeper into our pockets so now it is going to take money out of our children's pockets. That is where the Minister of Finance found his source of revenue to satisfy his insatiable appetite.

We will remember a promise that was made in 2015 and it is important to keep bringing it up. The Liberals promised a series of small deficits totalling \$10 billion to stimulate the economy and a return to balanced budgets in 2019. Budget 2017 confirms that the Prime Minister's Liberals are the worst managers of public finances that Canada has ever known.

I have much more to say, but in closing, seconded by the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton, I move the following motion:

That the debate be now adjourned.

The Budget

• (1710)

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1750)

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

(Division No. 238)

YEAS

Nil

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Albrecht
Aldag	Alleslev
Allison	Amos
Arnold	Arya
Ayoub	Badawey
Bagnell	Barlow
Beaulieu	Beech
Bennett	Berthold
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Block
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boucher	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Bratina
Breton	Brison
Brosseau	Caesar-Chavannes
Calkins	Caron
Carr	Carrie
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Choquette
Clarke	Cooper
Cormier	Cullen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCourcey
Deltell	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Doherty
Drouin	Dubourg
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
Dzerowicz	Easton
Egliniski	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Falk
Fast	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fragiskatos	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fry

Fuhr	Garrison
Généreux	Gerretsen
Gladu	Godin
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gourde	Graham
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Hoback
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Johns
Joly	Jones
Jordan	Jowhari
Julian	Kang
Kelly	Khalid
Khera	Kitchen
Kmieciak	Lake
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Liepert
Lightbound	Lockhart
Longfield	Ludwig
Lukiwski	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor	MacKenzie
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire
Malcolmson	Maloney
Masse (Windsor West)	Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
May (Cambridge)	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mendicino	Monsef
Morrissey	Motz
Murray	Nantel
Nassif	Nater
Nault	Nicholson
O'Connell	Oliver
O'Regan	Ouellette
Paradis	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Poissant	Quach
Qualtrough	Rankin
Ratansi	Richards
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Sangha
Sansoucy	Sarai
Saroya	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Schulte
Serré	Sgro
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand	Simms
Sopuck	Sorbara
Sorenson	Spengemann
Ste-Marie	Stetski
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tabbara
Tan	Tootoo
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Vecchio
Viersen	Virani
Wagantall	Warkentin
Wauh	Webber
Weir	Whalen
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Wong	Wrzesniewski
Young	Yurdiga
Zahid — 231	

PAIRED

Members

Moore — 2

Anandasangaree

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

The Budget

Questions and comments. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think what we just witnessed surprised a lot of Canadians. We saw the official opposition try to adjourn debate on the budget, but the good news is that during that time in which the bells rang, they had a road-to-Damascus experience and they have understood that they made a mistake and have recognized that it was not a good idea.

There is so much good news in this budget for Canada's middle class and those who are aspiring to be a part of it. I like to think of it as an extension of the first budget, where we saw tax breaks for the middle class, we saw a special tax on the wealthiest one per cent, we saw the Canada child benefit program, we saw—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I remind hon. members that we are under questions and comments. This is part of the debate. I see the hon. member for Windsor West is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Brian Masse: Mr. Speaker, I just ask that if we have continued votes that the Liberals at least ask their drivers and their chauffeurs to stop idling vehicles while we come in and vote. That would be appreciated because often it is the case, as with this vote, that we have numerous vehicles that are idling outside of Parliament and the Liberals were often very critical of previous administrations for that.

The Deputy Speaker: I do not think that fits under the category of points of order.

Will the hon. parliamentary secretary just sort of finish up on his question?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

One of the criticisms that the opposition members across the way have made is on the issue of deficit. My question for the member across the way is this. Why does he believe that this government should take any advice from the Conservatives when they had a record \$150 billion-plus deficit and Mr. Harper was unsuccessful in balancing the budget in the first place?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by responding to the first comment that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons made.

We did that for one very simple reason: to allow all the backbenchers on the other side to understand what is happening in the other room. The members opposite are violating the rights of members, taking away their right to speak, denying them the right to speak in committee. That is what the members opposite are doing. They are trying to take away the reason why members were elected—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[English]

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what we have seen today is once again a government that is unaware of why the House has gone into this sort of thing, where there are votes like this. It is because we are standing up to protect the rights of all members of Parliament, including those Liberals over there who should know better. Many of them do. Many of them sat down in the window seats in the last Parliament as opposition members and they were afforded the rights to debate at committee and to keep speaking at committee without limits. They were afforded every right of the opposition members in this House and now they want to take it all away, so we will continue to stand here and defend the rights of all members of Parliament for as long as it takes.

I would like to ask the hon. member about the Conservative record of 1.3 million net new jobs and two balanced budgets in a row, and if the current government could learn any lessons from that previous government.

● (1755)

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, we were all elected here to represent our constituents. We are here to represent all Canadians. We were elected to stand up for their ideas and proposals. We are here, in each of our seats, because people back home in our ridings asked us to speak for them. What we are hearing today is that the members of the House, on the government side, particularly the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, want to deny us this right.

That is why I believe it is important to stand up and give the backbenchers on the other side of the House an opportunity as well to stand up and realize what is happening on their side: their leader is pulling a real fast one on them.

Getting back to the budget, we have a \$28.5-billion deficit this year. We had been promised a very small deficit of \$10 billion and a return to balance in 2019. It will be in 2055. There is no desire to balance the budget, to hear from members, or to give Parliament back to Canadians.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what a privilege it is to be able to stand in my place and address the House of Commons in this wonderful Centre Block of the Parliament Buildings and talk about something that is really important to the constituents I represent.

