



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 148 • NUMBER 185 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Thursday, June 1, 2017

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

CONTENTS

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, June 1, 2017

The House met at 10 a.m.

[*Translation*]

Prayer

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*English*]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation to the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group respecting its participation at the annual winter meeting of the National Governors Association held in Washington, D.C., United States of America, from February 24 to 27, 2017.

* * *

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

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 13th report of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities in relation to the supplementary estimates (A), 2017-18.

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the seventh report of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development in relation to Bill C-323, an act to amend the Income Tax Act, regarding the rehabilitation of historic property. The committee has studied the bill and pursuant to Standing Order 97.1 (1), requests a 30-day extension to consider it.

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 97.1(3)(a), a motion to concur in the report is deemed moved, question deemed put, and a recorded division deemed demanded. Pursuant to an order made on Tuesday, May 30, 2017, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 7, 2017, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Orders 104 and 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 32nd report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House.

If the House gives its consent, I move that the 32nd report be concurred in.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

[*English*]

Mr. Gordon Brown: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you will find consent for the following motion: That at the conclusion of today's debate on the opposition motion in the name of the member for Chilliwack—Hope, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion be deemed put and a recorded division requested and deferred until Tuesday, June 6, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. If members want to have discussions, I encourage them to do so perhaps in the lobbies.

Routine Proceedings

●(1010)

PETITIONS

TAXATION

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition signed by campers who stayed at Sand Bay Camp in Combermere, Ontario, on the shores of Kamaniskeg Lake in the riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke. The petitioners call on the government to ensure that campgrounds with fewer than five full-time, year-round employees be considered small businesses and be taxed as such.

[*Translation*]

ALGOMA PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present even more petitions addressed to the Minister of Transport about the Algoma passenger train, which has been out of service for several years. The only way to access 75% of the properties located near the rail line is by train. There are some industrial roads, but they are maintained only if industry needs them. Access roads are neither reliable nor safe, plus they are non-existent or impassable for part of the year.

The Algoma passenger train is the only safe, affordable, year-round route that can get people to the Algoma rail corridor. That is the way it has been for 100 years. The petitioners are calling on the Minister of Transport to restore the Algoma passenger train service in order to fulfill Transport Canada's mission, which is to serve the public interest through the promotion of a safe and secure, efficient and environmentally responsible transportation system in Canada.

WATER QUALITY

Hon. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present another petition addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs concerning the water quality of Lake Champlain.

Cyanobacteria proliferates each summer in Lake Champlain, which we share with our American neighbours. The entire population of the town of Bedford in my riding, so over 3,000 people, drinks that water.

When it gets hot this summer, the cyanobacteria will proliferate even more, and the water will become like pea soup. This water needs to be treated immediately. This petition is therefore addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is responsible for the International Joint Commission on the management of transboundary waters under the treaty we have with our American neighbours.

[*English*]

In conclusion, the petitioners, residents of Bedford and the surrounding area in the province of Quebec, ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs to review the mandate of the International Joint Commission for Champlain Lake, with the aim of resolving the problem of the deterioration of the water quality of Champlain Lake in recent years.

[*Translation*]

I also want to thank the member for Malpeque, who is supporting our efforts.

[*English*]

SHARK FINNING

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions this morning, both from residents of Saanich—Gulf Islands.

The first petition deals with an issue that has resulted in several private members' bills being presented before this place and remains unsolved. It is that while it is illegal in Canadian waters to fin sharks, it is still possible to trade and sell and offer for sale shark fins where the finning has taken place in other waters, and this contributes to the rapid extinction of many species of sharks.

The petitioners ask the House of Commons to deal with this gap.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is also from residents of Saanich—Gulf Islands.

The petitioners are calling for the federal government to institute a national moratorium on the practice of hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking. There are now provincial moratoria in Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, but there remains the fact, as the petitioners point out, that the chemicals used in the fracking compounds that are injected below the surface near our groundwater are not publicly known and are not registered with Environment Canada. There also remain threats due to induced seismology—in other words, causing earthquakes. The petitioners would like the Parliament of Canada to act on this matter.

CANADA PENSION PLAN

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my riding of Sydney—Victoria, in Cape Breton, has one of the highest proportions of seniors in the country. I have the honour to present a petition that contains hundreds of signatures of seniors from Cape Breton Island.

The petition is in good order and the petitioners are asking the Government of Canada to review the Canada pension plan, which, at the present, is not funded sufficiently to allow seniors to survive in today's society.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: I now recognize a member who made his debut yesterday in the soccer match against the pages of the House of Commons.

The hon. member for Sherbrooke.

●(1015)

FALUN GONG

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank you and I also want to congratulate you on an excellent match yesterday.

Business of Supply

I rise to present a petition signed by hundreds of people who are calling on the Government of Canada to take action with regard to Falun Gong practitioners in China. Not only are they being persecuted, but various reports suggest that they are the victims of human organ trafficking.

The petition calls on the Government of Canada and this Parliament to address this situation by passing a resolution calling on the Communist regime in China to put an end to this kind of practice. The petition also calls for action to be taken here in Canada to try to put an end to human organ trafficking and asks the Government of Canada to publicly denounce what Falun Gong practitioners are currently being subjected to.

[English]

CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition, in the form of an e-petition, that has 1,590 signatures. The petitioners are calling for the government to address the issue of lost Canadians. As members know, over the years we have had a series of arcane laws that render Canadians somehow not Canadian anymore. As well, the law does not recognize second generations born abroad as Canadians either. This has caused huge problems for a number of people.

The petition is calling for the government to welcome Canadians home and encourage Canadians to embrace global opportunities, by repealing retroactively the “after first generation” right to citizenship exclusion contained in subsections 3(3) to 3(5) of the Citizenship Act, thereby continuing the universal application that there is only one class of Canadian, with full charter rights.

I hope that we can do this as we head into the 150th anniversary of our country.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—KINDER MORGAN TRANS MOUNTAIN EXPANSION PROJECT

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC) moved:

That the House agree that the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project: (a) has social license to proceed; (b) is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of thousands of jobs; (c) is safe and environmentally sound, as recognized and accepted by the National Energy Board; (d) is under federal jurisdiction with respect to approval and regulation; and (e) should be constructed with the continued

support of the federal government, as demonstrated by the Prime Minister personally announcing the approval of the project.

He said: Mr. Speaker, indeed it is a pleasure to rise in the House to move this motion on behalf of the official opposition. We think it is a critical time for the House to pronounce on the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion project, a project that was personally approved by the Prime Minister in November of last year.

I would like to inform the House that I will be sharing my time with the member for Lakeland, a passionate defender of the oil and gas sector in her riding and right across the country, standing up for energy workers in this country.

The motion is very clear. It simply outlines that the House should reiterate its support for the Prime Minister's position on the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, that this project has social licence, as the Prime Minister indicated in his statement on November 30, that it is safe, reliable, that it should proceed, and that the appropriate steps have been taken to ensure it will be constructed in an environmentally safe way. That is really what this is about.

We often talk about pipelines in isolation, but the fact is that the pipelines are the safest way to transport energy products in this country. Pipelines have a proven record of reliability and are safer than rail. Just this morning, I read an article about record rail shipments to the United States. Over 150,000 barrels a day go by rail to the United States. What happens when we do not have the proper pipeline capacity is that more oil goes by rail. While that is also a safe way to transport energy products, it is not as safe as pipelines.

That is why Conservatives support this pipeline, which has been approved by the National Energy Board as safe. It has been proven that it can be done in an environmentally sound way, with 157 conditions imposed on the proponent. We support that and think it is important that we do it. It is a \$6.8-billion capital investment by the company. It would create 15,000 new jobs during construction, and secondary jobs in the oil sands will be in the thousands as well. We know there is a pipeline capacity issue right now. If we do not address it, there will be layoffs, further putting the fragile recovery of our oil and gas sector at risk.

The Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline goes through my riding. It has been there since the early 1950s. This pipeline has delivered oil from Alberta to Burnaby for over 60 years, and there has never been a major incident with the section of pipe that goes through my riding. As far as I know, there have been two incidents, one at a tank farm in Sumas, where the redundancies at the Sumas tank plant kicked in, and every drop of oil was recovered that spilled over when a valve froze during the winter. The system worked perfectly. The other time was in Burnaby, when a contractor punctured the pipeline with a backhoe. It was hardly the fault of the pipeline; it was the result of human error.

Business of Supply

In my riding, I sought the views of my constituents. I sent out a survey to every single household in my riding, asking constituents if they thought the Prime Minister should approve the Trans Mountain expansion project. It elicited a lot of responses. Thousands of people replied, and about 55% of those who took the time to reply said yes, they supported the expansion.

However, there is significant concern, even in my own community. People are concerned about whether a pipeline can operate safely over their precious water aquifer. There is a group in my riding called WaterWealth, whose primary purpose is to make sure that the waters in our area are protected. I wrote to the Minister of Natural Resources on their behalf. It took him seven months to reply, but he said that he believed the National Energy Board process had adequately addressed their concerns on the aquifer and that routing decisions would be made by the National Energy Board. However, there are concerns, and that is why we need to hear from the Prime Minister.

● (1020)

We have seen consent in Alberta, across the political spectrum, that pipelines are beneficial for the economy and that they can be built safely. In British Columbia, there is a little more skepticism. That is why we need the Prime Minister of Canada to come to British Columbia and finally start to sell this project in my home province.

I have been in the rooms of oil executives with the Prime Minister in Houston, Texas. There, he is quite proud to talk about approving the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline, to great applause from oil executives from all over the world. They love that he has approved that pipeline.

However, the Prime Minister will not come to British Columbia to make the same case. After his trip to billionaire island when he needed a distraction, he went to coast to coast, well, actually he did not go coast to coast, he went from coast to the Rocky Mountains. He did not quite make it to the B.C. coast. He did not quite come to Burnaby or Vancouver to talk about this pipeline.

It is easy to give a speech about approving a pipeline in Calgary to oil executives there. It is tougher to come to a skeptical audience in British Columbia and sell the merits of the pipeline. That is what we are calling on him to do. We are calling on the Prime Minister to come to British Columbia.

Premier Christy Clark has requested that he come to talk about the pipelines, to sell the benefits of the pipeline to British Columbians. He will not do it. He has not done it.

Norman Spector, who was a former PMO official in the Mulroney era, actually helped to negotiate the B.C. NDP–Green socialist manifesto, which is part of why we are here today, quite frankly. There has been movement in B.C. for the “forces of no”, the coalition of unwilling people who want to oppose every natural resource project in the province, including this pipeline. They have indicated that they intend to try to form a coalition government. The primary purpose of that manifesto is to try to kill the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

We believe that this House needs to pronounce on that. This House needs to indicate that this is a good project, that this is good for Canadian energy workers and for the middle-class families who

work hard every day to put food on the table. That is what this is about. It is about supporting the energy sector. We know it can be done safely.

The Prime Minister talks about the environment and the economy needing to go hand in hand. Of course, we did the exact same thing when we were in government. The funny thing is that when the Prime Minister comes to British Columbia, he does not talk about the economic benefits. He does not talk about this pipeline.

If the Prime Minister does not start to invest some of his political capital in this project, if he leaves it to the provincial government, to industry, this pipeline will not get built. We know why he will not come to British Columbia to promote this pipeline. It is because of the fear of the 17 Liberal members of Parliament from that province. They, along with our friends in the NDP, are cheering this coalition, this “forces of no”. They want this pipeline to die.

How do we know that? There is not a word from the 17 Liberals members of Parliament from British Columbia in support of this pipeline. Although their Prime Minister has been clear, we know from their public record that they oppose it.

The Minister of Justice is on the record, before she became a Liberal politician, as being vehemently opposed to pipelines. The member for Burnaby North—Seymour, the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard has said there is no consent for this pipeline.

We need to come together in this House. Those Liberal members of Parliament from British Columbia need to get behind this project and realize that it is good for our nation's economy, that the project is safe, that the project has been subjected to all of the appropriate reviews. As the Prime Minister has said, the NDP Premier of Alberta supports this. The NDP Premier of Alberta supports it, and yet Liberal MPs from British Columbia are trying to stand in the way.

We call on the Prime Minister of Canada to get behind the project. He has approved it. The Prime Minister has personally approved this project. I say to the Prime Minister, “Come to British Columbia. Talk to British Columbians about why it was approved. Talk to British Columbians about the benefits of the project, and stop putting the jobs of Liberal members of Parliament from B.C. ahead of the jobs of the Canadian energy worker.”

● (1025)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I certainly come from the opposite end of the country from the member for Chilliwack—Hope. To begin with, I would say that I think the member could be giving the Prime Minister a fair bit of credit for supporting this project. However, that is beside the point. I want to make that point, though, because the Prime Minister has been onside, and let us not forget that.

Business of Supply

My comment is really with respect to the fact that even where I live, in Prince Edward Island in Atlantic Canada, this pipeline is seen as much needed. In my opinion, we need the energy east pipeline as well. It is the safest way to move oil, and for my area there would be a lot of jobs. We used to have several flights out of Moncton to Fort McMurray and elsewhere that are not there now because of the oil downturn. I just want to point out and see if the member agrees, that this is not only important for jobs in the west, but important for the economy and jobs right across the country.

• (1030)

Mr. Mark Strahl: Madam Speaker, that is impressive. I agree 100% with that. I think that the member has eloquently provided a summary of why this is not just beneficial to Alberta. I know in my own riding there were people who travelled back and forth to the oil sands, leaving their families for weeks and sometimes months at a time, to put food on the tables in Chilliwack. It is 1,000 kilometres away from Fort McMurray. I agree with him that the benefits are there right across the country.

However, we know that the Prime Minister can do more. We know that the Prime Minister can cross those Rocky Mountains. He can make the case that this member has so eloquently just made. I wish that the member would be invited to the Liberal caucus for British Columbia on Wednesday morning where he could make the case that they should get behind this pipeline, because it is good for the entire country.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, I think there has been some progress. The Conservatives mentioned the term “social licence” today in their motion. To be fair, this was a term that the Conservatives dismissed for a long time as airy-fairy and non-existent. However, they have put it in their motion today.

We may disagree on the definition of “social licence”, because with 17 lawsuits against this pipeline and overwhelming opposition in Vancouver, Burnaby, and many places along the route, it would be tricky to say there is the broad consensus that the Prime Minister has talked about.

The Prime Minister did in fact go to British Columbia, on May 19, 10 days after the B.C. election, where 60% of voters in that province voted for parties opposed to this pipeline. My Conservative federal colleagues might not like that, but it is true. The Prime Minister said that all of the people who voted for those parties have it wrong.

This is my specific question. The member mentioned water and the importance of water and fish to British Columbia. This is a raw export pipeline. It is a diluted bitumen pipeline. We have no known way of cleaning up a diluted bitumen spill in water. Is this not a concern to his constituents? Is there any remedy he is aware of that if there were such a spill, we would be able to clean up even a drop of this stuff?

Mr. Mark Strahl: Madam Speaker, studies have been done that show this can be transported safely in a marine environment, as well as on land.

I understand where that member is coming from. I am not sure if he has talked to the member for Edmonton Strathcona about how Rachel Notley has been adamant that this pipeline has social licence, that it must be built. She said, “Mark my words, it will get built.”

Then we have John Horgan, who said “I’ll do everything in my power to stop it.” Clearly, there is a divide in the NDP’s leadership race. There are some who are for it and some who are against it. I understand the dilemma. However, the pipeline has been subjected to a stringent evidence-based, scientific review. There are 157 conditions that prove it can be done safely. We believe it should be done for Canadian energy workers.

Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Madam Speaker, there have been consultations among all parties and I believe if you seek it you will find consent for the following motion. I move:

That, at the conclusion of today’s debate on the opposition motion in the name of the Member for Chilliwack—Hope, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion be deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Tuesday, June 6th, 2017, at the expiry of the time provide for Oral Questions.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Does the official opposition whip have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Madam Speaker, the world needs Canada’s oil, and global oil demand will continue to grow for decades, especially in the world’s most populated countries. China’s economy is expanding at over 6% annually and with it Chinese energy needs grow. Meanwhile, India produces only one-quarter of the oil the Indian people need with economic growth of over 7% a year and projections that the Indian economy will surpass the American economy by 2040. While the development of and desire for renewable and alternative energy grows worldwide, so too does demand for available, affordable, abundant oil.

The International Energy Agency projects demand to reach 99 million barrels a day by the end of 2017. The potential for Canada’s global role as a responsible supplier of energy and of technology and regulatory expertise is boundless, but it is dependent on Canada being connected to major export markets around the world, especially while the United States—both Canada’s biggest importer and now most significant energy competitor—is reducing costs and red tape, and is ramping up domestic oil production to enhance American energy independence.

Business of Supply

Canada is the sixth-largest producer of oil in the world, with the third-largest proven oil reserves of any country on earth, the vast majority being in the oil sands. Unlike most major oil producers globally, Canada is a stable and free democracy with the most stringent environmental regulations and enforcement along with human rights, labour standards, and a fundamental philosophy that natural resources belong to citizens, so the wealth derived from energy development benefits the people broadly and in multiple ways. Despite these competitive and capacity advantages, only 4% of the world's daily oil production comes from Canada, which is forced to be a global oil price taker, not a price maker.

These realities are significant because the sustainability and future of oil and gas development in Canada are key to Canada's long-term prosperity overall and to the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of Canadians across the country right now.

Politics in British Columbia put the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion at risk, with NDP and Green Party leaders pledging to pursue legal action. This \$7.4 billion dollar project would create 15,000 jobs in Alberta and B.C. The Conference Board of Canada says it is expected to generate at least \$46.7 billion in government revenues and the equivalent of more than 40,000 jobs from economic spinoffs of this single project alone. It would create desperately needed jobs in Alberta while helping grow British Columbia's economy.

Pipelines are crucial economic transportation infrastructure, which Canada needs in all directions to diversify export markets, reduce reliance on the U.S., and enhance Canada's own energy independence and security.

However, the growing inflammatory ideological activism around pipelines threatens prosperity and opportunity for all Canadians, sometimes in the most crass and dishonest ways. Around 32,000 Métis and first nations people work in Canada's natural resource sector. In Lakeland and around Alberta, first nations are very active in oil and gas across the value chain, in upstream exploration and production, and in service, supply, and technology.

However, the Liberals and the left often use first nations as pawns in their anti-energy rhetoric, implying all first nations and Métis people are against it, but AFN Chief Perry Bellegarde confirms that 500 of the 630 first nations in Canada are open to pipelines and support petroleum development. In fact, 50 first nations actively support the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion in particular.

Representing a riding that includes eight first nations and Métis communities in northern rural Alberta, and as a person who happens to be part Ojibwa myself, I am disturbed and disgusted by the left's constant misrepresentation of the perspective on energy development of the majority of first nations in Canada. First nations across western Canada want more pipelines and are increasingly agitating publicly for themselves, because that infrastructure is as crucial to the lifeblood of their communities and to opportunities for young people as anywhere else.

The debate over pipelines in Canada is as much about trust as it is about economics. It has been odd to watch the minister—sometimes aggressively and sometimes just bewildered—express clear frustration that Albertans are just not grateful enough for their pipeline

approvals, as if he is not sure why we have the gall to still be so uppity, or as if we are just so hard to please, but the Liberals contradict themselves about oil and gas depending on where they are or to whom they are talking, because for the Liberals, it is about politics. That is why proponents on all sides of the pipeline debate have a hard time believing the Liberal rhetoric.

• (1035)

The Liberals' anti-Canadian energy agenda is obvious. They froze pipeline applications, delaying them for months, and launched four major regulatory reviews while citing interim measures that did not actually include any new aspects, except for the proposal of attaching upstream emissions to pipeline approvals, a standard they do not apply to any other major infrastructure projects anywhere in Canada, and more layers of administration and costs. This uncertainty deters investment and escalates job losses at the very worst time.

The Prime Minister told the world that Canada will phase out the oil sands and left the Minister of Natural Resources at home during trips in the U.S. focusing on trade and energy; the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, who seems to call the shots, was celebrated by U.S. lobbyists who explicitly oppose Canadian pipelines; and the new chief of staff of the Minister of Natural Resources wants to keep Canadian oil in the ground, while the NEB, one of the most renowned regulators in the world, is being dismantled and sent to Ottawa.

On the same day the Liberals accepted the independent expert recommendation to approve the Trans Mountain and Line 3 expansions, the Prime Minister killed the only actual new proposal to tidewater, the northern gateway pipeline, along with 31 first nations equity partnerships of \$2 billion. It was the first time a Prime Minister overruled or rejected a regulator's independent advice, which was based on the exact same process and evidence as the projects approved by the Liberals. Their talk of science and consultation is so empty, just like the tanker ban, which was directed by the Prime Minister in mandate letters before there was a single environmental safety or economic study, and ultimately absolutely no consultation with first nations about the ban, which applies to only one specific coast, astoundingly, because that incoherence is a product of politics and ideology driving policy and legislation.

Business of Supply

All Canadians should be concerned when ideological activism dictates government action. A 36-page Elections Canada report confirms the influence of foreign groups on Canadian democracy. At least three groups violated Canadian elections law, circumventing spending limits to push their anti-Canadian energy agenda to serve American business and energy interests. The truth is that many anti-Canadian energy groups are funded by American companies precisely to prevent securing diverse export markets for Canadian oil, but the need to accelerate that access has never been more urgent.

Canadian pipelines are sustainable, safe, and efficient, and 1.25 million more barrels of oil a day are transported across Canada through increased pipeline capacity approved under the previous Conservative government through four major pipelines and several others.

Thousands of Canadians lost their jobs since 2015, with people in some provinces and regions hit harder than others. The \$50 billion loss of investment in Canada's energy sector is the equivalent of losing 75% of auto manufacturing and all of the aerospace sector last year.

The economic and social consequences are immense: spikes in bankruptcies, foreclosures, food bank use, crime, domestic violence, family breakdowns, suicides. The losses in the energy sector are rippling through other sectors and across Canada. Pipelines will get people back to work in the near term and will sustain oil and gas, which are also the biggest investors in Canadian renewable and alternative energy development long into the future, yet Albertans in particular cannot seem to get themselves on the Liberals' priority list. The response by the Liberals to out-of-work energy workers is subsidies for other sectors and other countries, handouts to provincial governments, with added roadblocks and conditions to private sector investments like pipelines that would actually create jobs for middle-class Canadians, about whom the Liberals purport to care. The mythical social licence is always just out of reach, and it is now clear that no amount of taxing or begging or grovelling will earn it from those who never intend to grant it.

Oil sands development supports about 400,000 jobs across Canada, with thousands of businesses in every province directly dependent on the resource. Those jobs could reach 700,000 by 2030. They provide tax revenue and support major charitable, post-secondary, community, R & D, and education investments, and livelihoods, across Canada, increasing the standard of living in every community.

Alberta has long been a driving force in Canada's economy and a reliable partner in confederation. As a first generation Albertan, born and raised, I have only ever known my province as a young, dynamic, culturally and economically diverse, pioneering place, built by people from everywhere else in Canada, like my family from Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Ontario, single-handedly creating nine out of 10 jobs in Canada as recently as 2014.

Albertans are hard-working and generous, contributing \$200 billion between 2000 and 2014 to help lift Canadians in all regions. Even while Albertans lost more jobs than at any other time since Pierre Trudeau was in office, they continue to send billions more to the federal government than they receive in services.

This is an issue of national unity. The Prime Minister must support this motion.

• (1040)

Ms. Kim Rudd (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, with all due respect to the member opposite, I think she grabbed the wrong speech. We indeed have approved this pipeline, and we did so taking a number of things into consideration and making a number of changes. As an example, the interim principles that were provided around the NEB process create a more robust review and more engagement with Canadians and with indigenous peoples. The \$1.5 billion in the oceans protection plan is another example of how we address some of the concerns around making sure the economy and the environment go hand in hand.

The member mentioned job losses. Certainly, the sharp downturn in commodity prices affected the men, women, families, and communities in Alberta, and indeed across the country. I will go back to my colleague the member for Malpeque's comment about job losses across the country. Certainly, in my riding, a number of people went out west to work and now have come back home because the job market has certainly shrunk.

I wonder if the member opposite could talk about the 15,000 jobs that are going to be created, mostly in Alberta and B.C.; but again, people from across the country will return to work. Could she talk about the impact that will have on her communities?

• (1045)

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, the interim measures announced by the Liberal government, including community consultation, first nations input, and stakeholders impacted by the pipeline were nothing new. That was always done in the Canadian regulatory system by the world-renowned National Energy Board.

The only thing that was actually new was the attachment of upstream assessments as a condition of pipeline approvals. That is an assessment that would probably stop any other kind of major infrastructure anywhere in the country from being built, ever. That is a direct threat to the jobs and long-term prosperity of Albertans and the hundreds of thousands of Canadians who rely on the energy sector. The Liberals did it at the very worst time, and by their ongoing regulatory reviews, they have put the sector in uncertainty, which has been proven by the extreme fleeing of foreign investment and energy investment overall in the country.

Business of Supply

The ability for Alberta to continue to contribute to Canada is dependent on these pipelines. The Liberals need to do more than talk, and they need to give us a plan as to how they are going to get these pipelines built, and start by supporting this motion.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am absolutely astounded by the tone of the remarks. I will leave it to the 600-plus first nations of Canada, the Métis peoples, and Inuit to say whether or not their views are perhaps equally important as those of the member. She said her view overrides all of them.

Yes, in fact, we once had a revered institution, the National Energy Board. We also have some problems with the way the process has been going on in Alberta, with some reforms hopefully proceeding. However, we just had two expert panels, having consulted all across the country, recommending similar changes, as the public has lost trust in both the environmental assessment and National Energy Board processes. They made very strong recommendations for improvement.

The Supreme Court has given leave to the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation to raise its concerns, one of the most important cases coming forward. It was not consulted by her government, the Conservative government, on all the changes it brought to the NEB environmental process through omnibus budget bills. Would she like to respond to that? Perhaps they played a role in the problems we are facing in opposition to major energy projects.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Madam Speaker, I guess I can understand why an NDP MP from downtown Edmonton has no idea how first nations and Métis people, who live next door to energy developments and pipelines, actually are involved in the oil and gas sector and how important it is to all of their communities.

By the way, Premier Notley says that moving the NEB to Ottawa is dumb, so I guess there is no friend for the province like its NDP counterparts in the House of Commons.

However, this is what is really at stake. Albertans and my constituents are losing faith. They are not the kind of people to lie down or stand idly by while they are taken for granted and attacked. The Liberals must turn their attention to this issue urgently and seriously. They must not allow the debate on interprovincial transportation, a subject that is federal jurisdiction, to continue to divide Canadians. The Prime Minister, in my riding, in 2013, said this country is not about picking and choosing the areas we think we might be popular in; rather, it is about connecting and building a broad sense of where our country needs to go. He needs to do that.

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleagues, the members for Regina—Qu'Appelle, Chilliwack—Hope, and Portage—Lisgar, for their important and timely motion.

I confess that I find myself today in something of an uncomfortable position. Generally I would consider any alignment of the views of the members opposite with my own a source of discomfort, or even of soul-searching. In the case of this motion, though, we agree. Nonetheless, playing politics with economically vital projects like this is exactly why Stephen Harper got nothing built in 10 years. More important than my agreement with the contents of this motion is my—

• (1050)

Hon. Gerry Ritz: That is not true.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Now who is playing politics?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind the member for Battle River—Crowfoot that he will have an opportunity to ask questions and make comments when that time comes up. I hope he will afford the minister the respect he deserves to make his speech.

The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Jim Carr: Madam Speaker, more important than my agreement with the content of this motion is my complete agreement with the views on this project of our Prime Minister.

As hon. members will know, in the immediate aftermath of the election in British Columbia, the Prime Minister publicly and clearly reiterated our government's support for the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion project. He reinforced the case that our support for this project was made using a rigorous and thorough process, and it was based on science and facts, not political rhetoric.

At the moment, the future of the British Columbia government remains in question. Premier Clark has indicated her intention to face the legislature and test its confidence in her government. I cannot predict the outcome of a vote of confidence in the British Columbia legislature, but what I can say is that whatever the result of that vote, our government stands behind the decision we made to approve the Trans Mountain expansion project. Why? It is because it was the right decision when we made it last November. It was the right decision the day before the British Columbia election, and it is the right decision now. While the government in B.C. may change, the facts, the science, the evidence, the environmental considerations, the economic benefits, and the jobs all remain unchanged.

The project was, and this project is, in the best interests of Canadians, so I welcome the support of the members opposite. I welcome their recognition of the wisdom of our decision. I welcome their pointing out through this motion that the project has social licence to proceed, that it is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of thousands of jobs, that it is safe and environmentally sound, as recognized by the National Energy Board, and that it is under federal jurisdiction with respect to approval and regulation.

It is rare when the official opposition is a leading advocate for a government policy, but I can tell the House that it is something I could get used to.

Business of Supply

The motion before us deserves a fuller articulation, so let me address its various elements one by one. It asks the House to agree that the project has social licence, although I think we can all agree that this is an outdated term. One does not simply get a “lose” or a “yes” of social support. It is a daily responsibility to serve Canadians and constantly rebuild trust in the government.

How did this project achieve something the previous government was unable to do, which was diversify markets for our resources, during its entire time in office? The answer is straightforward. Our government listened to Canadians. The previous government believed it knew best without needing to ask for any other opinion. There must be a certain comfort in knowing all without asking Canadians what their opinions are on such projects as this. We listened closely. We heard that not all Canadians agreed, and that is okay. What we heard most strongly was that Canadians are tired of the polarization of the environment versus the economy. We are all in this together.

Under the previous government, Canadians had simply lost trust in the environmental assessment and review processes, because the outcomes were predetermined. They had come to believe that when weighing economic benefits and environmental stewardship, the scales had become tipped too far in one direction. Our government set about regaining the trust of Canadians. We did so by taking a different approach. We reached out to indigenous communities. We consulted meaningfully, something the Federal Court of Appeal said the previous government had not done sufficiently with the northern gateway project, which is the reason its permit was revoked.

In the case of the Trans Mountain expansion project, government officials consulted with 117 indigenous groups, and the results are publicly available. We have set aside more than \$64 million to fund an indigenous advisory and monitoring committee to meaningfully engage indigenous groups in monitoring the project over its lifespan, the first time in Canadian history. It is a step never before taken by any previous government.

●(1055)

Our government listened to environmental groups and those living in the affected communities. We listened to academics and industry. We extended the consultation period to ensure that as many voices as possible could be heard. However, we did not stop there. To regain the confidence of Canadians, we also initiated a modernization of the National Energy Board to ensure that its composition reflected regional views and had sufficient expertise in environmental science, community development, and indigenous traditional knowledge. We are now in the process of determining how these changes can best be made.

Canadians know that the path to a lower-carbon future may be long, but it is well under way. It is accelerating, and its trajectory is clear. They know that the economy of tomorrow will require investments today in clean technologies, energy efficiency, and renewable sources of energy. Our government has taken action on all these fronts, including doing what virtually every economist and energy company says is the best, most effective way to lower greenhouse gas emissions and spur innovation: putting a price on carbon. In fact, in our government's first budget, we made generational investments in clean energy and new technologies,

including technologies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the oil and gas sector. We will build that clean-growth economy, and we are, but we are not there yet, due to nearly a decade of inaction by the previous government.

With all these initiatives—consulting indigenous communities, engaging Canadians, focusing on sustainability, modernizing the National Energy Board, and investing in green technologies—we sent a very clear signal to Canadians and the world that under this government, environmental sustainability will go hand in hand with economic development. We cannot have one without the other. The actions we took, the investments we made, and the approach we embraced demonstrated that commitment and earned the confidence of Canadians.

The motion before us also speaks to the importance of the Trans Mountain expansion project to the Canadian economy and in creating thousands of jobs. Indeed, this \$7.4 billion project will have significant economic benefits. The project is expected to create 15,000 new jobs during construction. This is good news for workers in Alberta, it is good news for workers in British Columbia, and it is good news for all of Canada. It is also good news for indigenous peoples, who will benefit from jobs and business opportunities as a result of the impact and benefit agreements they have signed with Kinder Morgan.

The Trans Mountain expansion is also expected to generate more than \$3 billion in revenue for governments, revenues that can be used to invest in health care, schools, water treatment plants, and safer roads, improving the lives of millions of Canadians. This is a vital project in a vital industry, an industry that has been hit hard over the past few years.

I know that every member in the House understands what the effect of lower oil prices has been for Albertans. The economic impacts may be measured in rigs being closed, barrels cut, or investments deferred, but they are felt in the lives of families and experienced in hard conversations around kitchen tables. We took action to support families in the energy sector by extending EI benefits in affected regions, including parts of Alberta, Saskatchewan, northern Ontario, and Newfoundland and Labrador. We also provided additional support to families in the prairie provinces under the Canada child benefit.

To give more Canadians greater access to good, well-paying jobs, our government invested in training for unemployed and under-employed workers and will develop a new framework to support union-based apprenticeship training.

Business of Supply

For families in Alberta and British Columbia, the Trans Mountain expansion project offers much-needed help and good jobs. It is no wonder, then, that Premier Notley praised the Prime Minister for extraordinary leadership and said, “It has been a long, dark night for the people of Alberta.... [But] we are finally seeing some morning light.”

The Premier also pointed to a key benefit of this project when she said, “We’re getting a chance to reduce our dependence on one market, and therefore to be more economically independent. And we’re getting a chance to pick ourselves up and move forward again.”

● (1100)

Nor is it just Canadians in Alberta and British Columbia who will benefit from the Trans Mountain expansion project. A 2014 study by the Canadian Energy Research Institute found that for every job created in Alberta’s oil patch, at least two more jobs were created across the country. It could be a manufacturing company in Ontario, an engineering firm in Quebec, or an oil worker commuting from one of our coasts. Quite simply, a strong energy industry strengthens us all, and projects such as the Trans Mountain expansion benefit all Canadians.

The motion also points out the environmental soundness of this project, as determined by the National Energy Board. In approving this project, our government considered the evidence and weighed the facts. We agree with the National Energy Board that the project should proceed, subject to the 157 binding conditions that will be enforced by the board.

Our government considered the fact that without new pipelines, more diluted bitumen would be forced into more rail tanker cars for transport. That would be less economic, more dangerous for communities, and would produce higher greenhouse gas emissions.

At the same time that we approved the Trans Mountain expansion project, we also announced a ban on oil tankers on the northern B.C. coastline, specifically around Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait, and Queen Charlotte Sound. This coastline is vital to the livelihoods and cultures of indigenous and coastal communities and is part of a unique and ecologically sensitive region.

Hon. members will know that Bill C-48, the oil tanker moratorium act, has now been introduced in this House. I look forward to their support for this vital legislation in the days ahead. As the Minister of Transport has said, the Great Bear region is no place for an oil pipeline, and it is no place for oil tankers either.

Our government has also made the most significant investment ever to protect our oceans and coastlines, with a \$1.5-billion oceans protection plan that includes improving marine traffic monitoring; setting tougher requirements on industry, including for spill response times; making navigation safer; and co-managing our coast with indigenous and coastal communities.

Our government is also committed to consistently increasing our action on climate change. A 1.5-degree world helps no one, and that includes every one of us here and every Canadian we represent. Inaction comes at too high a cost, whereas a clean growth economy will build more good, middle-class jobs across the country.

These measures reinforce the importance of carefully balancing environmental protection with economic development as Canada makes the transition to a low-carbon economy.

The motion put forward by my hon. colleague points out that the Trans Mountain expansion project falls under federal jurisdiction for approval and regulation. Certainly the Constitution assigns the federal government jurisdiction over interprovincial and international trade. With that jurisdiction comes responsibility to consult widely, to act prudently, and to stand firmly.

We know that there are some who disagree with our decision to approve this project and that they may use the legal system to seek redress. We respect their right to do so, but we will strongly defend our decision in court.

Our position is clear: the jurisdiction is federal, the decision has been made, and our government will continue to support the Trans Mountain expansion project. On every aspect of this motion, our government finds itself in full agreement. Indeed, as I said in this House to a question from the hon. member for Calgary Forest Lawn, I appreciate their making the case for us.

As I have said many times, one of our government’s key responsibilities is to help get Canadian resources to market. With our major customer, the United States, producing more of its own energy, it is essential that Canada build the infrastructure to get our oil and gas to new global markets. That is exactly why we have approved projects such as the Trans Mountain expansion, doing more in one year than the previous government did in a decade: protecting our oceans, pricing carbon pollution, resetting our nation-to-nation relations, building a climate change plan, and putting middle-class Canadians back to work today by approving the pipelines we need to reach those new markets.

There is one final element of this motion that I have not yet addressed: that the Trans Mountain expansion project “should be constructed with the continued support of the federal government, as demonstrated by the Prime Minister personally announcing the approval of the project.”

● (1105)

I would have thought that the answer to that request would have been clear from the Prime Minister’s statements of the past week, so I was somewhat surprised to hear the hon. member for Regina—Qu’Appelle ask in this House whether the Prime Minister will “stand up to the forces that are seeking to kill these jobs, or will he fold like a cardboard cut-out?” If I may paraphrase one of the more famous phrases uttered by one of our heroes, Sir Winston Churchill, in this very place, some cardboard, some cut-out.

Business of Supply

Our government will not falter. We will not fail. We will certainly not fold in our support of the Trans Mountain expansion project, nor will we shy away from being a leading force in the global clean growth economy. Neither can be ignored. It is the right thing to do for Canada.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Madam Speaker, the rhetorical shots aside, I am glad to hear that the minister is going to support this motion and that he agrees with every aspect of it. He has been consistent in that regard on this pipeline.

As I have said, in Houston, Calgary, and this week in Rome, the Prime Minister has said that he is going to continue to press for this pipeline. I wish he would come to British Columbia to talk more about it, and I wish that the minister and the Prime Minister could convince the 17 Liberal members of Parliament. I hope they read his speech and are as convinced as some of the colleagues who were in his camera shot are, because we have not heard from a single Liberal member of Parliament from British Columbia about whether they agree with the minister.

Could the minister tell this House how we can expect to get social licence and the support of the people of British Columbia if he cannot even convince the Liberal members of Parliament from British Columbia in his own caucus?

Hon. Jim Carr: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the question from my hon. friend, and more than that I appreciate the excellent work that he is doing as the natural resources critic.

We agree on many things. We agree on doing whatever is reasonable that we can do as a government to look seriously at the Alberta energy industry and how we can help those who are suffering as a result of the downturn, also knowing that the jobs that are created by these major energy projects are of benefit not only to Alberta but, in the case of the Trans Mountain expansion, to the people of British Columbia as well.

Those benefits are well known to all of our members on this side of the House from all regions, not only in British Columbia and Alberta, where the job creation benefit is most direct, but throughout the country. The energy sector has been an important driver of the Canadian economy for decades. We believe that it will continue to be.

As we make that transition to a low-carbon economy, it is the entrepreneurship and innovation of Albertans and British Columbians that will help us drive it. It makes no sense not to use the wealth that we have available in the ground so as to help finance this transition. It is not only the members of Parliament from British Columbia but also members of Parliament from all across the country who realize how important the energy sector is to Canadians.

• (1110)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very proud to stand in this House as a coastal British Columbian and have this opportunity to ask the Minister of Natural Resources questions.

When the Prime Minister came to Esquimalt in August 2015, he made a solemn promise that the pipeline review process would have to be done for Kinder Morgan. The Liberal MP for North Vancouver, who is the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Environment

and Climate Change, also repeated the claim that Kinder Morgan would have to satisfy a new review process. So too did the Liberal member of Parliament for Burnaby North—Seymour.

I have a simple question for the minister. Why did the Prime Minister and Liberal members of Parliament from British Columbia lie to the people of British Columbia?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I want to remind the member that members are not to indicate that someone has lied. They can question why someone has said something.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, I will restate the question: why did the Prime Minister and Liberal MPs from British Columbia deliberately mislead the people of B.C.?

Hon. Jim Carr: Madam Speaker, we came into office with major energy projects under review. We had to make decisions on how those reviews were to be handled in the short term while we looked at permanent reforms to the environmental assessment process in Canada.

The member will know that as a part of those interim principles, we established more consultation, not only from government but also from an expert panel that made its way up and down the line, speaking extensively and meaningfully with indigenous communities and others who had an opinion. As a matter of fact, on the website there were literally tens of thousands of opinions expressed by Canadians from coast to coast to coast. That is not something that the process had allowed before.

We knew that the National Energy Board, as it was currently constituted, did not have the confidence of Canadians, so in the case of those projects under review, we added more opportunities and a different set of criteria, leading to the decision that in the opinion of the Government of Canada, this project was in Canada's interest.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, the debate so far today has been contaminated by so many claims that are contrafactual. In other words, the facts are clear, but the conversation in this place is ignoring them.

For instance, the claim was made that shipping bitumen is safer in a pipeline. The opposite is true.

When the question at issue is the safety of pipelines versus trains, the critical point is to know what product is being shipped. If it is Bakken shale, which is what blew up in Lac-Mégantic, it is clear it should not be on a train, but solid bitumen can only be put in a pipeline once it has been made more dangerous by adding diluent, which doubles the shipment times as a result of making it into a substance that can flow. Diluted bitumen in a pipeline, once spilled, cannot be cleaned up, but solid bitumen on a train is the safest way to move solid bitumen. That is relevant to the first non-fact.

The second non-fact is the idea that diluted bitumen can be cleaned up. The member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley already mentioned this point, but let me point out two incontrovertible scientific studies that were ignored by the National Energy Board.

Business of Supply

I intervened in the National Energy Board process. The process was flawed from the get-go by lack of procedural fairness and the abuse of the rights of intervenors in that process, and the courts will rule on that. However, I do need to say that the National Academy of Sciences in the United States—their premier scientific body—and the Royal Society of Canada expert panel both found that bitumen mixed with diluent does not, at this point, have any science to justify the claim that it can be cleaned up. It cannot. It still is not cleaned up in the Kalamazoo River in Michigan, and no matter how much we now hear from Liberals what we used to hear from Conservatives, the very well-modulated Kennedyesque tones do not make non-facts into facts.

• (1115)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind the members that I do have a clock and I am very cognizant of how long people speak.

The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Jim Carr: Madam Speaker, there is no question there is commentary, and I always learn from the commentary of the hon. member. She and I sat on the board of the International Institute for Sustainable Development when we were both way younger than we are now. Her extensive knowledge of this file and many others does credit to this chamber. On this item, we disagree.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I wonder if my colleague could share with the House the importance of considering the economic and social issues surrounding pipeline development.

Hon. Jim Carr: Madam Speaker, the world has changed. If this debate would have happened 20 years ago, the balance between economic development and environmental stewardship would have been lame. It would not have been at the centre of Canadian consciousness. It is now.

If this debate would have taken place 20 years ago, there would not have been much attention paid to indigenous communities. There would not have been much attention paid to the meaningful accommodation that is necessary to gain the support of indigenous peoples. That is not just in Canada. Wherever we go internationally, we find that the issues are the same. The issues are about sustainable development. Sustainable development, in the case of Canada, means paying close attention to environmental stewardship, honouring the teachings and realities of indigenous communities, and also knowing that the energy sector will continue to be an important source of economic development and job creation for Canadians.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am rising today to speak to the Conservative opposition day motion on the Kinder Morgan pipeline. I will also be talking about sustainability, because I just heard the minister responsible for natural resources try to appropriate to himself the teachings of first nations. He should learn one thing, which is that first nations are opposing Kinder Morgan because it is not a sustainable project.

It is worth reminding ourselves what sustainability is. Going back more than 20 years now, when we got the first report that said we had to start looking at the environmental, social, and economic

aspects of all projects, what that essentially said was that we have to remove one of the last remaining and huge inequalities in our society, which is the inequality between generations.

What the minister is trying to support and defend today is precisely the type of development that we have had in this country over the centuries. We take raw natural resources, we do not add value here in Canada, and we try to ship them out as quickly as we possibly can. I heard the government say yesterday that the real problem right now is the shipping of our raw petroleum resources to the United States in far too great a proportion, that we have to start shipping them off to the Asian continent just as rapidly as we were shipping to the United States.

However, it forgets the obvious, which is that when we are talking about replacing some of the fossil fuels we are burning now, those very same products can produce some of the ingredients for a sustainable future. In other words, whether it is epoxies or carbon substances that go into solar panels, or the propellers for wind turbines, these are all things that require us to learn how to be prudent with our resources, including the oil we are blessed with in this country. I do not think that statement is one that anyone would ever oppose. We are blessed in Canada to have this type of natural resource. Countries around the world realize just how lucky we are.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

I remember dealing with this on another occasion. When we were fighting the closure of the Shell refinery in Montreal, people asked me how I, as an environmentalist, could support keeping the refinery in Montreal open.

I was quite pleased when Louis-Gilles Francoeur, by far the best journalist to have written about the environment in Quebec, wrote a front-page article in *Le Devoir* backing us. He wrote that we should stop the foolish practice of exporting our raw natural resources. For example, we export B.C. cedar logs to China where they are transformed into children's play structures, and then we go to Costco to buy what was made in China with this beautiful cedar.

Why do we not add value here? Quebec prohibited this kind of wood export a long time ago, and there are furniture factories along the border.

The first step towards sustainable development is adding value to our products here in Canada, which has never been a priority for the Conservatives or the Liberals.

Business of Supply

[English]

It is not very surprising, of course, that the Conservatives are going to put forward a motion in favour of Kinder Morgan. They do not like it when we remind them that they used the technique of budget bills that used to hide all sorts of things, that they gutted key, century-old legislation like the navigable waters protection act. What is even more disturbing is that I was there on the night that the mammoth budget bill was going through, and it was hiding all sorts of things. I remember the Liberals rending their garments, saying how terrible it was, promising up and down that they would bring back the navigable waters protection act.

If we understand that we are blessed with these natural resources, then we have to understand that the only way they can be developed with people onside, what we sometimes call social licence, is to have a clear, credible, thorough, transparent environmental assessment process. However, the Conservatives showed a bit of frustration, that there were too many decisions of the courts according the rights to first nations to have a word to say about how resources were developed after 400 years of colonization and oppression. They thought it was about time that we started giving first nations the proper hearing respecting their rights. Conservatives did not agree with that.

The Liberals, the whole time, talked a good game. It is worth looking at the words that were used by the Liberals, because they cannot weasel away from those right now. The Prime Minister's approval of the process that he once condemned, for us, is a fundamental breach of his obligation toward British Columbians, and all Canadians.

In Esquimalt, B.C., on August 20, 2015, the Liberal leader, the now Prime Minister, was asked “does your NEB overhaul apply to Kinder Morgan?” He replied, “Yes, yes.... It applies to existing projects, existing pipelines” as well. He was asked for further clarification: “So if they approve Kinder Morgan in January, you're saying”, and then the Prime Minister cut him off. He said, “No, they are not going to approve it in January because we are going to change the government. And that process [has to be] redone.” The tape of that is easy to find.

The Liberal MP for North Vancouver and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change proclaimed on his campaign website: “A new, independent, evidence-based process must be established. The Kinder Morgan expansion project must satisfy this new rigorous review”.

The Liberal MP for Burnaby North—Seymour, who is now the parliamentary secretary to the minister of fisheries, of all things, told voters, “We are going to redo the National Energy Board process. [...] Kinder Morgan will have to go through a new, revised process.” That was a solemn promise. They broke that promise.

Madam Speaker, you were right, under the rules of this Parliament, to remind us that there are certain words we cannot use here, but I can say that they did not keep that promise, that what they said was not true. It was the opposite of the truth. I can use the word to describe when somebody intentionally says the opposite of the truth, and I will use that word for the rest of the day when I speak

to people outside of this hall. It is important to remind Canadians how we came here.

We came here with Conservatives, Mr. Harper, who famously said that Kyoto, which sought to deal with the real crisis that is global warming, was “a socialist [plot] to suck money [from] wealth-producing countries”. That was at least an honest expression on the part of a climate change denier.

What we have over on this side, and it is interesting because the head of the Green Party just used similar terms to describe it, is the smiling version of Stephen Harper. We have the reassuring version. We have the snake oil salesman version, in fact. Throughout the campaign, Liberals promised to do politics differently. They promised to bring back the Navigable Waters Protection Act. Of course, they have not brought back a single article. They promised to bring in a new environmental assessment process. Of course, they broke that promise.

What the Minister of Natural Resources was referring to before was something that even the people who were put on that panel after, as some sort of patch job, said. They do not have records of anything that they heard. He had the nerve to stand in the House a few minutes ago and say, “All is well. We received 10,000 emails.” What does that even mean? They are trying to snow people. They are trying to con people into believing that they are somehow different. The only difference is that instead of approving Kinder Morgan with a scowl, they are approving Kinder Morgan with a smile. It is still Kinder Morgan. People of British Columbia cannot be fooled on that one.

On the subject of what is often referred to as social licence, let us be clear. The process did not allow people to even cross-examine witnesses. Why is that important? It is important because all of these types of approaches, this type of tribunal, this type of hearing, have to follow what are called the rules of natural justice.

● (1125)

[Translation]

Major energy projects across Canada are no longer undergoing credible assessments that make Canadians feel as though their voices are being heard. Under the rules of natural justice, when witnesses are being heard, people have the right to ask those stakeholders questions and cross-examine them.

What did the Liberals allow to happen in the case of Kinder Morgan? They allowed people who represent Kinder Morgan to come and give their opinion. Then, rather than saying that it was an opinion, they said that it was evidence, facts. It cannot be evidence or facts if no one had the right to ask them any questions about their testimony or cross-examine them. That is a violation of the rules of natural justice, but the Liberal Prime Minister is trying to cover it up and lead us to believe that he changed the process.

There are rules of sustainable development. When I was the Quebec environment minister, I banned seismic testing in the Gulf of St. Lawrence for 10 years. Shortly after that ban was lifted, seismic testing was conducted for another pipeline, the energy east project. Seismic testing was done right in the middle of a beluga whale breeding ground. It is mind-boggling.

Business of Supply

I am proud to have included a provision in Quebec's Sustainable Development Act, which I presented in the National Assembly and which was unanimously passed, that changed the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, just as my colleague from Edmonton Strathcona here, in the House of Commons, is proposing to change Canadian law to recognize the right to live in a healthy environment, under existing legislation. The David Suzuki Foundation, among others, has used this provision of the Quebec charter to stop seismic testing in the habitat of beluga whales, a species that is already threatened in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

How can the public have confidence in either Kinder Morgan or energy east?

• (1130)

[English]

In the case of energy east, it is worth remembering that if we go to Quebec City, we will see very large crude carriers right across from there, at the big Valero refinery. If we go to Sorel-Tracy, we will see even larger crude carriers filling up the new Enbridge Line 9B that was recently installed. What they are doing is so obviously dangerous that those crude carriers are only allowed to fill up to a certain level because they are close to the bottom of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Between a train, a pipeline, and one of those very large crude carriers dumping in that ecosystem in the St. Lawrence, I know which one is more dangerous. I also know that it has to be studied. It does not make any sense that in Canada right now, we are importing crude oil from insecure foreign sources like Algeria and Russia, and having it refined at Valero's large refinery in Saint-Romuald across from Quebec City.