The Prime Minister has made it very clear to parliamentarians of all political stripes, and he has emphasized this within our own caucus, that he wants members of Parliament to look at what is happening in their constituencies and to represent their constituents here in Ottawa, as opposed to what happened in the Stephen Harper era when there was more of a move toward representing Ottawa in their constituencies. It is important for us to recognize that.

Whether we are looking at the budget we presented yesterday or we are looking at the budget that was introduced just last year, we will see they reflect what Canadians truly want and believe is important.

Private Members' Business

The Liberal Party has made it very clear not only since we were elected but even prior to being elected to government that we want to ensure that Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of the middle class are priority one. This government has made that possible, but we have not stopped there. There are so many other things we have done as a government. The constituents I represent, and in fact all Canadians in every region of our country, can be proud of the things we have done.

There are things that happen between budgets and I would like to provide comments on some of those things.

One of them is health care. Our Minister of Health has done an incredible job working with the provinces and territories. There are now 11 or 12 out of the group that have signed on to the new health care agreement. That means billions of dollars going from Ottawa to the provinces and territories. We are going to see more money being spent on palliative care, hospice care, mental health issues, so many issues that are critically important to the people we represent. This government made these things a priority and our Minister of Health got the job done. I am very proud of that fact.

This is a government with a vision, a government that goes beyond health care and covers many other issues.

I want to talk specifically about the CPP, which is yet another agreement that was achieved by this Liberal government working with the provincial governments. We are talking about helping those individuals who are in the workforce now and will be retiring in the future. It is not only proper for us to talk about what is happening today but also to make plans into the future.

The environment is another important area. The price on pollution will have a positive impact on all political parties—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. parliamentary secretary will have seven minutes remaining when the debate resumes.

• (1800)

[*Translation*]

It being 5:59 p.m., the House will now proceed to consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*English*]

AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS

The House resumed from February 21 consideration of the motion.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): I believe the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has five minutes remaining from a previous debate.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is one of those issues that is important for us to recognize.

We had a colleague for whom I believe members on all sides of this House had a true feeling of compassion. I am talking about Mauril Bélanger in the fight of his life. In a very real and tangible way, he brought to the attention of this House and many Canadians from coast to coast to coast an issue that affects literally hundreds of thousands of Canadians.

When I was making reference to the budget, I talked about the importance of health care. One of the aspects of health care that we really never get enough time to talk about is the importance of research. Research is incredibly important to many of the issues and challenges that health care and the department have to face nowadays. It requires a commitment and co-operation.

I have argued in the past, and will continue to argue, today especially, on issues such as the one we have before us, that if we want to see a national government play a role on important issues such as this, what we need to recognize is that it cannot be done alone. Many different stakeholder groups and health care professionals are involved. There are different stakeholders, including family members and affected individuals, who truly care and want us to advocate for this issue, bring it forward, and see if we can make a difference. The question then is, what can Ottawa do as a nation or as a level of government?

I would argue that Ottawa is in the best position to demonstrate national leadership. When we look at what we are debating today, we see that this in essence is what this government is being called upon to do. When we talk about these types of issues or health care issues in general, what we find is that Ottawa cannot resolve the problem itself; it requires the different stakeholders. Whether that is science or the different levels of government, and specifically provincial governments, everyone needs to get on board.

One of the greatest privileges I had while I was in the Manitoba legislature was the opportunity to be the health care critic in the province of Manitoba. At that point, I was able to get a better understanding of how health care is administered. Whether it is in Ottawa or in the provincial or territorial areas, there is a sense of commitment. This is one of those areas where I believe we will find there is all-party support. I am anticipating that we will see this motion pass.

I applaud my colleague who brought the motion forward. I believe it is a very timely motion. At the end of the day, I am very optimistic that we will get support on both sides of the House.

There are so many stories. This is the second hour of debate that we have had on the issue. In the first hour of debate, there were a lot of personal stories. I truly appreciate that in private members' business, we were provided the opportunity to listen to many of those personal stories. I suspect we will hear more of those in just a minute or two, because it is one way for not only parliamentarians but also Canadians as a whole to identify with issues such as this and examine what it is we can actually do.

Often what happens is we hear of a friend or a family member who is affected by this disease, and quite often the manner in which it causes the condition of the individual to deteriorate can be very sad and depressing.

Private Members' Business

•(1805)

However, we get these moments of truth with individuals like Mauril Bélanger, to whom I made reference. He was an individual who understood what was happening and fought it right to the end. He was able to accomplish so much.

Through the efforts of the sponsor of the motion and through the comments made from critics and others, whether inside or outside of the chamber, this is about education. The more educated the public is on the issue, we will see a more serious attempt by government to work with the different stakeholders to try to do what we can to fight this brutal disease.

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to speak to the motion put forward by the member for Humber River—Black Creek regarding amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, commonly known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease.

Motion No. 105 proposes two things. It calls on the government to reiterate its commitment to combat ALS through research and awareness. It also calls on the government to increase funding for research and create a strategy to assist in the eradication of ALS as soon as possible. Both parts of this motion are necessary steps that need to be taken and will serve to help those currently suffering with ALS as well as those who will be diagnosed in the future.

As all of us know in the House too well, ALS is an aggressive disease. We saw first-hand how it quickly and drastically affected our colleague, the Hon. Mauril Bélanger, just last year. Today, approximately 3,000 Canadians live with ALS, and each year roughly 1,000 more are diagnosed. There is no cure for this, and about 1,000 Canadians die from ALS each year. This equals to two to three people every day who are dying from this incurable disease.

The average onset occurs between the ages of 40 and 60, and is more common among men than women. Currently, there is no known cause for ALS, which is exactly why this motion, and in turn more research, needs to be done. Of all those diagnosed with ALS, only 5% to 10% will have a familial or hereditary type of the disease.