However, we cannot even have that discussion because neither Kinder Morgan nor energy east can go forward. There is no thorough, credible evaluation process for that type of project in Canada right now. The reason we do not have that project is because the Liberal government and the Liberal Prime Minister broke their word.

Recent spills have demonstrated that B.C. is not prepared to deal with current traffic, much less with a sevenfold increase in tanker traffic. B.C.'s coast and economy are too important to risk. That is why we are demanding a new and comprehensive review process, exactly what the Liberals promised but have not delivered, that would address environmental concerns, properly consult with first nations, fully evaluate regional economic impacts, and allow for full public participation.

I go back to the words of the member for Winnipeg, who reminded us that he has played some kind of role with regard to sustainable development in the past. That makes it even more unpardonable, because he does not even have the excuse of ignorance. He is claiming to have social licence to go forward with Kinder Morgan. He has no such social licence. His government has no such social licence.

We are also demanding that the review process that addresses those environmental concerns properly consults with first nations, fully evaluates regional economic impacts, and allows for full public participation. That's the only way to obtain that social licence. Pre-

election, the Prime Minister knew that. It is too bad that the post-election Prime Minister will not admit it.

[Translation]

Under Stephen Harper's NEB process, the public was excluded and hundreds of applications to provide comment were rejected. As I mentioned earlier, there was no ability to cross-examine witnesses. Important issues were also ignored, including climate impacts. In addition, first nations were not adequately consulted.

Even the government's own ministerial panel on the project criticized the significant gaps in the NEB process and found that the proposal could not proceed. Was it not enough that the National Energy Board had met in private with the former premier of Quebec, Jean Charest, to figure out how to better sell the energy east project? Since when is a decision pre-determined by people whose only mandate is to listen to the evidence, weigh what is presented in public, and make a decision based on what was heard and in accordance with the rules?

I often say that, generally speaking, it is just as big of a mistake to decide in advance that a project cannot go ahead as it is to decide in advance that it must. There was only one time in my career that I refused to consider a project. It was another project in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the completely ludicrous Rabaska project, which sought to bring huge ships filled with liquid natural gas to a terminal located across from Île d'Orléans and Quebec City, where it would be converted back into gas. It was so dangerous and so absurd that I said I would not even consider it.

Similarly, I was one of the people that said that there was no way that the Douglas Channel project near Kitimat, in northern British Columbia, should go forward. The name Thomas suits me because I always want to go and see and touch things for myself, so I went to visit the Douglas Channel with my friend and colleague who represents that area of British Columbia, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley. There, I was able to see for myself that the idea of bringing large tankers into that channel was absolutely insane.

It is therefore possible for a government to refuse to even consider a project, so why then did the Liberals have reports from the National Energy Board on the Trans Mountain project? There were two projects: one in northern British Columbia and the other in the south. As a result, there were two reports from the NEB. In the case of the Douglas Channel in northern B.C., the NEB said that the project could not go forward unless it was sustainable, unless the first nations were consulted, and unless it obtained social licence. However, the NEB said that everything was fine for the project in the southern part of the province. That does not make any sense.

Business of Supply

•(1135)

[English]

Even the panel co-chair reported that everywhere they went there were issues with confidence, transparency, independence, safety, and security. The Kinder Morgan pipeline will not be going ahead because the Liberals did not respect their promise to British Columbians to bring in a new process that would be credible, thorough, transparent, and that the public could have confidence in. Without those key elements, none of these major projects can go ahead, because in this day and age the public knows we have an obligation not just to ourselves now, but to future generations. That is the essence of sustainability, and that is why the New Democratic Party will be opposing the motion, and why we oppose the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Madam Speaker, I always enjoy the leader of the NDP's contributions to the debate in the House. The NDP has always been clear on this pipeline and certainly on any major pipeline that was proposed under the Conservative government. The NDP was opposed to the pipeline. That was its position and the member has just outlined the reasons for it.

What I have more trouble with is the Liberals saying one thing when they are running for election and doing something else when they are in government. Canadians should be concerned about that, as well as having the Prime Minister say one thing and Liberal MPs from B.C. say either the opposite or nothing, which appears will be the case.

I want to ask the member a sincere question. The NDP Premier of British Columbia—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mark Strahl: Sorry, I meant the NDP Premier of Alberta. Yes, I walked into that.

The NDP Premier of Alberta made it clear. She said, "Mark my words, that pipeline will be built." Obviously, John Horgan said something else. Tom Sigurdson, Mike Harcourt, Dan Miller, and other B.C. NDP luminaries have said they think it is good for the building trades and that it should go ahead.

I want to get the member's perspective on the comments of the Premier of Alberta and what he might say to her in opposing this project.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair: Madam Speaker, the member is also from British Columbia and has looked at this for a long time, but let us not forget that it is not Rachel Notley who promised a new system to evaluate the Kinder Morgan project; it is the Prime Minister. He is the one who is breaking his promise, and that is why British Columbians and the NDP say that the Kinder Morgan project cannot go ahead, because it has never been studied in a thorough and credible manner.

I would also add, and I think that Alberta has shown the way on this to many other provinces, that the Rachel Notley NDP government is the first one in the history of Alberta to come up with a plan to start bending the curve with regard to greenhouse gas reduction. It put on a hard cap. It brought together first nations,

business groups, and non-governmental organizations. That is bridge building. I also like to see the NDP Premier of B.C., as he was just referred to, and the leader of the Green Party getting together. That is also bridge building.

I am sure that with a lot of goodwill, we can do a lot, including creating new jobs in the new economy. It does not have to be based on those same resources of the past. We can do a lot and the people of Alberta can be part of that.

•(1140)

Ms. Kim Rudd (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will go back to the hon. member's original comment and ask if he purports to speak for all indigenous groups. If so, what does he say to those indigenous groups in communities that, indeed, support this pipeline?

I also want to follow up on something the member for Chilliwack—Hope mentioned, and that is the comment by Premier Notley, the NDP Premier of Alberta, who clearly supports this project.

In addition, I would ask the member opposite what he would say to NDP members across Canada who, indeed, support this pipeline and the workers, a lot of whom are represented by trade unions, who want the 15,000 jobs because they are good, middle-class, well-paying jobs and they are important to communities across this country.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair: Madam Speaker, in the filings of Kinder Morgan with the National Energy Board, it did not talk about 15,000 jobs. It talked about 50, not 50,000 but 50 jobs permanently created by that pipeline. I do not know where the 15,000 comes from.

I would ask my colleague one thing. Why did she enter politics? Does she feel good when she meets with a group in her riding and says the Liberals told the people of British Columbia that there would be a new process, but that was just something they were saying to get elected and had no intention of doing it?

Does that make her feel good about coming into politics and investing that much time and energy? I would feel terrible if I had ever done something like that. When I was the minister of environment, I was able to reduce greenhouse gases every year I was there. Does anyone know why? It was because I went in with core beliefs of what was important in terms of sustainable development and I dedicated myself, heart and soul, to respecting what I had promised people. People who get into politics making fake promises they have no intention of keeping is something that you should be ashamed of.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the member to address his comments to the Chair and not to use the word "you". It would be a lot easier.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, in regard to the Kinder Morgan existing pipeline, it actually runs through my riding. Obviously I am an interior B.C.-based MP.

Business of Supply

I would like to see a new pipeline, because it is 60-plus years old and the design standards and requirements today are unparalleled, considering the ones that the original pipeline was built under. Having a new pipeline built would allow for a greater amount of oil, but would also be able to pay for increases to safety and response times, as well as all the infrastructure that goes along with that.

The member has also mentioned his issues with the credibility of the National Energy Board. Could the member actually concretely say what elements he would change, and tell us why no member of Parliament has put forward a private member's bill to introduce that change so that we can have that debate on whether or not the board could be tweaked to build bridges, as the member said, and pipelines?

Hon. Thomas Mulcair: Madam Speaker, we know that the members of the National Energy Board, who were holding hearings on the energy east project, actually sat down with Jean Charest and admitted, because they had to be replaced because they were in an obvious conflict, that they were there to find out the best way to sell the project. Though they had not even heard the evidence yet, they had already decided the result.

That is a bit of a problem for most Canadians, if members of the NEB are supposed to be in an adjudication process listening to evidence and they have already made up their minds in advance. I do not know about the member, but I find that to be a bit of a problem.

With regard to the changes that are necessary, there has been another report brought in. I will distance myself from one key element of that. I did not think it made any sense whatsoever to say that the NEB cannot sit in Calgary. I thought that was an absolutely unacceptable sleight to the people of Calgary and to the ability of people to do their jobs.

However, the question is, what is necessary? We need a thorough, credible, transparent process. We do not have one. That is not just our opinion; it is the opinion of all the experts who have looked at it. We have to replace the energy board with something that is credible. If we do not, none of these projects, whether it is energy east or Kinder Morgan, can go ahead.

If the member believes in the sustainable and environmentally respectful development of our natural resources, which I repeat are a blessing, then he should get on board with trying to put in place something that the public can have confidence in. That is the nature of social licence.

• (1145)

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, the Liberal Minister of Natural Resources started his speech earlier by saying that he was in the uncomfortable position of agreeing with the Conservatives, and that he had some soul-searching to do. That is strange, because Liberals so often agree with Conservatives when it comes to pipelines.

If the expert panel that the Prime Minister appointed to review the National Energy Board came up with the following conclusions: that the public has fundamentally lost confidence in the National Energy Board, and that there is a "crisis of confidence" with respect to the decisions that are being made because the public overwhelmingly feels that the National Energy Board is a "captured" regulator. That

means it is too close to industry and is too often approving whatever it is that industry wants, leaving the public out.

If that is the situation and the promise was clearly made by the Prime Minister that in order to get that social licence, we have to restore and renew the NEB on this project before it gets approved, what situation do we have now? He went into British Columbia a week after the election and said that British Columbian voters, 60% of which voted for parties against this pipeline, were wrong.

What message is this Prime Minister and his silent Liberal MPs from British Columbia actually sending to the people of my province?

Hon. Thomas Mulcair: Madam Speaker, that question really is the essence of what we are discussing here today.

The Prime Minister said the process was broken. The ministerial review panel on Kinder Morgan said the process was broken. The expert panel on the NEB said the process was broken.

Why do the Liberals now think the process is fine?

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House today of behalf of the good people of Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola. I would like inform the House that I will be proudly sharing my time with the member of Parliament for Battle River—Crowfoot.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Order. I just want to remind the members of the NDP at this point that the House is still going on, and if they want to have conversations, they should have them in the lobby.

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, before we begin this debate, I think it is important for us to recognize why we are having it. We know that recently, the BC Green Party and the B.C. NDP did a backroom deal, with the intent to form a government in my home province of British Columbia. As part of this deal, it has been made clear that should a B.C. NDP-Green Party-supported government come to power, it will use every tool at its disposal to stop the Trans Mountain pipeline.

On top of that, we know that there are multiple Liberal members of Parliament from British Columbia who have publicly stated that they are opposed to the Trans Mountain pipeline being built. Meanwhile, when the Prime Minister was doing his cross-Canada feel-good tour, he conveniently skipped my home province of British Columbia. That is a curious omission. There is no question that when the Prime Minister is in Alberta, he is very committed to the Trans Mountain pipeline. However, this same commitment has not been demonstrated in British Columbia.

These things, all added up, raise concerns for me. That is why I think we are having this debate today.

Business of Supply

I will do something a little unusual for an opposition member. I will give some praise to the government, first, for approving the Trans Mountain pipeline. However, I must add that while one of the Liberals' favourite talking points is how the former government did not get any pipelines built to tidewater, to be clear, the National Energy Board did not green-light the Trans Mountain pipeline until the new government was in power.

On the same note, I will credit the government for keeping a campaign promise to re-open the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station and for adding spill response capacity at this station. I will recognize also that when the Prime Minister is in Alberta stating the reasons his government supports the Trans Mountain pipeline, he makes a compelling case. Let us hope that more of this happens in British Columbia where it is truly needed.

Now that I have given the government some credit where it is warranted, I would like to add a few thoughts on the topic. To be clear, if the Trans Mountain pipeline were not built, it would not stop the flow of oil, so to speak. It will simply guarantee that oil continues to go in the same direction across the same border, where we yield a much smaller return.

Let us be clear. The revenue and related taxation from resource royalties is part of how governments at all levels provide critically needed services for our citizens. The question is, ultimately, where we send the oil to maximize the return for the citizens we all, collectively, represent.

In Alberta, we have an NDP government that has paid a massive political price for introducing some extremely unpopular environmental regulations, the carbon taxation, to be blunt, in an effort to secure social licence on pipelines. It has been a failed effort, because those who oppose the oil sands will continue to oppose them, regardless of what the Alberta NDP government does.

However, here in this place we have an obligation to represent our citizens in a manner that also strengthens the fabric of the country, and ultimately the Canadian national interest.

In British Columbia there is an added concern about the presence of oil tankers off the west coast of Vancouver Island. Indeed, this Liberal government proposes to ban large tankers off the north coast of British Columbia. I mention large tankers, because of course, the proposed legislation says that smaller tankers are okay, because even those who oppose tankers on the north coast still need them. Because of that, they will get less efficient, smaller tankers.

Getting back to tankers off the west coast of Vancouver Island, there is an international shipping lane off the west coast of Vancouver Island. Just across the border and south of Vancouver, British Columbia, is a place called Cherry Point, Washington, home of a massive refinery. It is a destination for all kinds of large-scale tanker traffic. The bottom line is that tankers ply the waters off Vancouver Island, and will continue to, regardless of any legislation passed in this place or in Victoria.

● (1150)

The only question is this. Do we allow our resources to be discounted, and our jobs lost solely because some in the United States have figured out a loophole that makes it very easy to send large amounts of money into Canada to oppose not U.S. oil or Saudi

Arabian oil but just oil from Canada? I would suggest that this is wrong. It is one of the many reasons I support the Trans Mountain pipeline.

In fact, on a local level, some of the communities in my riding also publicly support the Trans Mountain pipeline. Aside from the job benefits, they stand to get some taxation benefits from the improvements. For a community like Merritt, which was hard hit by the closure of the Tolko lumber mill, these are critically needed jobs and revenues for local government.

Looking at the bigger picture, I also believe that there are times when we need to have a national vision and the leadership to see it through, because that is how we build a stronger Canada. We watch celebrities charter 100-foot yachts and jet around the world. They have a carbon footprint hundreds of times that of normal, everyday citizens. They will fly into Alberta, hire a local jet-fuel-powered Bell helicopter, and then blast us for our oil sands.

We see oil-producing countries with nowhere near the environmental regulations being implemented in Alberta that are getting a complete pass, because here in Canada, we have become the low-hanging fruit of the anti-oil industry. It is an industry. There is big U.S. money that flows across our border to fight Canadian oil.

We know that U.S.A. oil production is massively on the rise. Strangely, there is mostly silence on that. By the way, most of that growth was under the previous president, not just the current administration.

We have an opportunity today with this opposition day motion. The Liberal government can support this motion. It is in our collective interest to do so. Crown resources ultimately belong to the people, and we have a duty, an obligation, to ensure that we maximize the return on these resources to pay for the very services Canadians hold near and dear.

It is all well and good to offer \$372 million for a carbon-burning aviation project for a private company in Quebec, and likewise, \$35 billion for an infrastructure bank in Toronto, but that money needs to come from somewhere. Here we have a project not looking for a handout, not looking for a government guarantee on the money needed to finance the project. What it needs is not handouts; it needs the certainty that when it needs to build this project and put Canadians to work, it will have a federal government in Ottawa that will be there to help Canadians say yes.

Business of Supply

I recognize that the government itself so far has said yes. Words are important, but so are actions. Taking action today to support this motion will send a message that we have a federal government that is not afraid to diversify our oil export market away from solely the United States to allow us to get full value from what everyone would agree is a limited, finite resource. When we send that message, we will create jobs and increase our future revenues. Given the large deficits of the government, and likewise of many provincial governments, now is the time to take action and support Canadian oil produced by Canadians.

I appreciate the opportunity to stand on behalf of my constituents.

• (1155)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Madam Speaker, I always enjoy working with my colleague, and I thank him.

What bothers me about this motion is that it mentions social licence. It assumes that social licence for this oil pipeline is a given, but there are many people and quite a few communities vehemently opposed to it, and there are even legal proceedings under way against it.

I would like to know why the Conservatives decided to put social licence in their motion and what makes them think that this issue has been resolved and is no longer an issue. They think there is social licence and everything is fine. They seem to be looking at the world through rose-coloured glasses.

Why did the Conservatives put that in the motion when it is obvious that there is no social licence?

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, I first heard this term “social licence” being used in the context of oil sands and pipelines from the Premier of Alberta, Premier Notley, and it has also been used by the Prime Minister.

The problem with “social licence” itself is that it is a very loose term. It creates a sense that somehow we can always build consensus. In our modern society, we know we will not always have consensus. The New Democratic Party should know better than anyone that ultimately we have democracy. When we cannot get past feelings and regrets and questions and whatnot, when we have to come to decisions, we stand in this place, we vote, and we move forward. We have moderating institutions, like courts, to make sure that if people have legitimate concerns that the government is trespassing on people's individual rights, there is recourse. That is democracy. I support democracy, because it is something every Canadian knows, understands, and respects.

• (1200)

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, during the last few months while we have been in government, we have approved pipelines to tidewater. Our Minister of Natural Resources has been working on approving these pipelines, and our Prime Minister has done so, respecting the fact that we know that the economy and climate action go hand in hand.

I am just wondering what our hon. colleague has to say about the fact that we as a government have been able to do them together, the economy and the environment. The previous government made a number of removals from our climate-change policies.

What does he think about that, and why is he not satisfied with the actions our government has taken so far, and hence, has brought this motion forward?

Mr. Dan Albas: Madam Speaker, I guess it is because this is a new member and she is still feeling the glow from the previous election that she said it has been a few months the Liberals have been governing. I think it has been more like a few years. That is what it feels like to me.

However, the member raises an interesting point. She said that the Liberals are taking action on the environment and the economy. I would say they are actually doing the opposite on both.

First, on the environment, what the Liberals have done is put out a vague notion of a carbon tax, yet to be decided and pitting provinces against the federal government. This is from a Prime Minister who said he would listen to and work with the provinces. Second, the things they have, such as new methane gas regulations, they have actually pushed back implementing by three or four years. Many people in the environmental movement think what they are doing is wrong. In addition to that, there is the banning of coal-fired energy. You have exempted Nova Scotia and exempted other provinces.

At the end of the day, you are not growing the economy very much. You are blowing a lot of money, and you are not actually doing the environmental things they said they would, or else you would not be getting raked over the coals by the NDP on a regular basis.

The government still may feel like it is a few months into it, but the Liberals have not done that much in two years.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we resume debate, I would just remind the hon. member to direct his attention and language toward the Chair, as opposed to members opposite.

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, that is great advice. I apologize to the Chair and ask that the member opposite appreciate that I get a little worked up about these things.

The Deputy Speaker: Not a problem.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure to stand in this House at any time to represent the people of Battle River—Crowfoot and to represent, in a small part, the people of Alberta and the people of western Canada and Canada. Let us make no mistake. This debate today is very important to all of those groups I mentioned, whether it be the constituents of Battle River—Crowfoot or even the broader constituents of Canada, and probably people around the world as well.

This is also the very first opposition day debate in which our new leader of the official opposition and of the Conservative Party has brought forward or allowed a debate on this subject. I can tell members that this bodes well for Alberta and for our country.

Business of Supply

The motion we are debating today is very important for Canada's energy sector, and it is important for the wealth and prosperity of our country. Today's debate is important for every social program that we have in this country. The ramifications of a prosperous, forward-moving country benefit all.

The Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion project is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of thousands of jobs. That is one of the important aspects of the motion we are debating today.

Many Canadians understand the great promise of prosperity that Canada's energy sector has for our country. For the coming decades, the world is going to continue to need and want Canada's oil and gas. We see China and India moving more and more to a need for what our country produces; that is, energy. Canada is an exporting country. There continue to be markets around the world that want Canadian energy products. This will continue to be the case for decades to come.

In fact, when we look at the history of our country, we very quickly understand that Canada has prospered, historically, because we have been able to provide the world with goods it has needed and wanted.

In the very early days of Canada, Europeans asked for fur. We developed the fur trade, and this large geographic nation of Canada, whether through first nations or our trappers and settlers, provided that fur around the world. Then it was coal. As people looked for energy and looked for home heating around the world and in our country, they required coal. Canada responded and produced and exported coal. It was likewise with wheat, to feed the world. Today, the west and regions all across the country continue to do that. More recently, it has been energy, whether it be Canada's gas and oil sector or, hopefully, an expanded LNG sector. As we look to the future, we either have to decide if we are going to provide what the world is asking for or if we are going to withdraw into this little island and try to get by. The world was asking. There have been, and there will continue to be, more and more customers who want to purchase Canada's oil and gas.

However, our major customer, the United States, has now become our major competitor. This is imperative to understand. We must prepare to transport our energy, our gas and oil, to offshore markets other than the United States. We want the United States market. We will continue to sell into it. However, we must realistically look and say we need more countries. We need to build the necessary transportation infrastructure that will ensure that we can export these products over the next 30 to 50 years.

On November 29, 2016, the Liberal government announced that it approved the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion project. It was satisfied that it had achieved social licence from Canadians to go ahead with this project.

• (1205)

Canada's National Energy Board has recognized and accepted that this project is both safe and environmentally sound. Canadians can have jobs and a clean environment. The previous Conservative government was confident that this would be the National Energy Board's conclusion. We were already working on getting Canada's energy to the markets.

The Liberal government has only delayed the progress Canada has made. This project and others could be well advanced in their progress. Some could be completed by now. We have to prepare. We have to look to the future, and we need to do this quickly to make these energy sales abroad.

The previous government approved four pipelines: Keystone, the Alberta Clipper, Anchor Loop, and Line 9B. The northern gateway pipeline was also approved by the Conservative government. Construction would have started over a year ago, but the Liberals effectively cancelled the project by placing a moratorium on the transportation of crude oil by B.C. tankers. Did they study that? Did they work to reach a social licence to go ahead with projects that would help Canada export its energy products? The answer is no. They just recklessly cancelled things and laughed about leaving the carbon in the ground.

By May of 2016, the National Energy Board had consulted 35 indigenous groups and more than 1,600 different groups representing industry stakeholders, the public, and government. The National Energy Board approved Kinder Morgan, but the Liberals delayed the final decision to go ahead, and they were threatening not to proceed with it.

Meanwhile, nearly 20,000 jobs have been lost in the natural resources sector since January 2016. Most of these jobs were in the oil and gas sector, and pretty well all of them were in western Canada. Many of my constituents work in the oil and gas sector. Some of them worked in the oil sands. I met them when we were campaigning in 2015 in Camrose and Stettler, where they were waiting for the oil sands projects to get going again. They travelled to Fort McMurray. They travelled and worked, and it was worth it.

Many of my constituents worked in support of this sector. Most of these jobs are gone. We have lost many customers in the oil patch. We have lost the jobs associated with pipeline building. We have lost the customers who needed heavy machinery maintained. We have some locations with 10% unemployment in Alberta. In fact, my constituency had 9.9% unemployment in the month of March. In the lead up to the recession, we had 3.2% unemployment. During the recession, it was about 4.5%. In March, it was 9.9%. In April, it was 9.7%. The NDP MLA from Camrose was bragging about the increase in employment in Camrose, with unemployment going from 9.9% to 9.7%.

Business of Supply

About the same time that the world oil prices fell and other factors played in to create a perfect storm that attacked Canada's oil sector, the Liberals were talking about everything but that. The government did not come to the rescue of one of Canada's major export sectors. It did very little. It did not help keep these jobs. It did not help ensure the sector remained prosperous. It actually lost revenues for its own government, and that continues to be the case. All the while, it continued to borrow billions of dollars that Canadian taxpayers will have to pay back over the next few decades. Revenues from the oil and gas sector will help to pay back some of the billions of dollars in borrowed money. Our grandchildren will want to sell gas and oil to pay back the billions the Liberal government has piled on in deficits and national debt. Our children will want to see jobs, and they want to see them soon.

We need pipelines. They are the safest, most efficient, and most economical way to move gas and oil. Anyone who travels through the west now sees trains that seem as if they are miles and miles long, carrying predominantly oil. Three weeks ago, just outside Camrose, in my constituency, in a little town called Bawlf, I got a phone call that there had been a derailment. Twenty-nine cars derailed. I absolutely thought that this was another disaster, that there would be oil everywhere. Thankfully, that train was hauling grain in the 29 cars.

• (1210)

The safest way to move our oil is not by train but by pipeline. Approximately 99.99% of pipelines are absolutely safe. Canadians understand that. The question is whether we are going to allow pipelines to be built to help our future.

I thank the Liberal government, because from what it sounds like today, it is going to vote with us on this motion. I am also very aware that many Liberal members of Parliament from British Columbia are not to be found in this place and that is a sad commentary of where we are in this debate today.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do find something my colleague said puzzling. He talked about the fact that China is currently in competition for the production of oil, yet ironically China is actually the world leader in renewable energy production. As a matter of fact, China produces more than twice the amount of renewable energy that the United States does. China's renewable energy production outpaces its fossil fuel and nuclear capacity right now. China sees the future, at least.

I accept the fact that the member did mention in his comments that he saw oil as being extremely important for the next couple of decades. Where does he see the future after that? Does he see the future indefinitely in oil, or does he see it eventually going toward renewable energy, as China clearly does?

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to stand in this place and say that I am a strong advocate for renewable energy. This is not an either-or situation. We will gladly encourage investment by the private sector in renewable fuel.

I do not have the statistics in front of me right now, but make no mistake; we know there will be a market for fossil fuels over the next 100-plus years. Given a complete revival in more renewable energy being brought forward, the most it could do is up to 30%, according to most experts.

We need to make sure that we invest in new renewable energy. The member said China invests in renewable energy, but China is also the largest burner of coal and every month brings forward more coal.

We have to find that balance. We need to export.

Years ago when we looked at China on the CBC, we saw old gentlemen travelling down rickety sidewalks on bicycles. Now the Chinese want vehicles. They have 10 lanes of traffic. They are our customers. They are not looking for only renewable energy. They are looking for what is going to burn in that car, and there has not yet been a complete solar vehicle that would satisfy any country's needs.

• (1215)

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his remarks.

I would like pick up on the point I made earlier when I asked his Conservative colleague about social licence. The Conservatives mention it in their motion, which might be the first time they have ever talked about this principle.

His Conservative colleague replied that social licence is a loose term that he was not sure about. Let me paraphrase what he said. He said it is important, it is democracy, our democratic institutions make decisions, and the voters go to the polls to express their opinion.

On that last point, as we saw in British Columbia just recently, 60% of the voters supported a party that is opposed to the current Kinder Morgan project, whose environmental assessment process was flawed.

Does the member agree that 60% of the voters expressed their opposition to this project in British Columbia? If so, why is he trying to move it forward when he obviously does not have the social licence the Conservatives talk about in their motion?

[English]

Hon. Kevin Sorenson: Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of a line used in one of my children's favourite movies, *The Princess Bride*, in which one gentleman says, "I do not think [that word] means what you think it means." The idea of social licence is much the same. I do not think "social licence" means to the NDP what it may mean to the Liberal Party. I am not certain that "social licence" means to the Liberal Party what it means to indigenous groups, but the Prime Minister says that we have social licence.

Business of Supply

What governments typically have to look for is whether this is going to be in the public good. My definition of “social licence” is very closely connected with “public good”. The National Energy Board and other groups ask if this is going to have an overriding negative impact or a positive one. If it is positive, then we say it is in the public good to do something. Social licence allows people to have jobs and provides union jobs across this country.

I will read one quote from the head of Evraz North America, Conrad Winkler, which has holdings in Camrose and Regina. He stated, “Pipeline project benefits do not recognize regions or stop at oil field borders. They generate huge benefits for Ontario and Quebec as well—because they provide jobs, property and income taxes, construction activity and community development.” Jobs like this allow social programs like health care and education to carry on. These jobs are in Canada's best interests.

Mr. Marc Miller (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my hon. sparring partner from Saint John—Rothesay.

I stand here today to address the Trans Mountain expansion project. This government has been working diligently to ensure that this important project comes to fruition and bears the promised outcomes of stable, middle-class jobs and security for Canadians. In a country that relies on its ability to sustainably manage its vast natural resources, the Trans Mountain expansion project is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of thousands of jobs. With the continued support of the federal government, as demonstrated by the Prime Minister personally announcing the approval of the project, this project is on track to move forward.

My colleague across the way from Alberta, the member for Red Deer—Lacombe, stated in January 2016:

We have not had a very clear signal about what the Liberals are going to do... about things like pipelines, one thing they should not do is send a signal to the market that they are going to ban tanker traffic off the west coast to appease a special interest group, which will shut down the northern gateway pipeline that would put billions of dollars of Alberta crude into the marketplace, eliminating the price differential that Alberta's captive market currently is in the North American marketplace.

My colleagues and I are here today, standing before our colleagues, to assert very clearly that this government intends to make good on its commitments to move forward with the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion project.

● (1220)

[*Translation*]

Not only has our government been working with our indigenous partners to determine the best way to move ahead with this project, but it is also committed to doing so in a sustainable way. Since we are committed to protecting Canada's coastline, a source of pride and inspiration for Canadians, we are also concerned about all Canadians whose livelihoods depend on the economic viability of Canada's waterways and natural resources.

Many jobs that support middle-class families and the products we consumer every day depend on our ability to manage our resources and share them with our international trading partners. Oil extraction is no exception. While it is true that we continue to develop new technologies and new sources of sustainable energy, we must also

continue to participate in the global economy. Canadians share our desire to ensure that our vast and magnificent landscapes, and the ecosystems they support, are protected and continue to be protected.

Canadians also recognize the importance of economic growth and of steady employment opportunities. This government will continue to support hard-working Canadians. The regulatory review of the pipeline component of the Trans Mountain expansion project is subject to the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Energy Board and Fisheries and Oceans Canada for Cooperation and Administration of the Fisheries Act and the Species at Risk Act Related to Regulating Energy Infrastructure.

Under the terms of collaborative agreements, the National Energy Board assesses the potential impacts of a project on fish and fish habitat, including aquatic species at risk, taking into account the intent and requirements of the Fisheries Act and the Species at Risk Act with regard to waterway crossings in the context of the pipeline component of the project. As this project works its way through federal approval processes, the government continues to support the National Energy Board's 2016 report on the project and its recommendations to approve the Trans Mountain expansion project subject to 157 important conditions.

[*English*]

In January of this year, the Province of British Columbia issued an environmental assessment certificate for the project, subject to an additional 37 conditions. The Liberal Party has been clear that protecting our natural heritage and our oceans is a priority. Canada is a maritime nation with more coastline than any other country in the world. Canadians rely on their coasts and waterways for recreation, to deliver products to the market, and to earn their livelihoods, but also cherish them for cultural reasons.

All Canadians, and especially coastal communities, need confidence that commercial shipping is taking place in a way that is safe for mariners, and that protects and sustains the economic, environmental, social, and cultural health of our oceans and coasts.

In November 2016, the Prime Minister launched the oceans protection plan. This national \$1.5-billion investment will protect Canada's marine environments and improve marine safety and responsible shipping. It will also provide indigenous groups in coastal communities with new opportunities to protect, preserve, and restore Canada's oceans and sea routes. The oceans protection plan is an ambitious, whole-of-government approach to oceans management that involves working with the provinces and territories, indigenous peoples, industry, environmental organizations, and a host of other partners to further protect our coasts and waterways in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic.

Business of Supply

This national strategy is creating a world-leading marine safety system that provides economic opportunities for Canadians today, while protecting our coastlines and clean water for generations to come. The hon. Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and the Minister of Transport have announced several initiatives as part of the oceans protection plan, and the government is busy implementing those initiatives.

One of these initiatives is marine pilotage. Marine pilotage is a service where marine pilots take control of a vessel and navigate it through ports and waterways. In Canada, once a vessel enters into a compulsory pilotage area, under law, the vessel is obliged and obligated to have Canadian marine pilots guide it in transit through the area. Marine pilotage has a success rate of over 99%, providing Canadians with the assurance that ships in their waters are travelling safely to and from their destinations.

Pilotage has a direct impact on significantly reducing vessel accidents, such as collisions, power groundings, and drift groundings. Canadians can confidently say that when marine pilots are combined with the use of escort and standby tugs, shipping operations in Canadian waters are very safely conducted.

• (1225)

[*Translation*]

This government balances the needs of Canada and Canadians today with the right of all Canadians to preserve their natural heritage for future generations.

There is no doubt that our oceans and our coastal areas are a beloved and integral part of our country's identity. It is becoming increasingly clear that moving forward with the Trans Mountain expansion project has been a difficult decision. Canadians know and understand that this government is committed to ensuring that it is implemented in a sustainable manner, both on land and in water.

The decision was made to move forward with the project that would have the least possible environmental impacts. The fact that the Trans Mountain expansion project was given the green light neither weakens this government's efforts to sustain its economic momentum, nor affects its ultimate goal of weaning our economy away from oil.

To be blunt, we must move ahead with the Trans Mountain expansion project for economic reasons.

We are also pursuing medium- and long-term projects that will allow Canada to not only develop sustainable energy, but to market this energy and offer it to our international trading partners.

Together, Canadians can work together to ensure jobs and economic growth for years to come. Together, Canadians can work to develop these technologies of the future. Together, Canadians can protect and restore our vast and precious natural environment.

Canada is a proud trading and maritime nation whose ports and maritime corridors are seeing increased activity. As good stewards of our lands and waterways, we have the opportunity to meet the challenges that our oceans and coastal regions are facing right now, while preparing for the increased pressures they may face in the future.

The environmental legacy our children and grandchildren will receive in 50 or so years must include healthy, productive and prosperous oceans and coastal regions. In the meantime, they will benefit from a strong economy, education, health care, jobs and research.

The Trans Mountain expansion project is how we contribute to that future, today. This government is committed to ensuring that the project moves forward in a measured and deliberate manner. We are committed to monitoring each step of the process to ensure that proponents adhere to all of the recommendations to which they are bound.

In addition, this government is committed to making the most of this investment made by Canadians. While the Trans Mountain expansion project promises direct jobs for the middle class, it will also offer many other indirect opportunities for Canadians, in addition to generating economic outcomes that we simply cannot afford to pass up.

We also need to make responsible decisions about the energy we consume and how to safely transport it to global markets. We are working on the front lines toward that objective, ensuring that the pipelines we build are safe and benefit from modern technology.

Lastly, the Government of Canada is investing in an ambitious ocean project plan. We are protecting our wilderness and our coasts. We are building partnerships with indigenous peoples, listening to their concerns and using their traditional knowledge.

As I see my time is up, I will now take questions.

[*English*]

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the record on some of the statements that some of the previous speakers have made. Under our watch as the Conservative government, most environmental indicators improved in Canada for things like sulphur dioxide, nitrous dioxide, and our freshwater quality was rated number two in the industrialized world. We have a very proud environmental record as a Conservative government.

The member talked about ensuring that pipelines are built to high standards. As someone who has done environmental assessments of pipelines and has worked in the oil sands directly, one thing I can assure him and all others in the chamber is that every single industrial process, industry in Canada, and development is built to the highest standards in the world. Of that, members can be sure of. To check and recheck after doing it right is simply a waste of time in many cases.

Business of Supply

One thing I found out in my time in the Mackenzie Valley is that prolonged processes kill projects. I know the Liberal Party wants to talk about process after process. After 25 years of environmental process in the Mackenzie Valley, there is no pipeline and dozens of impoverished communities.

My question relates to national unity. I find it appalling when one province wants to block the exports of a province inland. Look at the ramifications of this. My province exports wheat, grain, and oilseeds. We are an exporting country. What if every coastal province decided that they did not like a certain product going through their jurisdiction? The impact on national unity would be horrendous. This project needs to go through and B.C. needs to be told it is part of this Confederation and it is its responsibility to ensure that this pipeline is built and the oil flows.

• (1230)

Mr. Marc Miller: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I heard a question, but I am glad to speak to what the hon. member discussed.

I do not think for a second that we should be talking about national unity when it comes to getting our oil to tidewater. This is a project that is important for Canadians, important for the middle class, important for quality jobs, and important for the economy and the development of this nation as a whole. On the idea that something for Quebec is not good for B.C. or is not good for Alberta, this pipeline is good for New Brunswick and Nova Scotia and every single province in this confederation, and to make it a national unity debate is both silly and unproductive.

This government will take its time. I understand the hon. member is trying to give me assurances about what they did previously. Having two years in government I realize we need to trust, obviously, but we also need to verify, and that is what we are doing. We are doing the checks. We are doing it properly. We have a number of conditions we impose. We will be responsible about it and we will do it in the right way to make sure we have proper jobs for the 21st century.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a sad day when the Liberals, including all the MPs from British Columbia on the Liberal side of the House, are standing in unison in support of the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

I have a question for the member. This pipeline is slated to go through up to 15 first nations reserves, including the Coldwater band, which has opposed this pipeline and has vowed to fight putting the pipeline through its reserve land.

Section 78 of the National Energy Board Act says that the federal government can indeed expropriate this land through an order in council. I ask the hon. member, will he use this power? Will he help Kinder Morgan expropriate land from first nations reserves? Further, the Minister of Natural Resources said that he would use the defence forces and the army to get this pipeline through our province. Will he indeed back the Minister of Natural Resources and agree with that horrible statement?

Mr. Marc Miller: Mr. Speaker, if we check the record of how this pipeline got approved, we see that we expanded the consultation with indigenous people. They are entitled to their views. There is a considerable amount of support for the project. This is an important project to get oil to tidewater.

The members on this side of the House are entitled to their opinion and those from B.C. are entitled to theirs. They are entitled to advocate within caucus. Some support it, and the record shows that some do not. This is an open and transparent government, and people are entitled to their opinion. The decision has been taken to approve the project. We will be very careful in how it is implemented and we will work with the proponent in all communities that are touched by this project in order to make sure it is done in the most effective, transparent, open, and safe way.

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me say how pleased I am to stand to speak to this motion today. I am a proud member of Parliament from the riding of Saint John—Rothesay, a riding that is highly industrialized. It is the home of one of the largest oil refineries in Canada, a riding that is pinning a lot of hopes on this government and our transparent process, the NEB process, and hoping that energy east will also be delivered to our riding.

Canada has always been a nation with an abundant and thriving natural resource sector, something I think we can all be very proud of. In 2015, natural resources, directly and indirectly, accounted for 1.77 million jobs in Canada and accounted for 17% of our national GDP. Currently, responsible resource development is a key plank in our nation's prosperity.

On November 29, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau gave the government's approval for Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain expansion project. In approving this, the Prime Minister noted that this decision is a major win for Canadian workers, Canadian families, and the Canadian economy, now and into the future.

This was a decision that was not taken alone, nor was this decision taken lightly. This project received approval from the National Energy Board, which consulted with numerous stakeholders. Though this process, we believe we have the social licence to proceed with this project, which falls under federal jurisdiction.

While we recognize the need over the coming decades to transition to a low-carbon economy, getting the best price in world markets for Canada's natural resources is our priority and is critical to the economy of our country.

Resource extraction, particularly with regard to oil, is a serious matter, and we have worked to ensure that we are taking steps to do this appropriately. As my colleague and friend said in his previous speech, this is not a time for politicizing. It is not a debate on national unity. It is about doing the right thing for our country.

On January 25, 2017, my colleague, the Hon. Marc Garneau, outlined our government's commitment to keeping our coastlines safe through our ocean—

• (1235)

Mr. Tom Kmiec: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I hate to interrupt the member's speech, but as the member knows, we cannot name another member of this House under our Standing Orders. I would like the member to correct himself.

Business of Supply

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for raising the point. I think the hon. member for Saint John—Rothesay got the point and will avoid that in the future, I am sure.

The hon. member for Saint John—Rothesay.

Mr. Wayne Long: Mr. Speaker, on January 25, my colleague, the Minister of Transport, outlined our government's commitment to keeping our coastlines safe through our oceans protection plan. I thank my friend across for that correction.

This \$1.5-billion investment is one example of how we are working to show that a clean environment and a strong economy do not have to be mutually exclusive. I think over the past year we have proven that time and time again.

Although this project is federal jurisdiction, all the partners in this project have been working to ensure that it is beneficial to both the environment and the economy. They go hand in hand. However, we believe that this pipeline should be constructed with the continued support of the Government of Canada, as announced personally by our Prime Minister.

We have shown the steps we have taken to proceed responsibly. Now let me talk about the economic benefits.

This project will bring jobs and economic growth, both during its construction and after completion. What other project will provide 15,000 jobs without government investment, 15,000 jobs that will change communities and change the lives of so many families across this country?

This project will provide a \$7.4-billion injection into Canada's economy through project spending. Additionally, this project will increase our ability to get our resources to market, resulting in \$4.5 billion in tax revenues and royalties for federal and provincial governments to reinvest in critical infrastructure, schools, and hospitals.

The economic benefits for this project are far-reaching. On a large scale, this project will create 15,000 jobs during construction, as I said earlier, and create 440 permanent jobs per year during its operation. This is a substantial boost to our economy. It is a substantial boost to our country.

Canada is committed to strong nation-to-nation relationships with our indigenous peoples. In this regard, as this project has been planned and implemented, economic benefits for indigenous peoples have been a key consideration. One of the three members of the ministerial review panel was Kim Baird, a six-time elected chief of the Tsawwassen First Nation and a consultant on aboriginal economics and governance, and more than \$300 million has been committed to indigenous groups through this project under mutual benefit and capacity agreements.

Additionally, it is anticipated that \$4.5 billion in goods and services will be required to construct this pipeline. The Trans Mountain project will ensure that these business opportunities are shared among indigenous, local, and regional groups. Already over 2,500 local businesses are taking advantage of these business opportunities. Among those, almost 200 are aboriginal businesses based in British Columbia and over 150 are aboriginal businesses in Alberta.

Beyond direct economic benefits is the potential for this project to spread these benefits throughout the west, spurring rural economic development. Rural development and indigenous economic economic growth are priorities of our government.

Western Economic Diversification Canada is well positioned to hit the ground running to ensure that the west benefits from this project. Through WD, we have already been working with small and medium-sized enterprises, indigenous groups, and rural communities as part of our mandate. This network of contacts should help us maximize the economic impacts of this project.

This government owes a responsibility to ensure sustained economic growth. We owe a responsibility to our environment and to responsible resource development, and we owe a responsibility to stakeholders, indigenous peoples, small and medium-sized enterprises, and all those who stand to benefit by ensuring they are best positioned to do so.

On a more personal basis, as the MP from the riding of Saint John—Rothesay, I can tell members first-hand about the hopes of construction workers, of refinery workers, of industries, of support industries that want to see pipelines built, but they have to be built the right way, with proper consultation.

● (1240)

I believe in our government and I believe in the process. We are committed to meeting these responsibilities.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously the member and I share at least one thing in common, which is that we both have energy workers, or those working hard to become energy workers, in our ridings.

I would like to quote from the agreement signed by the B.C. Green Party and the B.C. New Democrats and get the member's view on what the government should do to stop this.

This is what they have agreed to do in British Columbia. It states:

Immediately employ every tool available to the new government to stop the expansion of the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the seven-fold increase in tanker traffic on our coast, and the transportation of raw bitumen through our province.

This is on page 5. I would like to hear the member's take on what his government should do to make sure the Kinder Morgan pipeline gets built.

Mr. Wayne Long: Mr. Speaker, I think that our government should do what any responsible government should do, much like the government across the House would also do, which is to approve the pipeline. We will support the pipeline and we will do everything in our power to make sure that the pipeline moves forward.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on the last question. The member said that his government will do everything it takes to put this pipeline through British Columbia. The pipeline is slated to go through 15 first nation reserves and 80 first nation territories without their consent, so Kinder Morgan will be applying to expropriate land from these reserves and first nation territories. Under section 78 of the National Energy Board Act, the government needs to sign an order in council for these lands to be expropriated.

Business of Supply

I am wondering if that is what the member means. Does he mean that cabinet will sign orders to expropriate land from first nation reserves and first nation territories, yes or no?

• (1245)

Mr. Wayne Long: Mr. Speaker, it is pretty clear that our government has done a lot of consultation with indigenous groups and first nation groups right across the country. Our relationship with them is about being transparent and open and working with them.

At times I am puzzled by the viewpoints of the party opposite, which seem to depend on the province in which they are speaking. This is not the time to politicize this issue. This is not the time to put up roadblocks and barriers. This is the time to act as a government for all Canadians, do the right thing for Canadians, and back that pipeline.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know the member across the way through our work together at the human resources committee. I have visited his home province of New Brunswick and have experienced his hospitality. He is someone who understands the importance of oil and gas to our economy in Canada.

When we talk about economies, for a lot of people out there it is a lot of blah, blah, blah, but what it comes down to is what was just talked about, which is jobs. I have often talked about it as a roof over our head and a meal on the table. Could the member opposite speak to how important it is to the people in his riding and how resource development in his province puts food on the table and a roof over people's heads?

Mr. Wayne Long: Mr. Speaker, I also respect the work of my friend and colleague across the House at the human resources committee. He is a great member.

I agree with what the member said with respect to how important our natural resources are to the country and how important it is to get those resources to tidewater. Again I am in Saint John—Rothesay, and I live daily how important it is to our economy to get pipelines built.

To be perfectly transparent, I ran in the election against a party that said it would build that pipeline. What I ran on was that we also wanted to build the pipeline, but we wanted to do it the right way, by having consultations and by being open and transparent. I have faith that our way will work and that we will get our product to tidewater. I think that is of the utmost importance to the country.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Cariboo—Prince George.

I would like to talk about our motion today. Oil and gas is something that I am especially close to in Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies. We have our own oil in my neck of the woods. One of my first jobs as a young guy was working on pipelines in the north, about 15 kilometres from the Yukon border.

I want to speak specifically about three particular issues that have been brought up by the NDP. First I would like to talk about claims by the leader that aboriginals do not support the project. Second, I would like to talk about the safety of the project, and the safety of oil and gas development in Canada generally. Third, I would like to talk

a little about the hypocrisy of using oil and yet being in opposition to its development.

Let us start with the aboriginal support. I have an article here from person I have met, Calvin Helin, from B.C., president of Eagle Spirit Energy Holdings. He is aboriginal. I will read a few quotes from this particular article: “The leaders of a First Nations-backed oil pipeline and tanker export proposal off the B.C. coast are speaking out against legislation introduced last week”.

The moratorium is what this is speaking specifically about. They are against the moratorium because they want the benefits of developing resources to their people. It goes on, “To be clear; there has been insufficient consultation for the proposed tanker moratorium and it does not have our consent”.

This was from the statement by Eagle Spirit Energy, an initiative of elected and hereditary chiefs from B.C., with elected co-chairs from B.C. and Alberta. It continues with, “we do believe environmental protection and responsible economic development is possible.” “This ill-conceived legislation”—referring again to the moratorium—“puts the prosperity and the future of our people, particularly our youth, in jeopardy.”

There it is, in terms of the benefit to aboriginal peoples themselves. We have even seen with other pipeline projects the government has said no to that there was a vast majority of support by aboriginal communities along those particular pipelines.

To say in a broad statement that all aboriginal peoples are against oil pipelines is ridiculous. I have a lot of friends I grew up with in Fort St. John and Dawson Creek who work in the industry, and they absolutely, full on, support oil and gas development in our province.

The fact that this oil comes from Alberta is irrelevant to us. We see energy as energy. With regard to the capacity to provide clean energy that is produced in the safest manner in the world, by whatever method members could name, whether it is oil sands, pipeline, shipping across the ocean, we have the safest regimes in the world.

I would like to speak a bit about what I have learned as part of the B.C.—Yukon caucus and in my critic role for the Asia-Pacific gateway. We heard a presentation from Teekay shipping. These are some of the companies that build double-hulled tankers and actually operate them. At the time that we heard the presentation, there had not been one breach of a double-hulled vessel in the world, yet we see millions and millions of barrels of oil per day transported across our oceans. An incident that happened back in the 1980s caused the whole industry to change its entire perspective on safety, and it has been dramatically changed. We see the staggering amount of shipments that go on per day. It is 60 million barrels per day, pretty much without incident. That is an awful lot of oil going across the ocean without much incident.

Business of Supply

I am going to speak about the east coast for a minute, and I will quote another article. This is a great article that I would highly recommend, "Sinking the myth of dangerous West Coast oil tanker traffic". The author says it quite well, that it is myth, and it really is.

Let's start on our eastern coasts. Transport Canada data shows that more than 1.6 million barrels of petroleum is safely moved from 23 Atlantic Canada ports each day. Another 500,000 barrels per day moves up the St. Lawrence to Montreal and other Quebec ports. Overall, Eastern Canada's ports berth some 4,000 inbound petroleum tankers each year without any major incidents.

● (1250)

What we are talking about on the east coast and the Kinder Morgan project is an increase in tanker traffic. It is a dramatic increase in Vancouver traffic, from five per week to 35 per week. Meanwhile, on the east coast, as I just said, 4,000 inbound petroleum tankers operate each year without a major incident. I just want to highlight this.

We have seen presentations where we have looked at other ports around the world, where literally thousands of tankers move in a harmonious way. It is something to see when one watches on a graphic screen, how many tankers move in a day and do so safely around the world. We are talking about an increase from five to 35 per week.

In talking about the article and the myth of dangerous west coast oil tanker traffic, it is exactly that, a myth.

Most people know that I am a British Columbia member of Parliament. Like a lot of other MPs, I generally fly back on Thursday nights on a flight from Ottawa to Vancouver. It is not just Conservative members on that flight. I see a lot of NDP members, as well, getting on that same airplane. Guess what goes into that airplane to allow it to fly? It is a product that is produced from oil and is called jet fuel. I always find it ironic that members of both the Green Party and the New Democratic Party get on the same plane as I do and protest that very product's development and production. I would use a strong word to describe that, and it is hypocrisy.

I know of no electric airplanes that can fly from Ottawa to Vancouver. We need to develop oil and gas because we need it for our planes, for building smart phones, for almost everything in our modernized world. Would it not be practical to develop our resources but to do it responsibly? We see from the B.C. Green Party and the NDP in B.C., this ridiculous agreement that says they will do their very best to shut down projects like this, yet they still go to the gas station and fill up their vehicles with the product. That does not compute with me.

A person of principle is somebody who stands by a principle. People can have their principles, but they should live by them. If people believe in not supporting any kind of oil and gas development, then they should not use it. It is straightforward. It is fine to have a strong position, but I do not see NDP members in the chamber, or members from the provincial NDP or Green Party, walking back to British Columbia. Given the product that is made from oil from the oil sands and turned into jet fuel that powers the planes that fly those members back and forth from Ottawa to Vancouver, I do not know how they can keep a straight face while doing that.