There is also no established, concrete way to detect the disease early. Even once symptoms begin to appear, it can be difficult to diagnose as the symptoms tend to mimic typical signs of aging, such as lack of coordination, muscle weakness, and cramping. Once diagnosed, 80% of people with ALS have a life expectancy of two to five years. As I stated previously, this is a very aggressive disease, and more research needs to be done so it can be diagnosed and treated as soon as possible once symptoms begin to occur.

In my previous life as a chiropractor, I was fortunate not to come across any patients who ended up being diagnosed with ALS. However, while I was doing my fellowship, working and studying at Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon, I experienced a patient with ALS. As a diagnostician, this is not a condition one readily forgets.

Given that ALS is relatively uncommon and that the symptoms can easily mimic those of other less serious medical conditions, I encourage all primary health care practitioners to ensure they get the full picture with respect to a patient's history, complete orthopedic and neurologic exams, and to use all the diagnostic tools and information available to them. If there is any doubt or concern, I

would encourage health care practitioners to refer their patient to the appropriate specialist, and where deemed necessary, to an ALS specialist. While there may not be a cure, it is worthwhile to do everything possible to try to extend the lifespan of that patient should he or she eventually be diagnosed with this disease.

One aspect of living with and fighting ALS that many do not tend to think about is the financial cost. It is common that those with ALS and their families will end up paying hundreds of thousands of dollars to manage this disease. These expenses come in many forms.

Most people with ALS prefer to live at home with their loved ones, while they battle their disease. This means that homes need to be retrofitted to allow for greater accessibility, as those afflicted with the disease often end up wheelchair-bound due to the muscle degeneration. Ramps may need to be installed, doorways may need to be widened, and these things come at a cost.

There is also an expense of medical equipment that is often needed when people with ALS choose to live at home. If they have issues with swallowing, they might need to purchase a suction unit to ensure the saliva does not build up and flow into their lungs. As the disease progresses, it might be necessary to purchase or rent a special bed to ensure that people with ALS is as comfortable as possible. Other costs associated with ALS include medication, which can sometimes be extremely expensive.

There is also the aspect of travel costs. I live in a rural riding and in order for one of my constituents to see an ALS specialist, he or she would have to drive for hours to get there. This means paying for fuel, food, and potentially accommodation in places like Regina or Saskatoon, which are two to five hours away.

All this is to say that ALS a challenging disease to manage just on the financial side of things, and anything that can be done to find a cure should be done.

•(1810)

There is also an emotional cost to ALS, which is impossible to quantify. The people who are diagnosed have to cope with the knowledge that their condition is incurable and that they will soon lose the level of physical independence they are accustomed to. They also feel pressure to get their affairs in order, as ALS can progress rapidly once it is diagnosed. These are just a couple of the issues that people with ALS need to confront while dealing with the disease.

Families and friends are also affected when a loved one is diagnosed with ALS. As many people with ALS wish to stay at home, family members will often take on the role of caregivers. Being a caregiver is not easy. It is physically and emotionally exhausting, and it only becomes more difficult as the disease progresses and the person with ALS begins to rely on more help more often. Caregivers sacrifice a lot when they assume that role, and I commend them for all they do in that regard.

Private Members' Business

Respite care beds cost \$32.94 per day, based on income, in Saskatchewan. This service is provided to give relief to the family and other primary caregivers of a dependant person living at home. Caregivers may also need to quit their jobs or take a leave of absence to assist a loved one who has ALS. This adds to the financial burden that many families face after receiving a diagnosis, and it can be emotionally taxing as well, given that both the caregiver and the person with ALS will now need to adjust to the new reality.

There are support systems out there, however, and I encourage anyone dealing with this disease to seek those out, even if it is just talking to someone who has had, or is going through, a similar experience.

The first part of the motion calls for increased research and awareness, and this is integral to finding a cure for ALS. I am sure that all of us here recall the ice bucket challenge that went viral in 2014 and is still going today. This challenge ended up raising more than \$19 million dollars for ALS research and brought more attention to the disease than had ever been paid before. Suddenly people all over the world were talking about ALS. In fact, due in part to campaigns such as this one, more has been done in the field of ALS research in the last five years than in the entire century before it. That is remarkable, and I truly hope that this momentum can continue in the quest to find a cure for the disease.

There are also many walks for ALS that happen across the country, with the goal of raising awareness and funds to be put toward research. In my home province of Saskatchewan, there is Kim's Walk, scheduled for June 3, the Saskatoon Walk on June 25, and the Regina Walk on September 23. These are a great way to not only increase awareness and raise money but also to encourage people to get outside and be active while also building relationships in the community. I sincerely hope that everyone listening today will participate in one of these walks this summer and in any other fundraising effort for ALS research and awareness. There is a list of scheduled walks on the ALS Society of Canada's website. I encourage everyone to check that out.

We need to find a cure for this disease, and we need to do it at the earliest possible opportunity. In 2011, Brain Canada was created. It is the only national non-profit organization devoted to supporting all neuroscience research. The previous Conservative government invested \$100 million dollars over seven years in Brain Canada, funding that expires in 2017. The ALS Society of Canada received \$10 million dollars through Brain Canada to stimulate research relevant to ALS, and I call on the Liberals to do everything in their power to maintain or increase that level of funding. Clearly, it is needed, and I trust that the government recognizes that, just as the previous government did.

ALS is currently incurable, but there is always hope. Technology has advanced quickly in the last few decades, and there have been many advances in the field of medicine because of this. I believe that with the use of technology and the continued support for ALS research and awareness, a cure will be found.

I would like to thank the member for Humber River—Black Creek for her work on this issue. I encourage all members of the House to support the motion, as I will be doing.

●(1815)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak about amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, commonly known as ALS or Lou Gehrig' disease. I would also like to thank the sponsor of this motion, which I will support.

This issue is particularly important to me, because today the daily fight by ALS sufferers and their families needs a high profile, constant engagement, and unwavering political support. As we will surely recall, in 2014, the fight against ALS attracted major visibility through the ice bucket challenge. It gave real hope to those with the disease, their families, caregivers, and researchers. Many media personalities agreed to get involved, and \$16 million was raised in Canada.

This vitally important issue resurfaced in fall 2015, when our colleague, the Hon. Mauril Bélanger, informed us that he had been diagnosed with ALS and that there was no cure. I became acutely aware of this disease over the few months that I witnessed what Mauril Bélanger was going through before his death. What was happening to my colleague made me realize the difficulties caused by this disease, and just how important it is to stand with ALS sufferers and their loved ones.

Anyone can get ALS. People living with this disease become paralysed gradually. They therefore require material as well as psychological support. It is our duty to make sure they have it. Although people may be physically affected, their intellectual faculties remain in tact. In 80% of cases, people with ALS die within two to five years of being diagnosed. However, I cannot simply accept that as a final prognosis when innovative research is being done and very encouraging advances are being made every day.

Let me explain. The ALS Society of Canada is very hopeful that a cure will be found by 2024, but if nothing is done to support the research efforts and if financial resources dry up, the desired medical advances will never be achieved. The fight against ALS must be a key priority. Over 3,000 Canadians have the disease, and at least three people die of it every day. At present, there is no known cure or effective treatment.

That is why we must act now. In 90% to 95% of cases, ALS strikes someone with no family history of the illness. It can happen at any age and affect any community. Researchers say that they have never been this close to finding at least a treatment that will slow down its unrelenting progression. Today, research, in particular the MinE project, is being conducted on the creation of a genetic database for this disease. The project will map the full DNA profiles of 15,000 ALS patients and 7,500 control subjects.

People understand the importance of the fight against ALS, as indicated by the success of the ice bucket challenge around the world. Even at the local level many people participated in the challenge. I saw this show of support in my riding where many constituents took the challenge, including members of the Institut de technologie agroalimentaire in Saint-Hyacinthe, the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Saint-Hyacinthe, and even the mayor of Saint-Hyacinthe, Claude Corbeil, when I was a municipal councillor.

These community members took on the challenge to raise money for ALS, and also to raise awareness about this disease. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone in Saint-Hyacinthe and Acton Vale who gave their time, energy, and money to this very important cause and who also have risen to the challenge.

In order to continue this record of solidarity for the third year in a row, the Centre ADN is organizing the ALS walk in Saint-Hyacinthe —Bagot with the proceeds going to the ALS Society of Canada. On June 29, 2016, more than 300 people from Saint-Hyacinthe attended the ADN challenge and raised \$1,900. I thank them from the bottom of my heart, as well as the spokesperson for the event, Bertrand Godin, facilitator, analyst, and automobile journalist who contributes so much to promoting our riding.

• (1820)

Those who know my family and the sports enthusiasts in my family know that we are big fans of Mr. Godin's work.

This year, the Saint-Hyacinthe walk for ALS is happening on Saturday, May 6, 2017. We are once again expecting lots of people to come out for the walk, which is being organized by Denise Saint-Pierre, a long-time resident and volunteer, and the Centre ADN's walking and running club. Young and old alike are invited to walk or run two to five kilometres or more.

I am proud to announce to the House that, on May 6, I will be the honorary patron of the event. I encourage everyone in Saint-Hyacinthe and Acton Vale to walk or run in the third Saint-Hyacinthe walk for ALS to raise funds for ALS. This year's goal is \$3,000. Together, we can do it.

This year, a wheelchair-accessible route will be blocked off, and volunteers will be on hand to collect donations. Everyone who comes out will be doing something fun that is also good for their health and wellness. Once again, I hope to see many of my fellow citizens at this community-building event on May 6.

Now the question is will we be able to live up to these wonderful initiatives and shows of solidarity? Will the government help develop these projects and initiatives in the fight against this disease? Will it fund research and shows of support?

Private Members' Business

On October 4, 2016, I had the honour of representing the New Democrats at the all-party ALS caucus organized by the ALS Society of Canada. Founded in 1977, this organization is the only not-for-profit active across the country funding ALS research and improving the quality of life for Canadians with this disease.

The ALS Society of Canada made the following recommendations: first, the federal government should invest \$25 million over five years to maintain the momentum of support built over the past three years; second, it should invest \$10 million to help each Canadian with ALS provide a DNA sample to Project MinE, as well as allow the transfer of all stored samples from deceased individuals.

Thanks to strong measures and the ALS Canada Research Program's challenge, our country could become a world leader in the fight against ALS. We already have a community of international researchers who are working on finding a cure for ALS. We can also be trailblazers in this field. We have the resources to carry out our plans. We can take action and design a comprehensive strategy to eradicate ALS.

I would like to quote Dr. David Taylor, vice-president of research at the ALS Society of Canada, who gives us hope for the future. He said:

Five years ago, the breadth of ALS research we are funding today would not have been possible simply because we didn't know enough about the disease to be able to ask the kinds of questions that today's researchers are investigating in their work. The fact that we now have the ability to explore ALS from different angles reflects the growing body of knowledge about the disease and the increasing likelihood of effective treatments being developed.

The motion before the House today proposes more than just recognizing the work of researchers. It also proposes putting greater emphasis on community leaders, provincial and territorial stakeholders, because they are the ones working on the front lines in the fight against this disease. They must be supported in their essential activities in assisting ALS patients and their caregivers.

Today my team even reached out to the president of the ALS Society of Canada, who told us that she is extremely hopeful that with the support of all parties, this motion will pass and new funding will be allocated to research and to the fight against ALS before 2019.