Another person I have happened to bump into a few times in the lineup to get on those same planes is a man named David Suzuki. He comes up to our neck of the woods and into our ridings. He tries to stop pretty much any natural resource project that is being planned or thought about in my area of Fort St. John.

It has been mentioned before about some of the high flyers, the people with the big yachts. They seem to have developed a conscience. They say we can develop oil and gas on the east coast of Canada, but they want to keep the west coast of B.C. as a park for all to visit once in a lifetime.

I have spoken about this in detail. Members need to absolutely support our opposition motion. I give full credit to some of the speakers on the government side who are defending the project. We want more solid leadership in the province, so that when threats like this are made by coalition governments, the federal government will stand by a decision and make sure it happens.

● (1255)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate many of the comments and a bit of the irony that the member across the way has pointed out. It is important to recognize that virtually since taking government, we have established, through the Minister of Natural Resources and the cabinet, a process that has ultimately led to fact-based decisions being made on the approval of pipeline projects. We have seen a government that has taken the issue of consultations very seriously. When I say very seriously, it was doing that consultation with provincial governments, indigenous peoples, and the different stakeholders out there, and working with individuals to advance that. Now that we have this particular pipeline that has been approved, the Prime Minister has been consistent on it, and we understand the value to it. I would think that it is time that we look to individuals who can put the party politics to the side for the sake of our environment and our economy, and that we move forward on the project.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, in defence of the National Energy Board, the process that we were involved in before is a very arduous one. I remember one project that went through my riding and 4,000 people presented on that one project. There was no lack of consultation. There was probably no oxygen left in the room because there had been so much discussion there.

I know the member is trying to defend and say his new way is better, but frankly, the system was pretty good before and the National Energy Board does a very rigorous review of projects and rigorously consults with stakeholders along that project. We have no problems with that. We believe in the process and we believe it should be done for safe natural resource projects to function in this country.

Business of Supply

•(1300)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as one of those British Columbia MPs who does rely on airplanes to get to the nation's capital, I firmly acknowledge that we have an economy and an infrastructure that is reliant on fossil fuels. I do not think anyone on this side of the House disputes that fact. What we have trouble with is the fact that, first of all, the Kinder Morgan pipeline is not going to be servicing the Canadian market. It is going to ship diluted bitumen to markets in Asia. We are basically selling the lowest quality of oil possible, with no upgrades, no value added, so I do not see how that does well for the Canadian economy.

When we talk about a just transition, I still do not know what the Conservatives' plans are. Does the member acknowledge that climate change is a threat to our way of life in the 21st century? I just do not know what the Conservatives' plans are for a transition. I proudly stand in the House in support of electrification of the vehicle grid and so on, but I will proudly stand and defend that stance because we owe it to our children and to future generations to seriously start talking about those things here now in 2017.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, I guess there is a slight disconnect between the federal New Democratic Party and the provincial New Democratic Party when we see the absolute blockage of every resource project. Let me be specific about natural gas or oil in the province of British Columbia. They have not said they are willing to talk or discuss a better way to do it or a safer, more efficient way. No holds barred, they are going to block the project. That is what they are saying. I acknowledge that the member seems to be more pragmatic, but I do not see as pragmatic the party in B.C. and the party at large here in Ottawa. I see them as absolutely blocking these projects, and that is a big concern to us and our future.

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in an earlier intervention there was talk about processes. We know that the Liberals are trying to take credit for improvement of the process. Would the member like to comment on the government's apparent decision to move the National Energy Board out of Calgary and what signal that might be sending to industry and to development at large?

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, the concern is the different perspective from which projects will be looked at. It is a type of mentality that either we look at projects as if the glass is half full, and we try to see them proceed, or we look at them as if the glass is half empty and we put up every roadblock type of attitude, and that is a concern where it is more of a negative process. Projects are considered almost as a default no and then they have to go through this process where they are proven. The concern for us is that the projects will be told no before they will be told yes, again not questioning whether they should be done safely, efficiently, and the rest, but a concern definitely that we see some major changes happening to the NEB.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand in the House today and speak to the motion. It is the very first motion that our new official Leader of the Opposition has put forward. I want to thank him for taking a principled stand on an issue that is dearly important to us in the province of British Columbia and, indeed, in all of Canada.

The motion we are discussing today reads:

That the House agree that the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project: (a) has social license to proceed; (b) is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of thousands of jobs; (c) is safe and environmentally sound, as recognized and accepted by the National Energy Board; (d) is under federal jurisdiction with respect to approval and regulation; and (e) should be constructed with the continued support of the federal government, as demonstrated by the Prime Minister personally announcing the approval of the project.

What we need right now is a champion, someone who will stand up for safe transportation of our natural resources and for the people who rely on the natural resource sector and the energy industry to put food on the table and a roof over the heads of their families.

Unfortunately, to no one's surprise, our Prime Minister made the announcement but has been absent on this front, choosing to offer a few platitudes not from Ottawa or his riding of Papineau but from Italy. He personally approved the project and said the following:

This is a decision based on rigorous debate on science and on evidence. We have not been and will not be swayed by political arguments, be they local regional or national.

Forgive us for our cynicism. I remind the House that we saw the Prime Minister and his cabinet absolutely, 100%, and uncategorically swayed and influenced by outside parties with the reversal of the northern gateway project. The economic benefits from that project to our first nations and Métis communities were unprecedented in Canadian history. It was a chance for those communities to share in up to 33% of the ownership and control of a major Canadian energy infrastructure project, and the aboriginal equity partners would also receive up to \$2 billion in long-term economic business and education opportunities for their communities.

The reason we are here today is that we have heard a lot of talk, but we have not seen the Prime Minister defend it in the province. We have not seen his 17 MPs defend it in the province of British Columbia. I would hazard to guess that the reason we are sitting today on the verge of possible provincial collapse with the coalition of the B.C. NDP and the Green Party is that the Prime Minister himself and the 17 B.C. MPs have refused to come to the province and refused to stand up for these projects that are the lifeblood of our economy. I have listened to this debate intently over the morning. I have yet to hear one B.C. Liberal MP stand up in support of the project. We heard great testimony from members from the Liberal side, talking about the benefit to their communities on the east coast, but we have yet to hear one B.C. MP stand up in the House today in support of the Kinder Morgan project.

I am going to talk a little about the economic benefits of the project. A lot of the facts have already been said, but I also want to tie it to what it really means to communities like my communities in Caribou—Prince George.

Business of Supply

I will first go back to this. The Kinder Morgan project would provide Canadians incredible economic benefits. The National Energy Board released its report on Kinder Morgans' Trans Mountain pipeline twinning project on May 19, 2016. After thorough review, the board approved the pipeline, concluding that subject to 157 conditions, the pipeline was not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects and that the construction of the pipeline was in the best interest of Canadians.

•(1305)

The Kinder Morgan pipeline was approved after a rigorous, independent, scientific review process. It would create 15,000 well-paying, high-quality jobs for Canadians. More than \$300 million has already been committed to indigenous groups by the proponent under mutual benefit and capacity agreements. More than 40 letters of support from first nations communities along the pipeline had been given to the proponent, and the government knows that. Shovel-ready pipeline projects can see people gainfully employed for two to three years during the project's construction phase.

Finally, since it is FCM week on the Hill and many of our colleagues are actually touring around our mayors, councillors, and directors from regional districts, I want to make this very clear. Municipalities across Canada receive more than \$600 million in property tax each year from pipeline companies. Those sound like some pretty good benefits.

The Prime Minister has made the case for the pipeline in Calgary, which I would say is probably a pretty willing and supportive audience, and in Rome, where they are going to support it—what else would they do? However, his B.C. caucus has been afraid to have him discuss it in the province of British Columbia. The Prime Minister has refused to come and actually speak to the merits and the benefits of it in the province. It is interesting too that he will go to the province when he is standing beside third parties, when he is making an announcement of a tanker moratorium or the oceans protection plan. Unfairly in many ways, because we are not seeing it on the east coast, the Prime Minister will stand beside third parties and proudly make that announcement of those measures, but he will not stand up when we are talking about something that impacts so drastically our economy in our province and indeed our country.

In these times of economic uncertainty, it is imperative that we recognize the importance of our energy and resource sectors, something the current government has failed to do. I hate to be the one to break it to the Prime Minister, but that is part of his responsibilities. It is outlined in his job. He is to be the champion of our resource development, of our energy sector, of our softwood lumber industry, and of our forestry industry.

I suggest it is now up to Justin Trudeau to walk the talk, stand up for his B.C. Liberal MPs, and champion—

•(1310)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I apologize for interrupting, but I am sure the hon. member intended to say Prime Minister and not his proper name.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for her intervention. In fact, she is right. We had one of these just in the last hour, as a matter of fact. These things do happen, and I am sure the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George will

prevent that kind of thing happening for the remainder of his comments.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, I apologize and I appreciate that my hon. colleague was listening so intently to my speech.

It is now up to the Prime Minister to walk the talk, stand up to his B.C. Liberal MPs, and champion the pipeline in B.C. to ensure that it actually gets built. It is not a single region that would benefit from this project; it is all of Canada. When we create jobs, the benefits are felt by all, from the mom-and-pop grocery stores to the gas stations where people fuel up in the morning. Sometimes politicians forget to include this in their vision when they are talking about resources, be it softwood lumber or the creation of future pipelines. I know that in my riding, we are going to face hundreds if not thousands of job losses as a result of the current government's failure to secure a new softwood lumber agreement.

When the energy sector took a hit in the last few years, it was a very difficult time for people in my constituency and indeed all across Canada. We all had acquaintances, friends, or loved ones who had been impacted negatively or lost a job. Even our airlines took a hit, with direct flights cancelled between Calgary, Prince George, Terrace, Brandon, Penticton, Kamloops, and Abbotsford. It was a huge hit, given that a daily round trip and domestic service into an airport in a small community roughly the size of Prince George generates \$2.5 million in value-added GDP and \$5.8 million in economic impact.

We are not just talking about a pipeline. We are talking about Canada's economy. We are talking about the government—the current Prime Minister and his 17 B.C. MPs—standing up for a project that is so vital for not just the province of British Columbia but for all of Canada.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to have a question for my friend from Cariboo—Prince George. He is my friend. I do not say that merely as a nicety. We are friends. However, I do not agree with him that this project is in the national interest.

It is important for Canadians to know that when the National Energy Board reviewed the Kinder Morgan project, it refused to hear evidence from Unifor, the largest union representing workers in the oil sands. It refused to hear evidence from Unifor because the National Energy Board ruled that jobs and the economy were outside its mandate in reviewing the project. Therefore, it cannot be said that the economic impact of this project has been reviewed.

It is interesting to know that what Unifor wanted to present to the National Energy Board was evidence that the Trans Mountain pipeline, Kinder Morgan's expansion, would hurt Canadian jobs and cost Canadian jobs.

Business of Supply

I would ask my hon. colleague if he does not agree with me that we should follow the plan for the expansion and development of the oil sands that came from Peter Lougheed. That was the era when the idea was put forward that Alberta's economy would benefit from mining bitumen and processing it in Alberta. The reason this will cost Canadian jobs, according to Unifor, is that shipping raw bitumen to refineries in other countries will hurt Canadian jobs and actually lead to the closing of the Chevron refinery in Burnaby, because it does not have the capacity to process raw bitumen.

Why do the Conservatives prefer creating jobs in other countries, in refineries in other countries, rather than processing the material and creating jobs in Alberta?

• (1315)

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, as my colleague mentioned, she is a friend, and from time to time, her interventions are interesting and well thought out. I always enjoy listening to her in the House.

I cannot speak to the comments Unifor made and its position on Kinder Morgan. I will not speak to that. I vehemently dispute my hon. colleague's assertion that Conservatives are all about shipping jobs overseas and closures and whatever the question was insinuating. Clearly, the Conservatives are all about free trade and making sure that our suppliers and producers in Canada are able to access every market possible, creating not just jobs but great-paying jobs right here in Canada, and ensuring that our products get to market. Whether at home or abroad, Conservatives are all about—

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. 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, as I indicated earlier, we as a government have moved forward on the issue of pipelines, being very sensitive to the economic and environmental issues and the importance of consultation. Through our process, what we have seen is that for the first time in over 10 years, pipelines to tidewater have actually been approved. That is of great significance, because that has benefited not only the province of Alberta but, as has been pointed out by other colleagues, the entire country, directly and indirectly.

Would my colleague not agree that the current approach for developing and getting pipelines done is the right approach?

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, I would ask for your indulgence in allowing me to finish my answer to the earlier question. Clearly, the Conservatives stand for making sure that creating jobs in Canada is important, not just good-quality jobs but high-paying jobs.

To my colleague across the way, announcements are great, but getting shovels in the ground and projects up and running is an other thing. The government has shown over the last two years that it is great at making fluffy announcements, but when the tires hit the pavement, where is it? There are not a lot of shovels in the ground. What we are talking about today is having the Prime Minister and the 17 Liberal members of Parliament from British Columbia sell, promote, and support this project in the House and at home in British Columbia.

Mr. T.J. Harvey (Tobique—Mactaquac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to say that I will be splitting my time with my hon. colleague, the member for Surrey Centre.

Mr. Speaker, this government believes that economic growth and protecting our environment go hand in hand. Canadians have told us that we need to address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions while promoting economic prosperity across the country. The Government of Canada is taking steps to do just that by lessening our reliance on fossil fuels, introducing a price on carbon pollution, and investing in the clean energy economy of tomorrow. In the meantime, we need to make responsible decisions about energy, the energy we use, and how we move our energy resources safely to the global market.

As a rural member from Atlantic Canada, I recognize the importance of the natural resource sector, along with the preservation and enhancement of the quality of Canada's natural environment, which includes protecting water, air, soil, flora, and fauna. I would like to speak to some of the environmental protection elements that are part of our pipeline plan we have recently announced.

I am pleased to say that our new pipeline plan has a number of strong environmental protections in place. Our ability to meet our greenhouse gas commitments will not be hindered. Species at risk will be protected. Pipeline and marine safety will be improved, and the pristine wilderness of British Columbia's north coast will be protected.

We have assessed the greenhouse gas issues related to these projects and have factored them into our decision. Greenhouse gas emissions from the operation and construction of both pipelines will not be significant. With respect to the Trans Mountain expansion project, the National Energy Board has added conditions to the project certificate to mitigate some of the emissions related to the construction of the pipeline.

Environment and Climate Change Canada has estimated the greenhouse gases related to the production and processing of the oil that will be transported by the pipelines, referred to as “upstream emissions”. These will be regulated through the Province of Alberta's climate action plan and its 100-megaton cap on greenhouse gas emissions from oil sands development. Meeting our 2030 targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions will require action from all sectors, including all levels of government and the oil and gas industry.

We are working together with the provinces and territories to develop a pan-Canadian framework for clean growth and climate change. In developing this framework, we have actively considered how to collectively do more to reduce greenhouse gases. For example, our government announced last week regulations to cut methane emissions from oil and gas operations by 40% to 45% by 2025.

Business of Supply

Our government has put in place a pan-Canadian approach to pricing carbon pollution as a central element of this plan. Pricing carbon pollution is one of the most efficient ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, drive innovation, and encourage people and businesses to pollute less.

Future oil and gas production levels will depend on how producers respond to carbon policies and corresponding market signals, what technological advancements are made, and the ability of companies to compete in an increasingly carbon-constrained world. We are confident in our industries' capacity to innovate, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and compete in the emerging global low-carbon economy.

With all these factors in place, the government believes that the pipeline project will not impact our plan to meet, or exceed, our 2030 emissions reduction target of 30% below 2005 levels.

The Trans Mount pipeline will pass through the ranges of some herds of the southern mountain caribou, which the Species at Risk Act considers to be threatened. The National Energy Board imposed six conditions to ensure that there would be no net loss of caribou habitat. Environment and Climate Change Canada will work with the National Energy Board to assist the proponent in meeting these conditions. Furthermore, construction will be timed to avoid disrupting the mating and migration of the southern mountain caribou.

The government has worked with the Province of British Columbia on a study to review the protections in place for southern mountain caribou to encourage their recovery. The government will not hesitate to take additional action, if required, to mitigate the potential impacts from specific projects on the affected southern mountain caribou herd.

The government is committed to the protection and recovery of Canada's southern resident killer whales, listed as endangered under the Species at Risk Act. The primary threats to this species' survival and recovery are environmental contamination, reductions in the availability or quality of prey, and acoustic disturbance.

● (1320)

Before any shipping from the Trans Mountain expansion project begins, the Government of Canada is committed to advancing work in key areas to reduce its impacts on this population. The objective is to mitigate the impact of additional Trans Mountain expansion marine traffic before the project begins operations.

The Government of Canada, with the help of its partners, is putting in place a strong southern resident killer whale action plan to promote recovery. The plan will significantly reduce the impact of noise from marine vessels on killer whales through voluntary and regulatory measures. It will ensure that there is sufficient food available for the whales, and it will reduce the pressure on the whale population from persistent contaminants.

With Line 3, Enbridge will be required to ensure that the project does not create a net loss of wetland areas, as wetlands are not only vital habitat for migratory birds but also provide important ecosystem services, such as flood prevention and water purification.

In addition to habitat protection and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we are making the transport of petroleum products safer. The recently announced oceans protection plan is designed to achieve a world-leading marine safety system for our country's unique context that will increase our government's capacity to prevent and improve its response to marine oil spills.

The Pipeline Safety Act, which came into force in June 2016, strengthens Canada's pipeline safety system by enshrining the polluter pays principle into law. In terms of specific safety measures, Enbridge's Line 3 replacement will have new, thicker pipeline in many sections and will be built to modern specifications that will enhance the safety and integrity of the network and further protect the environment from potential spills.

Furthermore, a number of additional safety features are included in the Line 3 replacement project. For example, the installation of 26 new remotely operated sectionalizing valves near waterways will allow the pipeline to be shut off quickly if necessary.

The biggest environmental protection initiative we will put in place in our pipeline plan is the moratorium on tankers carrying crude oil and persistent oil products. The tanker moratorium will provide an unprecedented level of environmental protection for the Great Bear Rainforest and British Columbia's northern coastline, which is integral to the livelihoods and cultures of indigenous and coastal communities. The Great Bear Rainforest and the Great Bear Sea, which stretches more than 400 kilometres along British Columbia's north coast, is home to several indigenous and coastal communities as well as a spectacular variety of fish, marine mammals, and wildlife. The tanker moratorium will help ensure that this area is preserved for future generations.

The sensitive ecosystem of the Douglas Channel, which is part of the Great Bear Sea, is no place for 220 tankers to be transiting annually. For this reason, we have directed the National Energy Board to dismiss the northern gateway pipeline project application, because it is not in the public interest. In the case of the northern gateway, the proposed economic development was not consistent with our principles of environmental protection.

In coming to these decisions and in developing this plan, the government reviewed thousands of pages of scientific evidence, held hundreds of consultation sessions across the country, specifically in British Columbia with indigenous peoples, and heard from thousands of Canadians. We have listened, and we are confident that our overall plan maps out a path forward that is consistent with both growing the economy and protecting the environment.

I would like to further add that this is a government that has spent a significant amount of time and resources meeting with stakeholders, meeting with indigenous communities, and meeting with environmentalists, and taking all those factors into account as we have made our decisions. We need to ensure that we are not sacrificing the environment for the sake of a project, or vice versa. I think we have achieved a great deal of progress over the last year and a half.

Business of Supply

With that, I would like to conclude my remarks today.

• (1325)

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the people of British Columbia, including people in my riding, are very concerned about the Kinder Morgan pipeline for some very good reasons.

They talk about the flawed environmental assessment process. That has been confirmed by a couple of expert reports recently. They believe that pipelines are old thinking and that we need to be moving towards a green future, a green energy economy, that keeps jobs local rather outside our communities.

There is no consent from several first nations along the route, which speaks to whether the government is truly interested in reconciliation.

It will create a sevenfold increase in the risk of a catastrophic oil spill on the B.C. coast. The cost of one oil spill will far outweigh any long-term benefits for British Columbians.

Given those very strong, very important concerns, I would like to hear what my colleague's response is to the people of British Columbia who really care about those things.

Mr. T.J. Harvey: Mr. Speaker, I respect my colleagues arguments 100% and I think he is really speaking to the plan that we put in place. The reason he is speaking to that is that his question speaks to the tremendous amount of consultation that we have had with indigenous communities, with indigenous stakeholders, and with communities on the B.C. coast. It speaks to our oceans protection plan. It speaks to the changes we have made to the environmental assessment process and to the changes that we plan to make in the future in order to best represent our constituents in a given area that could be affected adversely with the building of any project.

It is important to recognize the tremendous gains we have made as a government over the last 15 or 16 months in terms of ensuring and enshrining the rights of Canadians, especially in geographic areas where there are projects going on. I know there are projects going on in New Brunswick and across Atlantic Canada and Atlantic Canadians have the same concerns as British Columbians. It is important that we recognize the tremendous work that this government has done and will continue to do to ensure that all those stakeholders are properly consulted and that they play an integral part in the process and approval of any project.

• (1330)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my hon. colleague, as the member of Parliament for Saanich—Gulf Islands where my constituents are overwhelmingly against this project, I intervened before the National Energy Board on their behalf. I went through all 23,000 pages of so-called evidence from Kinder Morgan and I will say without a shadow of a doubt, most of what is being claimed in the House is nonsense. There was no rigorous review. There was no rigorous science. What science exists was rejected by the National Energy Board as coming too late in the process and therefore unfair to Kinder Morgan to accept.

The overwhelming evidence is that bitumen mixed with diluents cannot be cleaned up. Therefore, having a wonderful, so-called

world-class oil spill response program is nonsense when there is no technology known by science, including Canada's premier scientific academy, the Royal Society of Canada, to deal with a substance that separates in a marine environment with bitumen sinking and the volatile diluents, which include benzene which is cancer causing, entering the atmosphere. We literally have no technology to clean this stuff up.

Would my hon. friend from New Brunswick and the federal Liberals be willing to wait so that a decent, rigorous environmental review can be done by the Government of British Columbia?

Mr. T.J. Harvey: Mr. Speaker, I completely 100% respect my hon. colleague's concerns. What is important about the environment we have here in the House is that we can have robust discussions about a variety of topics recognizing that we are not always going to completely agree with each other's opinions. I do not completely agree with my hon. colleague's opinions. The reason is that we have done our due diligence. We have recognized the potential of this project given its merits. We have taken into consideration the effects on indigenous communities. We have consulted with indigenous communities. We have consulted with the people of British Columbia.

The National Energy Board has done its due diligence and approved this project. It is our responsibility to respect that decision and recognize the economic potential that we could have from this project, while taking into consideration the effects on the environment and the communities in that area.

I am really proud to say that I am part of a government that has taken those into consideration. I sit on the natural resources committee with hon. colleagues from both sides of the House and we have had robust discussions over the last year about the process and about consulting with Canadians and indigenous communities. I am happy to say that I think that within our committee we have come to a lot of general agreements across party lines. That speaks not only to the strength of this government and our approach but also to the strength of committees.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise in the House to address the motion. As a British Columbian, and someone who cares about our coasts, our environment, and our economy, I would like to talk about the implications for our coastlines of natural resource projects, such as the one being discussed today.

Canada has the longest coastline in the world with tens of thousands of kilometres of beaches, shoals, cliffs, forests, glaciers, grasslands, cities, and villages. Our coastline is home to fisheries. It draws in Canadians and tourists who come to play, to challenge themselves, or to relax and reflect. It allows our businesses to trade with other countries in the world in emerging and established markets. It supports the livelihoods of traditional, indigenous, and coastal communities. Our coasts help define the Canadian experience, and they power the Canadian economy.

Business of Supply

I have had numerous constituents speak to me about this matter, some who are for it and some who are against it. Therefore, it is vitally important for Canada that we protect our maritime environments, that our waters and coastlines remain clean, safe, and accessible, and that we continue to sustain communities while growing our economies.

To this end, in November 2016, the Prime Minister introduced Canadians to the oceans protection plan, a plan that will safeguard our communities, our coastlines, and our marine environment. The plan, developed in collaboration with Transport Canada, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Canadian Coast Guard, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and Natural Resources Canada, reflects and relies on scientific evidence to safeguard our maritime environment. It puts a priority on co-management with indigenous Canadians, and responds to the desire of Canadians to better protect the coastal environment that is central to our way of life.

We are putting \$1.5 billion into this plan, the largest investment of its kind ever made in our coasts and waterways. This plan will create a world-leading marine safety system, including new preventative and response measures, to better protect our waters and coasts. Safety is the top priority of this plan.

In Canada, we already have a strong marine safety record. However, with this new plan, Canada will have a truly world-leading system for marine protection and emergency preparedness. To that end, we will ensure that the Canadian Coast Guard has the tools it needs—

• (1335)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, with respect to relevance, we are talking about a motion with respect to Kinder Morgan, the Prime Minister, and his 17 B.C. MPs standing up in support of it. However, for the last four minutes, our hon. colleague has gone on about the oceans protection plan, and has not once mentioned the motion with respect to Kinder Morgan.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for his intervention. I am cognizant of the fact that the hon. member for Surrey Centre is only three minutes into his remarks and, agreeably, is on a topic that is perhaps not directly but certainly indirectly part of today's discussion with respect to the shipment of petroleum products as it relates to the motion that is before the House. I am sure the hon. member will be invoking these subjects throughout the course of his speech and will bring them around with respect to their relevance to the motion that is in front of the House this afternoon.

Is the member for Tobique—Mactaquac rising on the same point of order?