Passing this motion will not only represent a step in that direction, but it would also be a lovely tribute to the memory of the Honourable Mauril Bélanger. It would also help ensure that the current very promising research could continue. It would also make it possible for the awareness efforts to continue in close co-operation with provincial and territorial stakeholders.

• (1825)

Lastly, it would support the efforts of all the local stakeholders who are fighting every day to get the word out about ALS and the problems associated with it. More importantly, it would give ALS patients and their caregivers hope for a brighter future.

Private Members' Business

[English]

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank the hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek for tabling Motion No. 105 on amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS. I want to thank her for her hard work to tackle this devastating neurological disease.

[Translation]

Members may know that, according to the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Society of Canada, ALS Canada, between 2,500 and 3,000 Canadians have amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Unfortunately, available treatments can do no more than relieve symptoms or delay the progression of this terrible disease by a few months.

We all know that it took the life of our friend and esteemed colleague, the Hon. Mauril Bélanger, who served the people of Ottawa—Vanier and his country for over 20 years. He will be remembered for his exemplary devotion to his community.

Without a cure, patients and their families have very little reason to hope. Motion No. 105 acknowledges the tragic death of over 1,000 Canadians with ALS each year and the fact that 1,000 more Canadians are diagnosed with the disease annually.

The motion calls on Canada to take the necessary steps to fight this terrible disease.

[English]

Through this motion, the House is being asked to reiterate its desire and commitment to work with the provinces and territories to combat ALS through research and awareness.

I am here today to express that the Government of Canada is committed to addressing ALS. We understand that continued research efforts stand to improve our understanding of this disease and lead to improved treatments and cures. Importantly, research also stands to offer hope to thousands of patients and families facing ALS. That is why our government is supporting Motion No. 105.

In order to credit existing work across the federal government and recognize its leadership role, we would propose two amendments to this motion. Please allow me a moment now to walk the House through these amendments.

First, in order to recognize past and current federal investments toward research on ALS, the Government of Canada is of the opinion that we should talk about playing a leadership role in supporting ALS research and supporting national efforts to find a cure for ALS at the earliest opportunity.

[Translation]

Federal investment in ALS research is up in recent years. Between 2011-12 and 2015-16 through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the federal government invested \$16 million in ALS research, \$4.4 million in 2015-16 alone, a 70% increase over 2011-12. This is in addition to the investments made by Health Canada and the not-for-profit sector.

The Canada Brain Research Fund, administered by the Brain Canada Foundation, has a system of matching funds under which federal funding provided by Health Canada is matched with

equivalent funding from private donors and charities involved in brain research.

Since 2014, the money raised for ALS by the ice bucket challenge has been doubled by the Canada Brain Research Fund to provide discovery grants in order to promote research into the causes and treatment of ALS.

As we can see, the Government of Canada continues to provide leadership on ALS research. By doubling contributions from private donors and charities, the federal government hopes to encourage Canadians to get behind this important cause.

Today I would like to reiterate the government's commitment to support the country's leading ALS researchers in order to get the best results in the interests of all Canadians.

The work of researchers such as Dr. Jean-Pierre Julien of Laval University, which is in my riding, and Dr. Janice Robertson of the University of Toronto, Canada Research Chairs both, is essential to improving available treatments and finding a cure for ALS. It is therefore essential that we continue to support their research.

• (1830)

[English]

As the House knows, there are many policy approaches the government uses to coordinate efforts and raise awareness. From large-scale strategies and frameworks to targeted program initiatives, the government takes care to ensure it uses an appropriate approach. It is not evident that comprehensive strategies are always needed when it comes to specific medical conditions and diseases. This is particularly true when effective programs and initiatives already exist.

In addition, there is a tendency worldwide to address rare diseases like ALS through strategies and approaches that broadly encompass all rare diseases. Canada has developed several such strategies. For example, Canada's rare disease strategy was launched by the Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders in 2015. It proposes a five-point action plan to address unnecessary delays in testing, incorrect diagnosis, and missed treatment opportunities.

One of these five goals is promoting innovative research. It recognizes Canada's open and inclusive research, strong international collaboration, and a research capacity that spans the research continuum, including basic biomedical research, clinical research, and health services and policy research. The strategy suggests leveraging these strengths in the field of rare disease research. It also promotes collaboration in all fields of rare disease research.

Through a key international program, Canada is doing just that.

Private Members' Business

[Translation]

Canada, represented by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Genome Canada, and the Fonds de recherche du Québec, is a member of ERA-NET for Research Programs on Rare Diseases, or E-Rare, which involves 25 organizations from seven countries. E-Rare coordinates research efforts in the fight against rare diseases.

As part of this research strategy, Canada is enhancing its ability to prevent, diagnose, and treat rare diseases such as ALS more effectively, and to benefit from international resources and expertise on the matter.

As the House can see, Canada already has ways to fight ALS and other devastating illnesses through its programs and initiatives. For these reasons and in light of the increased investments in research into ALS, our amendment seeks to intensify current efforts instead of developing a new strategy.

To be clear, we suggest deleting the word “eradication” from the motion, which is generally associated with infectious diseases. In the context of ALS, it would be preferable to use expressions such as “finding treatments” or “finding cures”. This would help provide some hope to the 3,000 Canadians with ALS and their loved ones.

[English]

I am pleased to see increasing federal investments in ALS research. I am pleased to see growing ALS awareness across across Canada. I am pleased that the Government of Canada will be supporting the motion, with the amendments I described.

With this support, the Government of Canada is playing a leading role in addressing ALS. We are calling on all Canadians to join us in raising awareness, supporting research, and offering hope to the thousands of Canadians affected by ALS.

I therefore move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after the words “(b) call upon the government to” and substituting the following:

play a leadership role in supporting ALS research, and to support national efforts to find a cure for ALS at the earliest opportunity.”

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It is my duty to inform hon. members that, pursuant to Standing Order 93(3), no amendment may be proposed to a private member's motion or the motion for second reading of a private member's bill unless the sponsor of the item indicates his or her consent.

• (1835)

[English]

Therefore, I ask the hon. member for Humber River—Black Creek if she consents to this amendment being moved.

Hon. Judy A. Sgro: Yes I do, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to Motion No. 105, which was moved by my esteemed colleague from Humber River—Black Creek in order to reaffirm and consolidate our fight against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, is a fatal motor neuron disease that causes the dysfunction and then destruction of the neurons that control voluntary muscle movement. If it is a horrible disease to think about, it is a thousand times worse to live with. The causes of this disease, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, are unknown in 90% to 95% of cases, and there is no cure.

At a time when medicine and health care are evolving so rapidly, it is possible to make a difference. We have the financial, scientific, and technological resources to fund and implement research activities that will lead to revolutionary breakthroughs. Two infectious diseases have been eradicated worldwide in the past 40 years, and we now look forward to the possibility of eradicating four others.

In fact, smallpox, a common illness, has now been eradicated. It is one of the greatest achievements of medical innovation and global co-ordination ever carried out. Furthermore, on October 14, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization announced that rinderpest, the other viral disease of cattle and other ruminants, has been completely eradicated thanks to human efforts. The four other diseases that are being eradicated are polio, guinea-worm disease, yaws, and malaria. These diseases could conceivably disappear in our or our children's lifetimes.

This large-scale global mission is no small task. It requires time, money, and sensitivity. Above all it is necessary. We have the tools to put an end to these debilitating diseases that cause so many deaths. I was very pleased to learn that Canada has joined Project MinE, a multinational study of the DNA profiles of 22,500 people. The goal of this project is to identify the genetic commonalities of people affected by ALS. It is a step in the right direction, but much more needs to be done. Only 62.25 DNA profiles have been collected in Canada, which represents 7% of our goal. Today, I support my colleague from Humber River—Black Creek in her efforts to ask the government to reaffirm its commitment to finding a cure for ALS.

About 1,000 people die of the disease and 1,000 more are diagnosed with it every year in Canada. At least 3,000 Canadians and 200,000 people worldwide have the disease. This number may seem low compared to other infectious diseases. That is not because the disease is uncommon; it is because 80% of people with ALS die within two to five years of being diagnosed. Once the degenerative progression begins, sufferers know their life will be cut short. According to ALS Canada, the cycle is like a revolving door because people do not recover from the disease and there are no effective treatments.

We all watched our dear friend and colleague, the Hon. Mauril Bélanger, succumb with startling speed to the disease. In November, the member for Oakville North—Burlington rose in the House to bid farewell to an active member of her community, Tim Robertson, who died of ALS. This disease can strike anyone, so it deserves our attention.

Private Members' Business

As with many matters brought before the House, cost is always an issue. What does it cost taxpayers and people with ALS? I cannot answer the first question, but I can share some facts in relation to the second.

● (1840)

The costs involved for people with ALS and their families range from \$150,000 to \$250,000. Costs include care and equipment, as well as potential loss of income if patients or their family members are forced to stop working. Most people with this disease receive treatments outside of hospitals, and they count on their families and the community to meet their medical needs.

We saw how the viral success of the infamous ice bucket challenge helped raise awareness about ALS. In Canada, nearly \$20 million has been invested over the past two years in research into this disease thanks to funds raised as part of that challenge. Brain Canada, with the support of Health Canada, matched all funds raised. This proves that people care about this issue, they want research to be subsidized, and they want a cure.

In Canada, funding for ALS research usually amounts to between \$1.5 million and \$2 million. That is not enough to discover new treatments that might put an end to this debilitating and fatal disease. Canada has always been a leader in science and technology research.

Let us take advantage of our wealth in human capital in these fields in order to make lasting progress. Imagine what leadership from the government would help accomplish for Canadians and for the global fight to find preventive and proactive solutions to ALS. Imagine alleviating the huge financial burden on our health system and our patients. Imagine the relief of all these families who can only helplessly watch their loved ones fade away.

This goal is not unattainable. It could be reached sooner than we think. Let us promise a future where our children and grandchildren will one day hear the news of a medical breakthrough to cure ALS.

I will close by quoting Dr. Charles Krieger, professor at Simon-Fraser University, chair of the Scientific Medical Advisory Council of the ALS Society of Canada and member of the ALS Society of Canada board of directors.

[*English*]

He said that having been focused on ALS research and care for over 25 years, he had seen the evolution of our understanding and ability to treat this disease since the beginning of the genetic era. Discoveries of the last few years, combined with recent technological advancement, make this an unprecedented time where we now can conceive of a day where ALS is a treatable disease, but reaching that point will still take many years without some funding beyond grassroots fundraising. He added that an investment by the federal government at this critical time will yield impactful results that will accelerate our ability to reach this amazing goal.

[*Translation*]

I think he is right. By strengthening our resolve, we can make ALS a thing of the past.

● (1845)

[*English*]

Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking so very much my colleagues in the House. After the last couple of days of political rancour that has been going on, it is so lightening to listen to us all come together on something that affected Mauril Bélanger, one of our dear members, and many others who are not being spoken about today in the House. It is a nice, peaceful feeling in this room that we can come together and show Canadians that it is not all about politics all of the time; it is about doing the right thing. I thank all of my colleagues for that.