Mr. T.J. Harvey: No, Mr. Speaker, it is a different point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: Then we will leave the intervention by the member for Cariboo—Prince George.

We now have a point of order from the hon. member for Tobique—Mactaquac.

Mr. T.J. Harvey: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order relating to the comments of the hon. member across the aisle. I raise this

point of order because I find it extremely disrespectful that in the middle of the speech by my hon. colleague, who is from British Columbia, who is here representing the 17 MPs from British Columbia, and who is representing the thoughts and concerns of British Columbians, the member stood up and cut him off for no apparent reason. I find that disconcerting. I have the utmost respect for my hon. colleague, and I just do not understand that. Therefore, I wish the member would retract his comments.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for his intervention. Points of order are in order when members believe that there has been some type of infraction as it relates to the Standing Orders. Points of order can be raised, even in the midst of another member's remarks. That is in order.

The difficulty, from the chair occupant's point of view, is that one has to actually hear the point of order before one can make a determination on whether it in fact pertains or is relevant to the matter at hand. We have done that. I appreciate the member for Tobique—Mactaquac's additional comments on the matter. However, the matter is closed at this point, and we will now get back to the hon. member for Surrey Centre and his remarks.

The hon. member for Surrey Centre.

• (1340)

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, I will continue on, and we will see at the end if my colleague is still concerned about the topic.

We are going to ensure the Canadian Coast Guard has the tools it needs to save lives and better protect our waterways. That means more vessels, an enhanced search and rescue capability, more rescue stations, better communications gear, and more towing capacity so that the Canadian Coast Guard is able to respond more quickly and effectively.

It also means enhancing the Coast Guard's ability to take the lead as part of any coordinated response to an incident or event. Additionally, we will be extending the role of the Coast Guard auxiliary to include environmental response functions. To further enhance safety in Canadian waters and along its shores, we will provide improved marine safety and navigation information, including hydrography and charting to mariners, indigenous peoples, and coastal communities. We will invest in leading-edge research on oil spill cleanup technologies.

Our goal is to keep Canadian waters free of damaging accidents. Our new safety measures will take us further in that direction. Our government will also examine how we can improve cleanup technology, how best to mitigate impacts, and how to encourage ecological recovery.

In addition, we are going to get tough on businesses and industries that pollute along our coasts. When it comes to oil spills, we already have in place a comprehensive system of liability and compensation, but we are going to improve it. We will ensure that unlimited compensation is available to those affected by a spill. We are also going to better address the risks posed by other types of hazardous and noxious substances transported by ship. With these measures brought forward, Canada will become a world leader in polluter-pay ship-source liability and compensation.

Business of Supply

The oceans protection plan addresses the concerns we heard from Canadians on marine safety, including during reviews of natural resource projects where marine shipping is needed to move goods to international markets.

In addition, as part of our plan, the government is developing a strong set of actions to implement the recovery plan for the southern resident killer whale. Substantive new actions will be developed and implemented to address the main stressors impeding the recovery of the southern resident killer whale population, including reducing the impact of noise from marine vessels on killer whales, ensuring there is sufficient food availability for the whales, and reducing the pressure on the whale population from persistent contaminants.

Further strengthening our partnership with indigenous and coastal communities is a key element of the oceans protection plan and its success. Our coasts are the traditional territories of indigenous peoples. We are committed to taking a real and tangible step toward co-management of our coastlines to ensure they remain healthy, clean, and safe for generations to come. In particular, the traditional knowledge and expertise of Canada's indigenous peoples is critical to protecting our coastal waters more effectively. Coastal indigenous communities will have real opportunities to be partners in the marine safety regime. They will be offered training in search and rescue missions, environmental monitoring, and emergency spill response.

The government will work with indigenous partners to create regional response plans for the west coast, and we will pursue shared leadership opportunities in other areas, such as the creation of local vessel control areas to help minimize safety risks and environmental impacts. Our government is dedicated to further integrating indigenous groups into the decision-making process as it relates to our marine environment.

As a trading nation, as a country that is open to the world, our coastlines are essential to our economy. We are a nation that balances the economy, growth, and the environment, and we do this without compromise. We make decisions based on independent scientific evidence, not pitting one region against the other. These are hard decisions, but in this case, it is the right decision. Our government has imposed 157 stringent and strong conditions that will ensure the project complies to the highest safety environmental standards in the world.

We understand that Canadian jobs depend on our ability to access and serve the markets of Asia and Europe. That is how many of our commodities reach buyers around the world.

By working together with our partners along the coasts and across the country we can preserve our coastlines for generations to come, address concerns, including pipeline safety and climate change, grow our economy, and create jobs.

• (1345)

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly welcome to hear another B.C. voice, particularly from the government side, that is actually speaking in terms of the importance of pipelines. It seemed to be more on the environmental front and looking after it, but that is an important part of it.

Does the hon. member feel that he and his colleagues are also speaking to people throughout British Columbia? As we know, the New Democrats have continued to raise concerns around it. Some may be well founded, and some I do not believe are credible. However, we live in a democracy. Does the member believe that he and his fellow Liberal B.C. MPs should be getting out and explaining exactly why this is in the national interest?

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, we have had town halls on climate change. We have had consultations, more than any other government has ever had. My caucus members from British Columbia have had hundreds of meetings with their constituents. Thousands of people have attended those. The safety and security of our maritime coastlines for our commodities to get to market is a primary concern, and we have done that in balance.

Our members of Parliament have been vocal and strong proponents to ensure that we have a balance. We have not done this in a vacuum. We have not done this in a silo. We have done it to make sure that we have jobs, we have growth in our economy. We encourage and increase more middle-class jobs. We do this all while we protect the environment, the coastlines, and our marine life.

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has left me a little confused, because building the Kinder Morgan pipeline will increase oil tanker traffic sevenfold in the Salish Sea and through the Gulf Islands.

How will a sevenfold increase in tanker traffic help protect British Columbia's coastline and the resident killer whale population?

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, the oceans protection plan does just that. It is spending \$1.5 billion to have more radar stations along the coast, to have more sensitivity and noise monitoring of vessels that are going past killer whale pods, ensuring that their inhabited areas are protected.

We are doing that while we are increasing the ability to take commodities to tidewater and open markets, so we are doing it in a balanced way. We are increasing the amount of funding that has been delayed for such a long time. We are increasing the amount of tugs that will escort these ships going out to the open seas. They are all piloted when they come in. There is a very high standard of monitoring, escorts, and hydrography to ensure that the ships go through safe passage.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for my colleague. He talked about evidence-based decision-making. The government's process for pipeline approvals is, by definition, not evidence based, because it allows cabinet to overrule decisions of the independent NEB. The NEB's job is to review the evidence and come forward with a recommendation.

However, based on energy east, the government has said it will not necessarily approve that project, even if the NEB finds that in fact evidence points to approval.

Business of Supply

If the member is in favour of evidence-based decision-making, I wonder why he thinks politicians, responding to non-scientific, purely political forces, should be overruling decisions made based on evidence by the independent NEB, and why the government did that with respect to the northern gateway pipeline.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite might be remiss. The previous government did make decisions almost solely based on political decisions, without any regard to scientific evidence.

Our government does it based on scientific evidence. In this case, it has protected the integrity of the independent scientific evidence, and it is based solely on it that all the decisions have been made.

I am very proud of our government, our cabinet, and our Prime Minister, who has made the right decision to balance the economy and the environment based on evidence and not politics.

* * *

[Translation]

ROYAL ASSENT

The Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received as follows:

June 1, 2017

Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to inform you that Ms. Patricia Jaton, Deputy Secretary to the Governor General, in her capacity as Deputy of the Governor General, signified royal assent by written declaration to the bill listed in the schedule to this letter on the 1st day of June, 2017, at 11 a.m.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Wallace

The schedule indicates the bill assented to was Bill C-31, An Act to implement the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and Ukraine.

* * *

● (1350)

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—KINDER MORGAN TRANS MOUNTAIN EXPANSION PROJECT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise to speak to this topic today. I will be sharing my time with the member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

I would like to read the motion as it has been put forward by the Leader of the Opposition:

That the House agree that the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project: (a) has social license to proceed; (b) is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of thousands of jobs; (c) is safe and environmentally sound, as recognized and accepted by the National Energy Board; (d) is under federal jurisdiction with respect to approval and regulation; and (e) should be constructed with the continued support of the federal government, as demonstrated by the Prime Minister personally announcing the approval of the project.

I would like to address a number of the points we have laid out in this motion. I am particularly going to focus my comments at the beginning of my speech on the idea of social licence and that this

project has social licence to proceed. Without a doubt, this project has public support. The Prime Minister often talks about social licence. This concept has different meanings, depending on who we talk to, so I would like to outline what I think that social licence means. It is a relatively new term, and it was coined in 1990 by a mining executive named Jim Cooney. He suggested that social licence is a subtle approval that runs parallel to governmental regulatory process. It seems that social licence is required for all projects to go forward, regardless of whether they have been officially approved.

The minister points out that when the regulatory process has been successfully completed, he then will politically decide whether it has social licence to go forward. The National Energy Board released its report on the Kinder Morgan pipeline on May 19, 2016. It had already approved a northern gateway pipeline as well. For some reason, one has been approved, and the other one has not been approved to go forward. It has been interesting to see. One of the things that is important for the concept of social licence is more on the moral question. If it is legal for these things to go forward, is it moral for these things to go forward? The question we are looking at in terms of the pipeline is what this pipeline means for the world in terms of whether it is a good thing or a bad thing. I will argue that it is a good thing.

Petroleum products are a big part of our lives. I would not be here today if it were not for petroleum products. I flew here from northern Alberta. I drove down to Edmonton in my car. I got on an airplane, and I flew here from Edmonton to Ottawa. That is due to the exceptional development of our natural resource petroleum products. The fuel used to fuel the jet and the fuel used in my car allow me to get here in a relatively easy amount of time, and they allow me to go back and forth. That is a good thing.

Fuel that is used in a tractor allows modern farming to produce more food than we can consume. In fact, members may be aware that in this country at this time, we are having a discussion about supply management. Do people know why supply management is even an issue? It is because we can produce more milk than our nation can consume. That is why supply management is an issue. That is what we have been discussing. For example, the State of Wisconsin produces 30% more milk than that state can consume. That amount of milk is the same amount of milk that all of Canada consumes. It goes to show that through modern technology, through the use of petroleum products, we are able to produce more food than we are able to consume. That is a good thing. The very fact that we are able to live in a society where there is an abundance of food is unprecedented in history. The resource of food has always been a limiting factor on the ability of humans to flourish.

● (1355)

I would make the argument that petroleum products are a very good thing. The very fact that we have a wealth of them and can ship them around the world is good for the entire world. We could feed the entire world based on the developments we make in petroleum products going forward.

The argument for getting our petroleum products to tidewater is very important. In Canada, not too many of us are starving. In the western world in particular, obesity is more of an issue than starvation. However, in other parts of the world, across the oceans from this continent, starvation is still a reality. I would make the argument that without the benefits of petroleum products in other parts of the world, agriculture will not flourish. Without the benefits of petroleum products, health care will not flourish. Without the benefits of petroleum products, transportation to get food to the people who need it will not happen. When we say that the pipeline should not be built because it does not have social licence, we have to understand that we are dealing with a petroleum product that has the ability to lift everyone out of poverty and feed the world, based on the way we use it.

I would argue that this pipeline most assuredly has social licence, because the moral question of allowing the world to starve or to eat is bound up in this question of whether we build the pipeline to tidewater.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATE

Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when it gets to the point where the ultra-federalists in Quebec believe that the Constitution is not working, then you know it really is not working.

Philippe Couillard wants to reopen the constitutional debate so that Quebecers no longer feel like exiles in their own country. What does the Prime Minister of Canada do? He unceremoniously tells us to take a hike.

The truth is that Canada is a prison holding Quebec back and keeping it from developing.

This year, Canada is celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Canadian yoke that has always betrayed the interests of Quebecers.

If we reopen the constitutional debate, Quebecers will be reminded that there is nothing to celebrate and that we have nothing to gain by staying in this country.

When one is at a dead end, it is important to back up and find a new way forward. Well, Canada is our dead end. Quebec has only one path forward, that of national independence.

* * *

[*English*]

MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

Ms. Kate Young (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the accomplishments of Carolyn Wilson from my riding of London West. Carolyn is a global leader in media literacy, and is the chair of the UNESCO-initiated Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy, GAPMIL.

Media and information literacy means that all citizens possess skills to analyze and evaluate the information the media present.

Statements by Members

GAPMIL was created to enhance research and training on media and information literacy. As a former journalist, I know first-hand how media and information literacy is essential in our communities. It is important we discuss with young Canadians what we watch, hear, and read.

I am proud to acknowledge the work of London's own Carolyn Wilson. Thanks to her leadership, GAPMIL has been at the forefront of this effort on the world stage.

* * *

● (1400)

PRIME MINISTER'S AWARDS FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize two exemplary teachers from my riding of Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner who are recipients of the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence, Laura Gale of River Heights Elementary School, and Donna Armstrong of Crescent Heights High School.

Laura, who teaches kindergarten, takes her class out for hands-on learning trips, uses technology to connect with classrooms globally, and encourages her students' passions. Donna teaches multimedia, design, and communications. Her students have gone on to win numerous design and animation awards. She has developed a program of mentoring between grades, and as well providing professional development for teachers in less-developed countries.

These two amazing teachers, along with all teachers, are helping build Canada's future leaders by providing the skills for youth to excel in tomorrow's economy. On behalf of all residents, students, and parents, congratulations to Laura and Donna. We thank them for their continued excellence and support of our children.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Nicola Di Iorio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): *Signor Presidente*, today, I would like to mark a very special and important anniversary for 1.5 million Italian Canadians.

We are celebrating a country, its democratic system, and its people, but also each of its regions: *l'Abruzzo, la Basilicata, la Calabria, la Campania, l'Emilia Romagna, il Friuli, il Lazio, la Liguria, la Lombardia, Le Marche, il Molise, il Piemonte, la Puglia, la Sardinia, la Sicilia, la Toscana, il Trentino, l'Umbria, la Val D'Aosta e il Veneto*.

Each of these regions gave sons and daughters who helped to build the Canada we love so much.

During this first Italian Heritage Month in Canada, we wish all Italian Canadians and Italians around the world a *buona Festa della Repubblica Italiana*.

*Statements by Members***JACYNTHÉ OUELLETTE**

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in the early 1980s, Jacynthe Ouellette lost her job in a hospital because she was pregnant and ended up on social assistance.

In 1987, Le Chic Resto Pop, which had recently re-opened, hired her as part of a workforce reintegration program.

After putting all of this community organization's services in order, Jacynthe Ouellette became its executive director in 1992. Under her watch, Le Chic Resto Pop became a veritable institution in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. This organization provides the poorest people in my riding with inexpensive meals, and works every day to ensure that other people like Jacynthe get the training they need to return to the labour market.

In a few days, Jacynthe Ouellette will be stepping down to take a well-deserved retirement.

Jacynthe, after so many years of dedication, support, solidarity, and taking care of others, you now deserve to take some time to take care of yourself. Happy retirement and thank you for all that you have done.

* * *

[English]

IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Mr. Darshan Singh Kang (Calgary Skyview, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I immigrated to Canada in 1970. In fact, many of my distinguished colleagues also came to Canada as immigrants or refugees.

Unfortunately, we continue to hear many people who pander and promote misinformation. They fear that immigrants and refugees are a drain on Canada and fail to contribute. The facts simply do not support this divisive and unhealthy point of view. Immigrants across Canada become small business owners, contributing substantially to our nation's economy and to our communities.

My riding of Calgary Skyview is among the most diverse in Alberta and one of the most entrepreneurial in the province.

Let me be clear. Canada's success, our success, is founded on the strengths of many peoples, many voices, and many points of view.

I am proud of all those who have made a better life for themselves and their families through hard work, contributing to a better Canada for all.

I have always believed that in Canada, opportunity is limited only by imagination and how hard people are willing to work.

* * *

•(1405)

SUMMER EVENTS IN YORK—SIMCOE

Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, summer is the time to be in beautiful York—Simcoe on the picturesque shores of Lake Simcoe. The lake is our playground. It is now enjoying its strongest environmental health in generations. Why? It is thanks to a decade of investment from the Conservative government's Lake Simcoe cleanup fund.

The summer fun in York—Simcoe starts tomorrow, with Mount Albert Sports Day, running from June 2 to 4. Come for the games, a midway, entertainment, and an old country dinner.

August 10 to 13 will see thousands taking in the Sutton Fair, a celebration of our community's agricultural history. Horses, cows, and sheep meet demolition derbies and baking competitions in this classic country fair.

On August 19, we will gather in Bradford at Carrot Fest. This giant party pays tribute to the Holland Marsh, Canada's salad bowl.

The best event of all will be the local MP's old-fashioned Dominion Day pancake breakfast in Sharon on July 1st.

Help mark the 150th anniversary of Confederation and give a maple syrup thanks to Sir John A. and the Fathers of Confederation for creating Canada, the best country in the world.

* * *

[Translation]

MEMBERS-PAGES SOCCER MATCH

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening, in keeping with tradition, MPs formed a mixed non-partisan soccer team, the FC Commoners, to face off against the House of Commons pages.

[English]

At times it feels as if it is only the pages who can pass anything in this place, but last night we proved to them that the MPs can at least deftly pass the ball when we work together across the aisle. With goals from Conservative, NDP, and Liberal MPs, the final score was four to one, and because there were no injuries this year, I can say that it was an unqualified success.

[Translation]

James Ashwell scored for the pages. Pages Kathleen Carter and Jonathan Khov and the member for Fredericton were selected as the three star players.

[English]

The pre-game banter focused on hard work, an ethic we all share.

While we MPs may have cheered “turn the page”, we have an immense respect for this year's pages. They will be missed.

[Translation]

Long live the pages.

Statements by Members

[English]

ATTACK ON AMRITSAR TEMPLE

Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 33 years ago, the Sikh community changed forever. In a deliberate attack by the Indian government of the day, the Indian army stormed the Darbar Sahib complex. On June 1, 1984, the targeted attack on Sikhism's holiest shrine left a scar in the hearts of Sikhs everywhere. Innocent lives were lost, the Sikh reference library was burned down, and the Darbar Sahib complex was destroyed.

This attack is important to me, as a proud Canadian and as a proud Sikh. This political discussion has always been a sensitive one, but what we cannot lose track of is that where so many people met a tragic death is a temple where people from all around the world come to peacefully pray. We have an obligation to continue the fight for justice, for the innocent lives lost in June 1984, and to advocate for truth and reconciliation as the way forward.

* * *

[Translation]

RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, cancer affects us all. My father, Yvon, died of throat cancer. My father-in-law, Laurent, died in December of lung cancer. My aunt is a colon cancer survivor. We are all powerless against fate, and even the word “cancer” scares us all.

Relay for Life will be held on June 17 in Plessisville and other Canadian cities to celebrate cancer survivors and raise funds to fight this terrible disease.

In Plessisville, a small town of 6,500 people, Serge Barthell's team of volunteers has been working miracles for the past 11 years. Last year, they raised over \$300,000. Their goal is ambitious again this year. Nearly 800 people will take turns walking through the night to pay tribute to their loved ones affected by cancer.

Our ambassador, Catherine Beaudoin, a fighter and cancer survivor, is an inspiration to us all.

I will be walking on June 17 with my wife Caroline, my children, and my family for all the people we love and to prove to cancer that we will never lose hope.

* * *

[English]

POVERTY

Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our fight against chronic generational poverty continues in Saint John—Rothesay, but I am thrilled to report that progress is being made. The Canada child benefit is transforming and changing lives of thousands of families from coast to coast to coast.

In budget 2017, money directed toward a national housing strategy, child care, and early learning projects are historic investments and game changers. Last September, an additional \$61 million was invested in New Brunswick for affordable housing. This is having a major impact on the front lines.

Premier Brian Gallant came to Saint John recently and announced an additional \$10 million for Living SJ to directly combat generational poverty. This investment and commitment is unprecedented and will be transformational.

I thank the premier and leaders like Erin Schryer, Shilo Boucher, Paulette Hicks, Jack Keir, Donna Gates, Cathy Wright, Monica Chaperlin, Randy Hatfield, and so many others. Together with government focus, support, and determination, we will make a difference in the lives of those who need a helping hand.

* * *

● (1410)

TOURISM WEEK

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Tourism Week, I am happy to report that in the Yukon we have recently seen a growing interest in northern and indigenous tourism.

In Canada in 2015, indigenous tourism contributed \$1.4 billion to GDP, a huge increase from \$596 million in 2002. Our government provided \$1 million to the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association and, in budget 2017, \$8.6 million to the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada to support the development of Canada's unique and authentic indigenous tourism industry.

This investment is our belief in indigenous tourism and the opportunity it represents for our country. The trend is wonderful and reflects the many great cultural experiences; for example Moosehide Gathering, Adaka Cultural Festival, and the Haa Kusteeey Celebration.

I wish all territorial and indigenous tourism operators a great summer season and wish all Canadians a happy Tourism Week. On Canada's 150th, I encourage all Canadians to visit Yukon and the rest of Canada from coast to coast to coast.

* * *

CANADIAN COAST GUARD

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge the dedicated men and women of the Canadian Coast Guard who work every day to keep us safe.

As summer approaches, Manitobans are taking to the waters of beautiful Lake Winnipeg. Stationed in the harbour at Gimli is Canadian Coast Guard ship *Vakta*. In Icelandic, “*vakta*” means to watch, guard, and patrol. That is exactly what the crew and team of the Canadian Coast Guard do for the thousands of recreational boaters, freighters, and fishers on Lake Winnipeg, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Every season it conducts dozens of life-saving search and rescue operations.

Oral Questions

Under Prime Minister Harper, the Conservative government invested more than \$550 million in the Canadian Coast Guard, a portion of which was dedicated to ensuring the station at Gimli would be well equipped. On behalf of everyone who loves Lake Winnipeg, I extend a sincere thanks to the men and women of the Canadian Coast Guard, especially those stationed in Gimli.

I call on the Liberal government to commit today to ensuring the Gimli Coast Guard station stays open and is well funded for the safety and security of all who enjoy Lake Winnipeg.

* * *

PRIDE MONTH

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour today to mark the beginning of Pride Month in Canada. In June and throughout the summer, Canadians will gather in our communities to march in support of equality, inclusion, and LGBTQ2+ rights. Pride flags and trans flags will be raised from coast to coast to coast to declare that in our Canada, we are equal no matter who we love or how we express who we are.

[Translation]

Canadians know that our country is stronger not in spite of our diversity, but because of it. Pride month gives us an opportunity this summer to celebrate progress made on behalf of the community and to fight homophobia and transphobia and remember the past.

[English]

Pride is a celebration. It is about wearing our colours and sharing our true spirit. Our government celebrates this spirit and commits to addressing the work that still needs to be done. As MPs, we are proud to march, proud to advocate, and proud to work every day to ensure that everyone can say, "I am free to be me."

[Translation]

I am free to be me.

* * *

[English]

WILD SALMON

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the stream to sea program provides hands-on education for children and teaches them about the importance of our salmon. The Liberal government's decision to cancel this program is a slap in the face to British Columbians. It is also the latest failure of the government to protect and preserve one of Canada's most valuable resources. Salmon are critical to our economy, our food security, and our environment, as well as the livelihoods and cultures of first nations people.

This short-sighted and irresponsible decision comes in the middle of a massive reduction in this year's sockeye run. The sockeye run of the Somass River in my riding is projected to be reduced from 750,000 to 150,000 this year. The loss of income for the fishers in many communities is nothing short of catastrophic. I am calling on the government to immediately reinstate the in-school stream to sea program and immediately restore salmon enhancement programs that are so critical to the survival of the west coast wild salmon stock.

Why is the government abandoning our salmon?

* * *

• (1415)

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is a major flap in the art world today. The taxpayer-funded giant rubber duck is a counterfeit. We know that this new Canadian symbol just does not measure up to the industrious beaver or the very famous loon. I hope the Minister of Finance is not promoting it internally as a cheap alternative to new frigates.

I also heard that PMO issues management thought maybe it would be a great distraction from the Prime Minister's own cardboard cut-outs. That is true. Perhaps at the end the Prime Minister is actually going to be using it as a beach toy on his next visit to billionaire island.

All joking aside, a serious allegation of intellectual property theft has been made by the original artist. This duck will be coming across the Canadian border. I certainly hope that the Minister of Public Safety is paying attention to the matter and that he will not try to duck his responsibility.

* * *

[Translation]

THE MOHAWK PEOPLE

Mr. Marc Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker,

[Member spoke in Mohawk and provided the following translation:]

I pay my respects to you who have gathered here. I stand here to honour the Mohawk language and I pay my respects to their people. Let us pay respects to the Creator for everything he has given to us that we may live peacefully.

I am proud to stand here and speak to you in the Mohawk language. Hopefully it will help us to become better friends. I also hope that we will hear the Mohawk language a lot more often here and that more Canadians will be proud to use it to speak to one another.

I pay my respects to you, the master of this house.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know the Prime Minister loves to spend taxpayers' money, including nearly \$400 million for his friends at Bombardier. However, when he actually has the chance to do some good for Canadian families, the answer is no.

Oral Questions

Conservatives offered a compassionate response to the challenges faced by families struggling with autism, and it would have cost less per year than the bonus of one Bombardier executive. Why did the Prime Minister reject support for the Canadian autism partnership? Why this mean-spirited decision?

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to addressing the health needs of Canadians, our government is fully committed to working with our partners, the provinces and territories, and health care providers on the front lines.