I like to believe that Mauril is sitting in the Speaker's chair, as he so much enjoyed his opportunity to be Speaker. It was not very long ago. The whole House truly respected Mauril for what he was, for what he did, and for his 20 years of contributions in the House. We watched him struggle with ALS. He was my partner, and when he sat beside me, he struggled every day. He made it for question period for very many days. It was such a struggle for him, but he was determined not to give in to this disease. He explored opportunities, such as what else was happening in Montreal, and went to different doctors trying to find a solution or a cure. Unfortunately, the disease went through him so very quickly.

I visited Catherine and Mauril a couple of weeks before Mauril passed away. My colleague spoke earlier about the immense cost involved in ALS. I have to say that I had been to their home many times before, but I found that they had completely converted their home, with a bed, a respirator, and such. It was like a small hospital, instead of a home.

He was able to be pushed outside in a wheelchair because it was a bright, sunny day. We sat outside in his back yard, where he had very recently built a barbecue and patio area for himself and Catherine. He invited many of his colleagues there, and we had such good times. There was great wine. He very good at barbecuing and all of that.

We sat in that very same place. He was unable to answer anything that I or Catherine said to him at that time, but we had a conversation through his eyes, because that was all he had left with which he could communicate. I left him that day knowing that there was not going to be another opportunity to see him again sitting in a wheelchair in his back yard. It was difficult. The least I can do and the least we can do is to recognize ALS for what it is.

Richard Wackid was another member of the Liberal family, who was a wonderful man. He died very quickly. He was someone else who was admired by so many people. There was also William Corbett. I do not have all of the names, but a lot of them were part of Parliament, in the sense of either serving as a member of Parliament, as Mauril did, or serving us. After 18 years of being here, when I had the opportunity to present a bill or motion, I wanted to do it on behalf of Mauril and the ALS Society.

Let me thank everybody here for their kindness and support. I look forward, on May 6, to joining in the walkathons and many other events to raise money. That is what it is about: it is about money for research. Whether we are talking about ALS, autism, or so many other things, we all need to pitch in and do everything we possibly can to eradicate these terrible diseases.

● (1850)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It being 6:50 p.m., the time provided for debate has expired.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the amendment will please say ye.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Pursuant to Standing Order 93 the recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, April 5, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will start by repeating the question that I raised in the House earlier this week:

The Calgary Olympic bid exploration committee is making plans to include Banff's Lake Louise ski area in its 2026 bid. Putting the Olympic Games in Canada's oldest national park would demand expanding the resort into protected natural areas. The environment minister has been silent on whether she would permit Olympic expansion in this UNESCO world heritage site.

Will she stand today and firmly reject any further development in Banff National Park?

The minister avoided my question in the House during question period and she is not here tonight, which is really quite worrisome.

Why did I raise the question? I raised it for three reasons. The first reason is to give the Minister of Environment, who is the decision-maker on this potential project, the opportunity to show her support for protecting national parks.

Adjournment Proceedings

I also want to be fair to the Calgary Olympic bid exploration committee and its 2026 bid. It needs to know as soon as possible whether Lake Louise will be part of the discussion or not.

I also want to protect the ecological integrity of Banff National Park. Banff National Park is a world heritage site, similar to Wood Buffalo, and we have seen recently what happens if government is not properly protecting a world heritage site. UNESCO came and reviewed what was happening in Wood Buffalo and expressed its concern about a number of aspects of the park, including the Site C dam in British Columbia and the oil sands and their impact on water.

What would happen to Banff National Park if additional development takes place in the Lake Louise ski area to accommodate athletes, the media, and the public in order to have the Olympic Games occur in this park? This a two-week event.

During our environmental committee trip to Banff in September, when we were exploring how Canada could get to 10% protected water and 17% protected land, we went to Lake Louise and heard a presentation from the area owners about expanding the Lake Louise ski area. National parks staff at the time said that there should be no development or changes to ski areas unless they benefit ecological integrity. The number one purpose of the parks act is ecological integrity.

Here is what some of the locals said about this particular proposal:

Once a generation, this dumb idea of Winter Olympics in Banff National Park comes up

explained conservationist Harvey Locke, a resident of Banff.

It's a great idea to nip in the bud. It should not happen. It should not be considered.

Locke says the hosting of events within the park would result in a development boom at the ski hill, and there would be pressure to expand the resort's boundaries. Banff National Park is a world heritage site. To destroy part of it to support a two-week Olympic event would be ridiculous.

My question again tonight is this: will the minister do the right thing and say no now to this proposal, which has the potential to seriously harm the ecological integrity of Banff National Park?

● (1855)

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the protection and the promotion of ecological integrity is a critical thing for this government. We have made that very clear in a number of the decisions that we have made over the course of the past year, including in some of the provisions that were contained in the recent budget.

I would also say that there is no project and no imminent project with respect to the Olympics, nor any request for an assessment. The question that is being posed by the hon. member is entirely speculative at this point in time and may or may not ever become something that needs to be actually addressed.

Adjournment Proceedings

However, if there ever was to be such a request to look at this issue and to assess it, a critical element of any such assessment, whether it is Banff or Jasper or any national park, would be a focus on ecological integrity and the importance of being able to protect the ecological integrity of the park.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Mr. Speaker, the news reported it this way:

As Calgary continues to weigh the possibility of submitting a bid to host the 2026 Winter Olympic Games, officials with the Lake Louise Ski Resort say the ski hill would be an obvious choice to host events....

and

The Calgary Bid Exploration Committee (CBEC) confirms Lake Louise would be considered....

Is it not really in the best interests of both the park and the committee to know right away that the government will not support this event happening in the world heritage site?

Mr. Jonathan Wilkinson: Mr. Speaker, as I said, this is entirely speculative. There may never be a request to actually look at this issue. I think that the hon. member is getting a little out in front of what may or may not ever become a concern. However, I would say to the hon. member that the issues around the protection of ecological integrity would be front and centre in any assessment that was done if, in fact, that was something that ever needed to be done.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte is not present to raise the matter for which the adjournment notice has been given. Accordingly, the notice is deemed withdrawn.

The hon. member for Lévis—Lotbinière.

[*Translation*]

ETHICS

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the legalization of marijuana, last November, the media widely reported some troubling facts suggesting that the work of the task force on cannabis legalization was leaked before it tabled its report. Coincidentally, this was a boon to the Liberal Party's CFO, the co-founder of a company that produces marijuana, who saw the value of his shares double in one week even though, as I said, the final report had not yet been released.

I do not believe it is ethical for a Liberal task force to be making liberal recommendations to legalize Liberal-friendly companies. To date, the Minister of Justice has not even had the decency to tell the House whether she will conduct an investigation to confirm that privileged information was leaked. The lack of a response indicates that there will be no investigation results.

Will the Minister of Justice don her minister's hat and assure us that a formal investigation into this discredited task force has been launched and that we will soon be apprised of all the details?

On December 8, 2016, I predicted that we had not seen the end of Liberal scandals, and here I am now, telling the House about another. This government takes the cake when it comes to failing to abide by its own ethics rules, which are set out in the document entitled, "Open and Accountable Government".

I am thinking of the task force on cannabis legalization, as well as all of the other ethical lapses. Here are a few examples: the Prime

Minister's family vacation to visit the Aga Khan, which cost Canadian taxpayers \$127,000; the moving expenses for friends of cabinet, which cost taxpayers \$200,000; the cocktail parties for the wealthy, where \$1,500 bought access to ministers and the Prime Minister; and last but not least, the change to the criteria for the Canada 150 fund to give priority to celebrations in 87% of the Liberal ridings in Quebec.

The criteria and objectives of eligible projects set out in part G of the general application form for the Canada 150 fund were changed in the summer of 2016 without notice, meaning that all of the organizations that had submitted applications where they provided a 20-line description of their project in keeping with the established criteria before the summer of 2016 had their applications rejected. These organizations had already been working for two years on their plans to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation.

Is the approach the Liberals took here ethical?

• (1900)

[*English*]

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to respond to the member for Lévis—Lotbinière's inquiry.

It would appear that the member opposite is relying almost entirely on something he read in the newspaper. There is a very old saying that those who do not read the newspaper may be uninformed, but those who do read the newspaper may be misinformed. I think this is a situation where for the member opposite there was perhaps a misunderstanding, and I would like to offer him some clarification.

As we have stated on a number of occasions, our government is committed to legalizing and strictly regulating cannabis in order to restrict access to young people, to keep it out of the hands of our kids, and also to keep the profits out of the hands of criminals. To that end, our government is committed to developing policy based on the best advice of experts and on the evidence in order to achieve those very important public purpose aims.

In June 2016, we appointed a task force composed of nine eminently qualified Canadians to conduct an inquiry on our behalf, and to report back to the government with recommendations based on the best advice and the best evidence. Those nine Canadians represented the fields of public safety, public health, justice, and problematic substance use. The task force was led by the eminently qualified, and I think widely respected, Anne McLellan, a former minister of this House. The task force received over 30,000 online submissions from Canadians from coast to coast. The task force also met with experts from jurisdictions that have taken steps to legalize cannabis in their jurisdiction, such as Colorado and Washington. It sought the views of a diverse community of experts, professionals, advocates, front-line workers, law enforcement, citizens, and employers.

Adjournment Proceedings

In response to all of the information that it gathered, on November 30, 2016, the task force submitted its report to the government. It advised at that time that its report would be translated and subsequently provided to all parliamentarians and the public once it was available in both official languages.

On December 13, 2016, the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation provided its report to the ministers of justice, health, and public safety and emergency preparedness. At that time, the report was made available to the public, and at the same time, was made available to all members of this House through Health Canada's website. That report contains information on how to promote and protect public health and safety, particularly among young Canadians.

The government will introduce legislation, as we have promised, in the spring. It will bring about the strict regulation of access to cannabis. It will be effective in keeping it out of the hands of our kids. It will help us keep the profits out of the hands of criminals, and it will enable us to protect the health of our citizens.

With respect to the unfounded allegations opined by the members opposite, I will reiterate that the report was made available to all Canadians on December 13, 2016, not a single day sooner, and any suggestion to the contrary is based on conjecture and baseless suspicion.

As we know, capital markets in Canada are strictly regulated. The regulating authority for the Toronto Stock Exchange is the Ontario Securities Commission. The Ontario Securities Commission is an independent body responsible for looking into any evidence of market irregularities. The securities commission will continue to ensure the integrity of capital markets and stocks listed on the stock exchange, including any investigation that it may see fit to conduct.

●(1905)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, since when it is ethical to change the criteria of a program without informing anyone or at the very least mentioning it on the government's website?

Does my colleague agree that the Liberals' lack of ethics no doubt resulted in projects in his riding receiving funding under the Canada 150 fund, to the detriment of other ridings in Quebec that should have been treated fairly?

I am hoping for an answer from my colleague.

[*English*]

Mr. Bill Blair: Mr. Speaker, the issue the member raised is with respect to the legalization of cannabis. I have responded to his concerns about the way in which this government operates.

I have great pride in the way in which our government has endeavoured to be open and transparent with all Canadians, and in creating opportunities for all Canadians to participate in Canada's celebration of its 150th anniversary. It is an enormous opportunity for Canadians from coast to coast, in every community and in every riding, to celebrate this great anniversary. We are committed to doing that in a way which is fair, equitable, open, and transparent for all Canadians.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted.

[*Translation*]

Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:06 p.m.)

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