We are supporting the provinces and the territories with an additional \$200 billion over the next five years. They will largely be responsible for the delivery of health care. In addition, we have a whole-of-government response to issues like autism spectrum disorder. That includes working with my partner, the Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities. It means working with my partner who is responsible for the Canada child benefit and the Canada disability credit.

We will all work together to address the needs of families affected by autism.

* * *

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the whole-of-government response was “no” to families facing autism challenges.

Yesterday I sat down with Amy Chang. Her parents, John Chang, who is in failing health, and Allison Lu, have been detained in China for 15 months. They are Canadian citizens who require help from their government, and the Chinese community in Canada is very concerned.

So far the Prime Minister has been absent on this file. Is he too busy or does he just not care? Will he commit to meeting with Amy this week and work to bring her parents home?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I share the hon. member's deep concern about this case.

I am following the case of Mr. Chang and Ms. Lu very closely. It has been raised repeatedly at a high level by the government and officials. Our officials are in contact with Mr. Chang, Ms. Lu, and their family.

I will be very glad this afternoon to be meeting with Ms. Chang. I look forward to that conversation.

* * *

• (1420)

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every day we discover one more reason why we should not appoint Madam Meilleur as the commissioner of official languages. First we learned about her donations to the Liberal Party and to the Prime Minister's leadership campaign, and her private meeting with the Prime Minister's closest advisers. Now we have learned that some of the Minister of Canadian Heritage's employees previously worked with Ms. Meilleur. There is only one thing left to do.

Will they finally rescind Madam Meilleur's appointment?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, after a long, and clearly merit-based process, we chose Mrs. Meilleur as the candidate for commissioner of official languages. A selection committee consisting of mostly public servants established this process and reviewed the different candidates. Every measure was put in place to ensure that employees who had contacts with Mrs. Meilleur in the past were not part of the process.

[*English*]

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals would have us believe that it is just a coincidence that the only choice for a non-partisan officer of Parliament is a Liberal activist, and that it is also just a coincidence that she donated to the Prime Minister's own campaign and discussed an appointment with his closest advisers. It is also just a coincidence that two of her former employees now work for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Will the Prime Minister admit that this was not just a series of remarkable coincidences, but was in fact the only reason she got the job?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned many times in the House, we are extremely proud of our candidate for official languages commissioner, because she has the experience and also has the expertise to make sure that she will be a good official languages commissioner.

I am proud of my team. I have been able to gather great people from across the country who understand the importance of official languages communities. Of course, I have explained the process many times, and that all the members of my team who have had contact in the past with Madeleine Meilleur were not part of the process.

Mr. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is becoming more and more clear, but to help the government out, the issue is not Madam Meilleur's professional qualifications. What is at question is the Prime Minister's competence. This appointment process has turned into a fiasco wrapped in a dumpster fire.

When will the Prime Minister take responsibility, cancel Madam Meilleur's nomination, and launch a new, non-partisan process?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see that the member is recognizing, finally, the expertise and experience of Mrs. Meilleur, because this is exactly why we decided to appoint her. It was because she actually has the knowledge and experience to make sure she would be a good official languages commissioner. Of course, the fact that she served in the past is something that we value, as we did when we appointed the former Conservative prime minister, Kim Campbell, to head the nomination process for Supreme Court justices. That is why we think we have a very good candidate.

Oral Questions

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister of heritage made a significant claim in the House yesterday. She stated that Gerry Butts and Katie Telford did not discuss the position of commissioner with Madeleine Meilleur. This contradicts Meilleur's own testimony at committee.

My question for the minister is straightforward. Would she like to withdraw or correct her statement, or is she accusing Madame Meilleur of intentionally misleading this Parliament?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I mentioned many times that Mrs. Meilleur is an amazing candidate because she had the chance to serve 30 years in supporting the promotion and protection of official language rights in our country.

Of course I would like to be precise in the fact that never was there any discussion relating to the fact that she could become the official languages commissioner. That is why we are very proud and will continue to support Madeleine Meilleur to become the next official languages commissioner.

• (1425)

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is duly noted that the minister has just said that Madeleine Meilleur intentionally misled this Parliament. That makes her ineligible to be named to a high office like commissioner of official languages.

[*Translation*]

The minister led the process to appoint Ms. Meilleur and is claiming that it was neutral and independent. However, we just learned that two staff members working under the Minister of Canadian Heritage used to work for Ms. Meilleur.

I would like to give the minister a chance to give us a clear and honest answer, and if she does not, she will be misleading Parliament. Is the minister ready?

Did the minister speak to her two staff members regarding the appointment of the official languages commissioner?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the process that we have put in place. I am also proud of the fact that I have been able to put together a very strong team that of course assists me in my responsibilities and duties. These individuals have experience and expertise in the area of official languages.

The individuals who have had previous contact with Madeleine Meilleur in the past were never part of the process and were in no way involved in Madeleine Meilleur's appointment.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Gerry Butts and Katie Telford were also not officially part of the process, but they were indeed involved.

Will the minister answer the question or not? Did the minister contact those employees in some way during Ms. Meilleur's appointment process? Answer the question for once.

The Speaker: I do not think that the member for Outremont wants me to answer his questions. He knows that I do not answer questions in the House of Commons. I therefore encourage him to address his comments to the Chair.

The hon. Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to point out that my colleague acknowledged many times in the past that Mrs. Meilleur was an excellent candidate with experience and expertise, and I thank him for that.

Of course, I would like to reassure him by saying that we held an open, independent, and merit-based process. None of the employees from my team who had any contact with Madeleine Meilleur in the past were involved in the process. That is exactly what happened.

[*English*]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we also found out today that when Madame Meilleur was interested in becoming an Ontario Liberal candidate, she bypassed the standard candidate nomination process. Who pulled the strings so she could be parachuted into a riding? It was none other than Gerry Butts. No wonder they are such good friends.

Does the minister not understand that the more she defends the partisan appointment made by the Prime Minister, the more she loses credibility? Will she do the right thing and recommend that Madame Meilleur be now removed from consideration as commissioner?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since Madame Meilleur has been such an important person in the protection and promotion of official languages rights in this country, including the protection of the Montfort Hospital and the creation of the francophone affairs commission in Ontario, I wanted to talk about the awards and recognition she has had, including the fact that she received the Order of Merit of the University of Ottawa, the Bastarache-Charron award for the common law section of the University of Ottawa.

The office—

Mrs. Kelly Block: That's not the question.

Mr. Mark Strahl: Let the Speaker answer it.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Speakers have long held that Speakers cannot comment on the quality of questions or answers or other things said in this House. We simply have the powers conferred on us by the House, including the enforcement of the rules. I encourage members to follow the rules and not to interrupt when another member is speaking on whatever side.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have learned that there are very obvious ties between the Minister of Canadian Heritage and the future commissioner of official languages even within her inner circle. Former staffers of Ms. Meilleur are currently working for the minister. These staffers worked closely with Madeleine Meilleur when she was the Attorney General and minister responsible for francophone affairs.

Will the minister cancel this proposed appointment or will we have to get to the bottom of the process and call for a public inquiry?

Oral Questions

• (1430)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud to have found a very good candidate, because when searching for candidates to become the commissioner of official languages, we wanted to find the best one.

This is exactly what our process allowed us to do. Based on a short list I received, I had the opportunity to conduct interviews and then appreciate Mrs. Meilleur's 30 years of experience and expertise during these interviews.

She clearly emerged on top, so I am very pleased that she is our candidate.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, do you remember that 70s quiz show *Who is Telling the Truth?* We have been watching it since May 15. The Minister of Canadian Heritage assured the House that Madeleine Meilleur never talked to either Mr. Butts or Ms. Telford.

However, on May 18 in the Standing Committee on Official Languages, Ms. Meilleur said that she had discussed an appointment as a senator or commissioner with Mr. Butts and had coffee with Katie Telford for the same reason.

Will she apologize for misleading the House once and for all?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear my colleague talk about Mrs. Meilleur because, when I had the chance to speak with her on the phone to tell her that Mrs. Meilleur would potentially be a candidate we would select, she told me that Madeleine Meilleur was indeed a good candidate and that she had the necessary experience and qualifications. This was also the case for the other official languages critic, from the NDP.

Clearly, Mrs. Meilleur is a good candidate. The process was properly followed, and my staff who worked with her in the past were not involved. Everything was done according to the rules.

[*English*]

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we know that Madeleine Meilleur met with Gerry Butts and Katie Telford. Why? She told us in committee. Madeleine Meilleur confirmed that she met with both of them.

Yesterday in the House the minister said that never happened. Was the Minister of Canadian Heritage misleading the House when she said so? It is time for the truth. How many times did Madeleine Meilleur meet with members of the PMO before being appointed as the nominee to the official languages portfolio?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course, as I have said many times, the discussion about Mrs. Meilleur becoming commissioner of official languages never took place.

[*English*]

I would like to remind members of the important awards that Mrs. Meilleur was able to gather during her amazing career, including something that the Conservative Party will actually like a lot, which is the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012. She even received the Ontario College of Social Workers—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. This is a good way to shorten question period, colleagues.

The hon. Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Mr. Speaker, I will continue. As I was saying, she received the Order of Merit from the Association of French-Speaking Jurists of Ontario in 2007.

[*Translation*]

She was admitted into the Ordre de la francophonie de Prescott et Russell in 2006.

She also received the Réseau socioaction des femmes francophones award of excellence in 2002.

[*English*]

She received a United Way Community Builder Award—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Perth—Wellington.

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are not talking about the awards that she received, but about the rewards that she is being given for being nominated for being a Liberal donor.

Let us talk about Madeleine Meilleur's time as an MPP and a Liberal cabinet minister. Her director of communications is now the minister's director of communications. The director of policy was a former executive director to the Kathleen Wynne Liberals.

The minister claims she set up a firewall, but I have a sneaking suspicion that the firewall is as flimsy as the minister's answers in this House. Will the minister provide evidence that this firewall actually exists, or does it exist at all?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see that my colleague recognizes that she received many awards. Not only that, the fact that she won so many awards is based on the fact that she has had lots of accomplishments in her public life.

That leads us to the question of the importance of giving importance to public servants. To that extent, I would like to understand the point of view of the Conservative Party that it is not okay to appoint a person who has served in the past but it is okay to appoint a former—

• (1435)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if I were a minister, I would have spent the last 24 hours getting my story straight with respect to Madame Meilleur.

The government is playing fast and loose with the facts when it comes to this appointment. Rules have been broken, and at least one very qualified applicant was completely ignored in favour of a Liberal friend. Yesterday we heard the contradicting versions of the same event. This will not end well.

Why is the minister continuing with this farce of a process? Why is she not shutting it down before she and the Liberals do any more damage to the integrity of this Parliament?

Oral Questions

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, of course we value the importance of public life, we value the experience of Mrs. Meilleur, and that is what was shown by the fact that we had a very thorough process.

Since we value the importance of public service, we also appointed the former Conservative prime minister, Kim Campbell, to be in charge of a very important process, which is to appoint bilingual Supreme Court justices for the first time, because we believe in the importance of official languages. Therefore, since we value public service, it is just normal that Mrs. Meilleur is our candidate.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this so-called open and transparent process is anything but. Key staff members who worked for Madame Meilleur at Queen's Park are now working in the office of the Minister of Canadian Heritage. As scary as it sounds, it is as if the Liberals at Queen's Park are a farm club for the bigger in-debt-and-deficit Liberal club here in Ottawa managed by Gerry and Katie.

Will the minister do the right thing and finally admit how many times Madame Meilleur met with PMO staff and her staff before they gave their Liberal friend and donor this appointment?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since we are talking about the importance of expertise and experience, and because I have already given many explanations regarding the process, I would like to talk about Madame Meilleur's participation in associations and organizations.

She has been a member of the Association of French-Speaking Jurists of Ontario. She has been on the Ottawa-Carleton Regional District Health Council. She has been on the board of directors of the Cité Collégiale. She has been on the board of the Vanier housing corporation.

* * *

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals promised to settle the softwood lumber dispute last year, but now, with no deal in sight and massive unfair tariffs imposed by the U.S., their failure has already cost Canadian jobs, and more are on the line. After 18 months of failing Canadians on this file, finally the Liberals are offering support to struggling workers in communities, and it is still not clear if it will be enough.

How quickly will the EI funds be available, and will the minister guarantee that each and every worker who loses their job because of the government's failure will receive support?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question because it is so timely. Just a few hours ago, the government announced \$867 million toward the forest industry in Canada. That is a combination of \$605 million in loan guarantees offered through the Export Development Corporation and BDC, looking in the longer term to making it easier for the industry to diversify, to encourage them to look for export markets.

We work, by the way, co-operatively with all of the provinces. This is truly a—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Jonquière.

[Translation]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today we heard an announcement from the government, which has finally decided to move after 10 months of inaction on softwood lumber. It was only after communities took action. Hundreds of workers and their families demonstrated in the streets to make the government understand just how much of an impact U.S. countervailing duties have had on their jobs and the local economy.

The Prime Minister himself said that he wanted to help the middle class, but he waited until there were job losses to act.

When will the money be available, and can this money be used to guarantee deposits?

● (1440)

[English]

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, much of this investment is available immediately. We have been working for many months, not only across the Government of Canada but across the entire country. The suite of measures that we announced today look, not only in the short term to ensure that workers and communities and producers are protected from these punitive duties, but also the longer term, so that we can sustain such an important industry for all Canadians.

* * *

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government House leader loves to throw around the words “open” and “transparent”, but make no mistake, the Liberal government is anything but. She throws these words around in the hopes that Canadians will buy what she says and not what the government is doing. The Ethics Commissioner is solely responsible to the Parliament of Canada, not to the Liberal Parliament of Canada.

Will the Prime Minister agree that as they search for a new Ethics Commissioner, they will not fall into the same trap that they fell into with the official languages commissioner, and simply recruit from the list of loyal—

The Speaker: The hon. government House leader.

Oral Questions

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 time and again, we have put in place a new open, transparent, and merit-based appointment process. All the conditions needed to apply are available online. If the member has people he would like to suggest, I encourage them to go to the website and apply. This is a process brought forward to ensure that all Canadians can apply, because we believe in the diversity of our country, we believe in gender parity. With this new process, we have made over 140 appointments, and they have all been great appointments.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the position of Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner will soon be vacant and we do not know whether the Liberals have even started a clear and transparent process to find a replacement. Transferring the appointment responsibilities from the Prime Minister's office to the Government House Leader's office is a thinly veiled ploy.

Can the Prime Minister confirm that the selection criteria for the next Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner will be the same ones used to pick the new Commissioner of Official Languages, that is, be in the Liberal family and a generous Liberal donor?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have implemented a new, open, transparent, and merit-based appointment process. Our aim is to identify high-quality candidates who will help to achieve gender parity and truly reflect Canada's diversity.

We have made over 140 appointments under the new process. Canadians can continue to apply. All positions are posted online.

[*English*]

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, ACOA is the economic development agency for Atlantic Canada, and for decades it has been run by non-partisan senior civil servants. However, that is not good enough for the Prime Minister, because his top priority is rewarding his Liberal friends. The latest Liberal to be rewarded is Francis McGuire, Liberal donor, insider, and cheerleader, who is now the president of ACOA.

Can the Prime Minister not see that this blatant partisan appointment is undermining the credibility of the good work that ACOA does for Atlantic Canadians?

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to be the minister responsible for ACOA. As the member mentioned, ACOA is responsible for helping Atlantic Canada realize its economic potential, innovation, growth, and being more competitive. I want to take this opportunity to thank the former president, Paul LeBlanc, for his hard work and leadership, along with 32 outstanding MPs, and for introducing the Atlantic growth strategy.

With regard to Francis McGuire, he is a well-respected individual who has extensive experience in both the public and private sectors. I look forward to working with him.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Francis McGuire has donated to the Liberal Party a whopping 23 times over the last 10 years, for a total of over \$30,000. That is more money than either Gerry, Katie, or the Prime Minister himself have donated to the Liberal Party. We have patronage at official languages, and we have patronage at ACOA, so it raises the question: What is the minimum Liberal donation going to be for the new Ethics Commissioner to even get on its list?

● (1445)

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member knows very well that we have put in a new process, an open and transparent and merit-based process. With this process, we have appointed over 140 nominations. The work that these people do is important work. We value the public service, and we value Canadians wanting to fill these positions. We are looking at diversity. We are looking at our two official languages. We are looking at many different factors. All position applications are available online. I encourage all Canadians to apply.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we know that torture and summary executions are immoral and run counter to Canadian and international law. They also alienate potential supporters in the fight against ISIS and produce information that is dangerously unreliable. The Minister of National Defence knows well the ongoing controversy surrounding possible Canadian complicity in torture involving Afghan detainees.

Now that the minister has decided Canadians should be advising and assisting Iraqi forces, in the face of recent evidence of gruesome torture and summary executions, will he now commit to a full investigation of our military co-operation with Iraq?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, National Defence and the government as a whole do not accept torture. Investigations have been done and are being done to protect Canada's reputation and ensure respect for international regulations.

*Oral Questions***PUBLIC SAFETY**

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals promised to implement a system to fix mistaken identities on the no-fly list, but Canadians are still waiting. There are children on that list. People are having to cancel their trips, and business people are missing out on opportunities because of the list.

[English]

What is the government waiting for in finally fixing the no-fly list, and how long are we going to have to wait before it finally puts in place the promised redress system, or is it going to be just another broken promise?

Mr. Mark Holland (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member, and indeed the committee for its work. They have just tabled their recommendations with respect to this item and the national security framework. We certainly appreciate the frustration of law-abiding travellers whose plans were delayed as a result of false positives. We are absolutely committed. I am working on the report that was just tabled to make sure that we get this right.

* * *

[Translation]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's forestry industry is important to all of our rural and urban communities and provides good jobs for Canadians across the country.

Can the Minister of Natural Resources tell the House what the government is doing to help the forestry industry and its workers get through this difficult time and emerge stronger?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Pontiac for giving me an opportunity to update the House on the softwood lumber file.

We just approved an action plan with measures worth over \$860 million to strengthen the softwood lumber industry, support workers, expand wood use, and diversify market opportunities for Canadian wood products.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 13 former Royal Canadian Air Force commanders recommended against an interim purchase of Super Hornets. The Senate committee unanimously recommended that the Liberals abandon their plan to buy Super Hornets, but the Liberals refused to listen to the experts. That is, until their rich friends at Bombardier had a problem with Boeing, and then the Liberals decided that Boeing was not a trusted partner. Is there at least one Liberal willing to stand up for the interests of Canadians rather than their rich Liberal insiders? The defence minister has turned this into a complete disaster. Who is going to clean up his mess?

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives left us a fleet that is over 30 years old. They did not take care of this problem. Since we want to properly defend Canadians and North America, as well as ensure global stability, we need to make sure that members of the Canadian Armed Forces are properly equipped and ready to meet all challenges.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would say to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence that it was his minister who was the architect of the misfortunes currently facing the Canadian Forces. He politicized the heck out of the process to replace the CF-18s.

Instead of putting it out to tender, he fabricated a capability gap that does not exist, just to please his friends at Boeing. Now, two years later, Boeing is no longer a friend of the Liberals. Imagine that.

The Royal Canadian Air Force always needs planes.

When will the minister stop putting the interests of the Liberal Party ahead of the interests of the Canadian Forces?

● (1450)

Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister always puts the interests of Canadians and the interests of the Canadian Forces first so that our soldiers may be properly equipped and trained to carry out their missions, defend Canada and North America, and ensure global stability with our NATO and NORAD partners.

* * *

[English]

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government has finally admitted what we knew all along, that the questionable detention of Canadian citizens, John Chang and Allison Lu, by China customs is a trade matter and should have been resolved months ago. Instead, Mr. Chang has been languishing in jail for 15 months, and the Prime Minister has done absolutely nothing to secure his release and safe return. It would take one phone call from the Prime Minister to his new BFFs in Beijing to resolve this. When will the Prime Minister pick up that phone and make the call? It is never too late to do the right thing.

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the minister earlier stated, our government is very engaged on this file. We have raised this matter at a very high level with the Chinese authorities. Our consular officials are constantly meeting and offering assistance to Mr. Chang, Ms. Lu, and their family, and the minister and I are meeting with Amy Chang later this afternoon.

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC): It is just 15 months late, and they are finally getting around to meeting with Amy, Mr. Speaker. That is just not good enough. Frankly, Canadians deserve and expect a lot better from their government. The member opposite talked about meeting with Amy months ago, which never really happened. It was all a figment of his imagination.

Oral Questions

The minister talks about following this file closely. She should be leading this file. She said three weeks ago that she was seized with this opportunity, but if that means rusted and immobile, she is absolutely right. They all have the credibility of a big yellow duck. When will the Prime Minister get involved and fix this?

Mr. Omar Alhabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the case of Mr. Chang and Ms. Lu deserves much more dignity and respect than it is receiving from this opposition member. We are treating this case with great seriousness, and our government has been engaged on this file. I personally spoke with Amy last October. Our door is always open to meet with families of loved ones who are abroad, and we will never stop until we resolve this case.

* * *

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' official languages record has been less than stellar lately. Take, for example, the partisan appointment of the official languages commissioner and the five French errors in the Prime Minister's 560-word biography.

Today, we learned from an internal government report that the use of French is dwindling in the public service. Fewer senior managers are fluent in French, translation quality is down, English is taking over, and so on.

When will the government implement practical measures to protect Canada's official languages?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's two official languages are certainly a priority for our government. That is why, when we were elected, we acted quickly to make up for the previous government's 10 years of inaction.

We reinstated francophone immigration programs, established a process for appointing bilingual judges to the Supreme Court, and reinstated university accreditation at the Collège militaire royal de Saint-Jean.

I will be presenting an official languages game plan a little later this year. We know that we can always do better and that there is plenty of room for improvement on the bilingualism front across the country.

* * *

[English]

LABOUR

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I do not have to remind the House that all members of Parliament benefit from a safe and secure workplace thanks to the brave men and women who work in the Parliamentary Protective Service. However, their contract expired in March and their employer is refusing to bargain collectively. The 220 members who keep us safe have launched a campaign asking for respect to bring their employer to the table to negotiate a fair contract.

Will the government show respect for our outstanding security personnel and begin fair negotiations?

The Speaker: Members know that questions must be within the responsibility of the government and this has nothing to do with the administration of the government if the member checks the legislation.

The hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

* * *

● (1455)

[Translation]

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government's response is inadequate. Instead of taking the bull by the horns and reaching an agreement on softwood lumber with the United States, it chose to kneel. The government lacks leadership and does not know how to negotiate. It must protect the softwood lumber industry and create jobs.

The Liberals are abandoning our regions. Workers want the government to sign an agreement in order to bring stability and prosperity to their industry. When will the government sign a new agreement with our main partner, the United States?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was the Conservative government that let the agreement expire.

The countervailing duties imposed by the U.S. Department of Commerce are punitive and unfair. We will go to court and we will win, as we have every time.

The Prime Minister spoke to the President at the G7 summit about softwood lumber. This week, I had two meetings with Secretary Ross at which we discussed the softwood lumber file.

We want a good agreement, not just any agreement.

[English]

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the Liberals did not take it seriously in 2015. They did not get the job done with Obama in 2016, and they are mailing it in right now in 2017. Now we are seeing thousands and thousands of jobs right across Canada being lost.

The government's aid package for the softwood industry is too little, too late for forestry workers and their families. Mills are already closing down across the country and this money will not bring those jobs back. Canadian forestry workers deserve stability and predictability from their government.

What does the Minister of Natural Resources have to say to those workers who want jobs, not EI?

Oral Questions

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question and I share the hon. member's concern about workers who might be laid off, which is why we are investing 90 million new dollars in helping the transition and the reskilling of those people. At the same time, we are making \$605 million available in loan guarantees, and in the long term, more investments in the marketplace in transition and the expansion of export markets for the workers.

We understand the importance of this industry and we will protect the workers, the communities—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Prince Albert.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government failed to secure a new softwood lumber agreement and now mills are closing down across the country.

There was a window of opportunity last year to get a deal done but the Liberals did not make it a priority. In fact, reports suggest that there was a deal on the table and the minister walked away. Thousands of Canadian forestry workers, who are about to lose their jobs, want to know what was in that deal.

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me remind the hon. member that it was his Conservative government that allowed the previous agreement to expire.

As to Ambassador Mike Froman's comments about there having been a deal on the table, there may have been offers from Mike that were great for the United States and punitive for Canada, but I will never do a bad deal for Canada.

* * *

DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Democratic Institutions introduced legislation to make political fundraising more open and transparent. All members in the House fully appreciate that Canadians should have a right to access more information about political fundraising events.

Could the Minister of Democratic Institutions please update the House on her new efforts to further improve transparency for political fundraising events in Canada?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Democratic Institutions, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are taking concrete action to enhance our already strong and robust rules around political fundraising events in Canada. Yesterday, I was pleased to introduce Bill C-50, which would give Canadians more information than ever before on political fundraising events where a minister, party leader, or leadership contestant is present. Canadians will know who is going to fundraisers, where and when they are happening, and the amount required to attend.

I encourage all parties in this place to support these important measures and to take action to become more open and transparent.

• (1500)

JUSTICE

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice is trying to blame everyone other than herself for court delays as serious criminal cases continue to be thrown out of court, a murder case in Montreal being the latest. However, Chief Justice McLachlin says a big part of the problem is 58 superior court vacancies, 58 vacancies that the minister has yet to fill. When is the minister going to stop making excuses, take responsibility, and get these vacancies filled?

Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am not making any excuses. I take very seriously my responsibility to appoint superior court justices across the country. I am extremely proud of the very meritorious candidates, 67 in total, that I have appointed thus far.

We are going to be moving forward with our open and transparent appointment process to continue to appoint justices to the superior courts. I look forward to making an announcement in this regard very shortly.

* * *

[*Translation*]

SHIPPING

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the damage caused by two-metre waves to residences in Yamachiche is in the thousands of dollars. Someone, somewhere must be responsible for this, as this is no act of God.

The victims are also dealing with flooding and hope that they will not be forgotten by this government.

The St. Lawrence pilots having assured me of their full cooperation with Transport Canada, can the minister confirm that the results of the investigation will be made public and tell us when we can expect the report?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

We are studying the investigation report. When the findings have been reviewed, they will be made public.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the people of Brossard—Saint-Lambert know that cultural and recreational facilities make for stronger communities and contribute to a better quality of life for all residents.

Our government has made cultural and recreational infrastructure a priority because it is an important part of community-building in Quebec and across Canada.

Can the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities update the House on the government's work on this important file?

Points of Order

[English]

Hon. Amarjeet Sohi (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, we were proud to announce \$24 million for 26 cultural and recreational projects across Quebec to support seniors, families with children, newcomers, and multi-cultural communities. We understand that infrastructure investments also help grow the economy, create jobs, and create opportunities for those Canadians who are working hard to be part of the middle class.

We will continue to work with the Province of Quebec to build even stronger communities going forward.

* * *

HEALTH

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, prior to budget 2017, nearly half of the Liberal caucus advocated for the Canadian autism partnership, and many said so directly to autism stakeholders.

Last month, on World Autism Awareness Day, more than a dozen Liberal MPs showed up for the photo op, but on Tuesday, in a vote, clearly strong-armed by Liberal leadership, all but one Liberal MP voted against the creation of the Canadian autism partnership. Why, on something so critically important, after so much work by so many exceptional Canadians, is the Prime Minister playing such a heavy hand?

[Translation]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary for Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize that autism spectrum disorder has a significant impact on those affected and their families. That is why our government allocated nearly \$39 million to the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research.

We have also enhanced benefits for young people with disabilities. We invested \$8 million in 2015 and 2016 for autism and \$5.3 million for research at Toronto's SickKids hospital.

We are involved and will become even more involved as we draft and study the bill to be introduced by the Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities.

* * *

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the most federalist premier in the history of Quebec admits that the Constitution is not working, you know that it is really not working. Unsurprisingly, the Prime Minister of Canada told Philippe Couillard to take a hike. The Quebec nation exists, but the Prime Minister will have nothing to do with it. In his legal challenge of Bill 99, he is even denying Quebec's right to self-determination.

Will the Prime Minister be democratic enough to recognize Quebec's right to decide its own future?

• (1505)

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister clearly stated this morning, we have no intention of reopening the constitutional debate. Our position has not changed, and the Prime Minister was very clear.

Our priority is to grow Canada's economy and Quebec's economy and create jobs for the middle class and those working hard to join it. That is the mandate that Quebecers and Canadians have given us. We take this mandate very seriously.

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there is no respect for Quebec's jurisdiction, as evidenced by Bill C-29. There is no respect for our needs, as evidenced by the health transfers. There is no respect for our land, as evidenced by energy east. There is even no respect for our laws, as evidenced by the infrastructure bank. There is never any respect for what we want.

When will this Prime Minister apologize to Quebecers for his total lack of respect towards Quebec?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our federal government is very proud of its relationship with the province of Quebec. We are working with the Province of Quebec for the interests of Quebecers and Canadians.

Our efforts on health, the environment, and many other files clearly show that we are working in a spirit of collaboration and mutual respect.

As I said, Quebecers are very pleased to know that we are focusing on the economy and job creation.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members to the presence in the gallery of His Excellency, Mr. Salifou Diallo, President of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Chris Warkentin (Grande Prairie—Mackenzie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier in question period, the government House leader invited MPs to direct people to the government appointments website to get information about the application for the Ethics Commissioner. I went there in anticipation of finding that. I saw that no such application or job was posted there.

I am wondering if she intended to mislead the House, or if in fact she wanted to stand to withdraw the comments, or if she intended instead to direct people to liberal.ca.

The Speaker: I do not see the member rising.

The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly is rising on a point of order.

Business of Supply

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I know you have the responsibility, and we humbly respect that, to judge the admissibility of questions. I would, however, submit to you, if I may, that in light of the current situation with the security staff on the Hill and the employer responsibility that is held by the RCMP, which is under the responsibility of the Minister of Public Safety, I would ask that you reconsider the admissibility of the question.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Matthew Dubé: I would also ask that the Liberals not heckle me as I talk about the security guards in the House of Commons and the work they are doing.

I would humbly submit, while respecting your decision, that you may reconsider it and that the member for Saskatoon West may be allowed to re-pose the question.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly for raising this question. First of all, I thank him for asking people not to heckle when someone is raising a point of order or at any other time. That is appreciated.

Second, the hon. member checks the legislation that created the Parliamentary Protective Service, he will find that it is an independent agency, which reports to both Speakers. It is also under the RCMP in terms of the daily operations, but it is an independent operation and therefore not within the responsibility of the Government of Canada.

Now I believe the hon. opposition House leader has the usual Thursday question.

* * *

● (1510)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I have a couple of questions regarding the upcoming business of the House for the government House leader. First of all, could the government House leader outline the business of the House for the remainder of this week as well as her government's priorities between now and the end of the sitting in June?

Informing the opposition of the government's priorities prior to the summer adjournment is the custom in this place, so it would be particularly helpful as we are moving forward and seek to do the good work that Canadians elected us to do during extended hours.

Also, it is our understanding that the government House leader intends to table a motion to change the Standing Orders. I think the government knows full well our position and the NDP's position. We remain strongly opposed to making any changes. That being said, could the government House leader advise us if she still plans on proposing a motion to change the Standing Orders, and if so, can she assure the House that she will not use the same types of procedural tactics to shut down debate on this motion before the summer recess?

Last, I have one more question regarding the upcoming business. Could the government House leader confirm the accuracy of rumours that the Prime Minister intends to prorogue in the next few weeks? Could she confirm whether that is accurate?

The Speaker: Order. I encourage members who are carrying on conversations to do so in the lobby. I apologize to the hon. opposition House leader for the noise that took place during her comments.

I would ask members to help me out by saying “Shhh”. Thank you very much, colleagues.

The hon. government House leader.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, we will continue debate on the Conservatives' opposition motion. This evening, we will proceed with Bill C-45, the cannabis act, at second reading.

Tomorrow morning, we will commence report stage of Bill C-44, the budget. In the afternoon, we will return to Bill C-45.

[*English*]

Our hope for Monday and Tuesday is to send Bill C-45 to committee, and also to deal with report stage of Bill C-44. Other bills for next week include the Senate amendments to Bill C-6, the Citizenship Act; and Bill S-3, provided the bill is passed by the Senate.

Should time permit, we would also like some debate on Bill C-49, transportation modernization; and Bill C-24, to amend the Salaries Act.

We have had a conversation among House leaders. I look forward to continuing those conversations, and I will do my best to report to this House the information that I have, and we will do our best to work well together so that all members can do the good work that we are sent here to do.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—KINDER MORGAN TRANS MOUNTAIN EXPANSION PROJECT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Peace River—Westlock has three minutes remaining in his speech.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was speaking on the topic of social licence, given the current motion that we are debating from our hon. leader. I would like to perhaps go over that motion once again. I will just read it once more:

That the House agree that the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project: (a) has social license to proceed; (b) is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of thousands of jobs; (c) is safe and environmentally sound, as recognized and accepted by the National Energy Board; (d) is under federal jurisdiction with respect to approval and regulation; and (e) should be constructed with the continued support of the federal government, as demonstrated by the Prime Minister personally announcing the approval of the project.

Business of Supply

Some 500 of the 630 first nations across our great nation of Canada are open to pipelines and petroleum product development. This means that first nation communities across the country are divided on the issues of pipeline development and energy resource development and things like this. Therefore, I would say that we need to be able to treat first nations the same way we treat all other Canadians and to have the diverse opinions that we have about petroleum product development. Given this particular project, the Trans Mountain pipeline project, the vast majority of first nations along the route are totally excited about the fact that this pipeline is going to be built. Therefore, we would appreciate it if the Prime Minister would go to B.C. and sit down with the people in Burnaby and have a chat with them to champion this pipeline, to make the case for the social licence that this pipeline has in order for it to be built.

We look forward to the Prime Minister's championing of this. We acknowledge that he has approved the pipeline; we know that was a hurdle in and of itself. We continue to raise concerns about the process by which it was approved, but we recognize that it is approved and the very fact that repeatedly members of the government stand up and acknowledge the fact that they have approved this pipeline. They brag about the fact that they have approved the pipeline. Now the imperative is for this pipeline to be built. We look forward to what the government will do in the future. We know that the market conditions are perhaps a bit downtrodden, and that is why we in Alberta are looking forward to having this pipeline built and bringing these life-saving petroleum products to the world.

• (1515)

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this motion is a request by the Conservatives to get the Government of Canada to approve the Kinder Morgan pipeline. We have already done that. This opposition motion is trying to remind us that we should be supporting the oil and gas sector and employees in the province of Alberta. We do that. It is less surprising that the Conservatives put politics over principle, but what is surprising is that they are putting politics over pipelines. How does the member think that pitting members against one another helps us achieve our common goal?

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, to the member's point, the issue with pipelines in general was social licence. We did not come up with that issue. That was brought up by the government, that fact that pipelines need to have social licence.

The government said that this pipeline had social licence, and therefore it approved the pipeline. Now it is incumbent upon the government to dispel the opposition to this pipeline, to ensure that all the actors involved understand that this pipeline has social licence, and to ensure that in the interests of Canada this pipeline gets built.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is a range of things I would like to ask my colleague from Alberta.

Maybe I will focus in on the issue of confidence—and I would suggest it is overconfidence—that my friends on both the Conservative and Liberal sides have with respect to the National Energy Board itself.

The government brought an expert panel together to review what is going on with the National Energy Board, which has had its problems. Let us admit the obvious. The energy east pipeline hearings had to be shut down. The Kinder Morgan hearings had to be suspended. Both were because of conflicts of interest. People who were being placed on the National Energy Board to review the pipeline had previously worked for the pipeline companies themselves. That is called a captured regulator, where the regulator becomes too close, too forgiving, and approving of those it seeks to regulate. It does not work.

In that expert panel's report, it said that the National Energy Board faces a crisis of confidence. It went on later to say that, for a generation to come, Canadians have lost faith in the National Energy Board.

When Conservatives and Liberals agree on their terminology of social licence, that somehow the public is on board, one would have to question how they define it. There are 17 lawsuits out against this decision. The mayors in the regions most impacted by this pipeline are unanimous in their opposition. The first nations that the member talks about are misrepresented. I deal with many of them. When someone signs an agreement to discuss, it is not an agreement to the project itself. That is what has been misconstrued continuously.

I have a very simple question. We cannot rely on the NEB process. The current Prime Minister promised British Columbians and Canadians that he would review the pipeline under a valid process. He himself admitted that the one that had been put in place by Mr. Harper was inefficient, ineffective, and did not build the public confidence needed to have social licence.

The process is the same one that Harper had. This Prime Minister used it as well. Under all that review, there was no evidence put forward that a diluted bitumen spill could actually be cleaned up. Does my friend have any evidence to offer the people of Alberta, British Columbia, or anywhere in Canada that when a spill of diluted bitumen happens, in salt or fresh water, it can actually be cleaned up?

My Conservative colleagues want me to hurry, because they actually know the answer. It is no.

Mr. Arnold Viersen: Mr. Speaker, in my limited lifespan, I have travelled to other parts of the world. Everybody I met from other parts of world congratulates Canada on being one of the cleanest countries in the world. That is to our great honour.

The NEB process that has been in place has championed our ability to have a world-class regulatory framework. In fact, most jurisdictions around the world look to Alberta specifically for how to manage their oil sands development or petroleum product development.

We have nothing to fear here. In fact, I would ask the hon. member who is questioning me to have a conversation with the premier of Alberta. Even she understands that there is social licence for this pipeline and that this pipeline needs to be built in order to get petroleum products to tidewater.

Business of Supply

● (1520)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his fine speech that, although interrupted by a question period, was excellent. I had the pleasure of visiting my colleague's riding this spring, when there was still a bit of snow. I saw for the first time the scale of oil development in western Canada, and as a Quebecker, I was impressed. We cannot imagine it, living in a small rural Quebec community. When travelling around these huge tracts of lands, on every block, we see pump jacks, which are making Canada the prosperous country it is today.

Today we are speaking on the motion by my colleague from Chilliwack—Hope, which reads as follows:

That the House agree that the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project: (a) has social license to proceed; (b) is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of thousands of jobs; (c) is safe and environmentally sound, as recognized and accepted by the National Energy Board; (d) is under federal jurisdiction with respect to approval and regulation; and (e) should be constructed with the continued support of the federal government, as demonstrated by the Prime Minister personally announcing the approval of the project.

I wanted to talk about this motion because it is an important debate. In fact, I want to thank my colleague for this initiative which will allow us to have a debate. However, even though the House of Commons sitting hours have been extended, I feel that many of my colleagues would have wished to discuss it further. Unfortunately, motion No. 14 on the extension of sitting hours will not enable us to continue discussion on this opposition motion.

I know that my NDP colleagues also have an opposition motion to present next week, and their time will be cut short, too. Nevertheless, extending the sitting hours is a unique opportunity for Canadians to hear what the official opposition and the NDP think on the issues that matter most to them.

The record now corrected, I would like to speak a little bit about the reasons why went in this particular direction. Obviously, the results from the last election in British Columbia have certain people worried, people who firmly believe in this project. Namely, they are worried about the coalition that has been formed by the New Democratic Party and the Green Party. This leads us to wonder if the Liberal government's commitment to the project is sincere.

Important projects such as these always face a certain amount of opposition by people or environmentalists, obviously, and this happens for all kinds of reasons. These projects still have a purpose, however. We sometimes have to try to convince people to get on board, but it is not always possible. There are many similar examples of this in Quebec. Some would say the Kinder Morgan project is one of them.

What role should leaders play when it comes time to create acceptance for and defend a project that is important to the economy and which might impact local communities? It is up to the leader to roll up his sleeves and start selling his project. In this case, the leader is the Prime Minister of Canada and he approved the Kinder Morgan project. It is up to him to head west and sell his project, to explain to people who still oppose it today why it needs to be completed for the welfare of all Canadians, including Quebeckers.

Unfortunately, the Prime Minister seems to talk about Kinder Morgan everywhere but in British Columbia, the very place where the leader's message needs to be heard. That is where the leader needs to go to underscore the project's importance and it is the only place where the Prime Minister of Canada refuses to talk about it. Maybe he does not want to upset his voter base. I do not know. Far be it from me to impugn the Prime Minister's motives, but I am appalled at his refusal to go British Columbia.

Energy resources are important for the economy not only of western Canada, but of the country as a whole.

● (1525)

According to Natural Resources Canada, with a production of 3.8 million barrels of crude oil a day in 2014, Canada is a major supplier of safe and reliable crude oil for all international markets.

Canada also has one of the largest oil reserves in the world, after Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. Canada has 171 billion barrels of proven oil reserves, including 166 billion in the oil sands. That is important for jobs in Canada. Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain project could create up to 15,000 jobs for Canadians.

Again according to Natural Resources Canada, the oil and gas industry directly employs over 700,000 Canadians, which represents nearly 4% of jobs in the country.

Of course, we just went through a difficult period because of the downturn in global oil prices. The industry has obviously been greatly affected by that. Over the past few weeks and months, we have heard our colleagues from oil-producing provinces calling on the government to help the sector weather this difficult crisis.

During my trip to Alberta, I saw many unused construction trailers. From what I was told, that is not normal. Usually, these trailers should be on site making work for Canadians from every province.

I know many people from my riding who went to work in Alberta. Unfortunately, that is not what is happening right now. We need projects like Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain project to help the oil industry weather the crisis.

Despite technological advances, there is still a high demand for petroleum products. Of course, we can seek to reduce our use of oil and work to develop new sources of energy, but in the meantime, oil is there. Oil exists. I do not know very many of my colleagues who do not use a single drop of oil in a day. Why? Because oil is absolutely everywhere.

Canada therefore needs to have trade opportunities for those products and needs to ship them to ports so that they can be exported to other continents, particularly Asia.

I will now turn to another important reason why I believe we must support the industry: safe transportation of petroleum products.

Business of Supply

As the member for Mégantic—L'Érable, I am deeply concerned about transportation of oil by rail. The government has amended the rules and is going to change the kind of tank cars being used, but in the meantime, a lot of oil is still being transported by rail all across Canada. Pipelines are one of the safest ways to transport oil.

According to Natural Resources Canada, pipelines are a safe, reliable and environmentally friendly way of transporting oil and gas. On average each year, 99% of the oil transported on federally regulated pipelines moves safely. That is one of my concerns, and I feel we should give these considerations some thought before we say no. That is why I encourage the government to vote in favour of this motion.

[English]

In Quebec, a lot of us are thinking that the Liberal government is trying to hide itself behind the Rocky Mountains instead of facing people in B.C. and explaining to them why the Kinder Morgan pipeline is important for our economy.

I am not afraid to support this project and the motion of my colleague, the member for Chilliwack—Hope. For the people of Quebec, pipelines are safe and are good for our economy, not only for Canada but for Quebec.

• (1530)

[Translation]

In closing, the Prime Minister has expressed support for Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain project several times. He did so in Calgary, in Houston in the United States, and in Italy, and I think he should continue to support it. Now, the Prime Minister needs to make a similar show of support in British Columbia. This is an urgent matter.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support the member for Chilliwack—Hope's motion.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite for supporting this project.

If the National Energy Board ever approved the energy east project, would my hon. colleague be in favour of those pipelines, considering how safe they are and the fact that we could then finally ship petroleum products across the country both safely and efficiently?

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very relevant question. The Conservative Party has just come through an excellent leadership race.

The new Leader of the Opposition brought forward a proposal for ensuring that Quebecers and Canadians always know where the gas they put in their vehicles comes from. At each and every pump, Canadians would know where it comes from. Right now, Quebecers would see that their petroleum does not come from Canada, but rather from other countries. This is one way of making Quebecers and Canadians understand the situation, and they could contribute to the economy of their own country. Indeed, I am sure they would choose to fill up at places that sell petroleum from their own country.

[English]

Ms. Kim Rudd: Mr. Speaker, I want to inform you that I am splitting my time with my hon. colleague, the member for Edmonton Centre.

Let me begin by thanking the hon. member from Chilliwack—Hope for this motion endorsing our government's decision to approve the Trans Mountain expansion—

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable on a point of order.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, could we verify that my five-minute question and comment period is really up? I have only been able to answer one question. I believe that I have time remaining to respond to comments and give my colleagues the opportunity to ask questions about my speech.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: There is a bit of confusion up at this end in terms of the clock.

[Translation]

Therefore, we will continue with questions and comments and the member for Mégantic—L'Érable has a further two and a half minutes. After that, we will ask the hon. parliamentary secretary to give his speech.

The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith can ask a question or make a comment.

[English]

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, is my colleague on the Conservative bench not aware that the Kinder Morgan pipeline is entirely an export pipeline for 100% unrefined raw bitumen, that there is no energy security benefit for Canada whatsoever, that this is not going to be fuelling our vehicles, that this is not going to be heating our homes, and that this is entirely an export of jobs and energy potential that Canada will not benefit from?

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I have difficulty understanding how Canada would not benefit from a pipeline to export oil, when building the pipeline will generate jobs in the tens of millions. This pipeline will benefit Canada.

It is the Prime Minister's responsibility to go to British Columbia, explain things, and speak clearly to people. He does not have to invent reasons. If increasing oil output means jobs for Canadians, I believe we must maintain our support for this project.

[English]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I heard very clearly that the Liberals are supporting this motion, but they suggest that there is politics behind it. Having the government approve the National Energy Board is one approval, but does he not believe that the message Parliament will send if it approves this motion is also a very important message? I think there are two processes here, and they are both very important.

Business of Supply

• (1535)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for that question. For Canadians to get on board, it is important to understand that, beyond the legislative or regulatory process, what counts is also the message that leaders send. Right now, the House can send a clear message that shows that we support the Kinder Morgan project because it will create jobs and benefit the economy and Canadians.

That is also why I am calling on the Prime Minister to do his duty and make his way over to British Columbia to explain to people why this project is important not only for western Canada's economy, but also for that of the entire country.

It is the Prime Minister's job to do that, and it is Parliament's job to sometimes adopt motions to support the Prime Minister's work. I am sure that, if the Prime Minister has a unanimous motion from all members of the House defending Kinder Morgan's project in British Columbia, it would make his job a lot easier. It is not every day that I try to help the Prime Minister do his job, but in this case we are prepared to do it.

The Deputy Speaker: I apologize again for the confusion.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources.

[*English*]

Ms. Kim Rudd (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I was saying earlier, it is great to have the opposition's support on our approval of the Kinder Morgan pipeline. Everyone in this chamber recognizes that the past years have been difficult ones for Canada's oil and gas sector. The sharp drop in oil prices has taken a heavy toll on the men and women and their families who depend on the industry for their livelihoods, not just in Alberta or Saskatchewan or Newfoundland and Labrador but indeed right across the country.

As the minister has pointed out, for every job created in Alberta's oil patch, at least two more jobs are created across the country. Of course, the converse is also true. Every job lost in the oil patch ripples across the whole country, affecting not only the person losing the job but the family who depends on them. All of us understand that, just as we understand that we cannot move global commodity prices with a snap of our fingers, no matter how much we want to.

Our government believes we can strengthen Canada's ability to access new markets and compete in the global economy, all the while protecting the environment, working with indigenous communities, and creating well-paying jobs. That is what the decision to approve the Trans Mountain expansion project is all about.

I am not sure why the members opposite would think this would change with an election in British Columbia. After all, it was the right decision at the time, for all the reasons outlined in this motion, and it remains the right reason today. The fact is that the Trans Mountain expansion project does have social licence to proceed, despite the comments of a vocal minority. It is critical to the Canadian economy and would create thousands of jobs. It is under federal jurisdiction.

I am pleased to confirm, in no uncertain terms, that it does have the support of this government and of our Prime Minister. It has our support because the decision was made based on solid science and clear evidence. Its environmental impacts were carefully considered, its effect on communities was exhaustively canvassed, and its economic potential meticulously measured. We understood and heard the opposing views. However, at the end of the day, Canadians expect their government to decide, and in the best interests of the country as a whole, and that is exactly what we did.

Our approval was rooted in a balanced approach, one that ensures Canada's energy sector remains a source of well-paying, middle-class jobs as we also tackle climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That is the message of this decision: balance. Thinking only of the environment without any regard for economic growth strangles the vitality needed to sustain both. At the same time, considering only economic growth while ignoring environmental impacts would be like fixing a leaking roof by borrowing materials from the foundation. It may provide temporary progress, but it undermines long-term stability. That same sense of balance informed our decision to propose a moratorium on tanker traffic off the British Columbian coast and to make the most significant investment ever to protect our oceans and coastlines with the \$1.5-billion oceans protection plan.

The Prime Minister's mandate letter to the Minister of Natural Resources is very clear on this balanced approach. It says, "Throughout Canada's history, our prosperity has been built on our natural resources. It is a core responsibility of the federal government to help get our natural resources to market, but that is only possible if we achieve the required public trust". That has been our approach since we took office, rebuilding trust and restoring faith after a decade of the previous government doing everything in its power to ignore valid questions and bulldoze through its constitutional obligations.

We have done that in a number of ways: by strengthening our environmental assessments and regulatory reviews, expanding public engagement and consultations with indigenous peoples, and ensuring local communities and indigenous peoples are true beneficiaries of resource development. It is the only way to make sure that the right resource projects, the sustainable resource projects, proceed, creating new jobs and opportunities for Canadians from coast to coast and in every corner of this country.

• (1540)

It is an approach that has come to define our government, promoting cleaner economic growth by getting our environmental house in order and rallying Canadians behind us.

Business of Supply

If I may, I would like to use my remaining time to talk about this new approach. It is the foundation upon which we have built our energy vision. Our efforts started as soon as we took office when the Prime Minister went to Paris with our provincial and territorial colleagues and Canada helped lead the way with a global agreement on climate change, a role we will continue to play because it is the right thing to do.

While in France we also helped to found Mission Innovation, the ambitious new global partnership aimed at driving clean energy research and development like never before. Then the Prime Minister again met with the provinces and territories to launch the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. This framework has set us up on a clear path toward ensuring Canada is a global leader in the transition to a lower-carbon economy.

We also continue to work on a Canadian energy strategy that, among other things, will protect Canada's energy security as we put a price on carbon pollution, redefine our relationship with indigenous people, and invest in new technologies to protect our coastlines through our oceans protection plan.

All of these measures are critical to the long-term future of Canada's energy sector, including the oil and gas industry. How? By making the industry more competitive in a world that increasingly values more sustainable practices. This was reflected in our government's first budget, which featured significant new investments in clean energy and new technology, including technologies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the oil and gas sector. It continued with budget 2017 with billions of dollars invested to ensure that Canada leads in the clean growth economy of tomorrow.

Let me just add that no one understands the need for clean technology and innovation better than Canada's oil and gas sector. There would be no oil sands if it were not for the Canadian ingenuity that found a way to separate oil and sand. That innovative spirit continues today through Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance. It is a formal partnership of 13 leading companies that have invested, to date, more than \$1.3 billion to develop and share more than 935 distinct technologies and innovations.

For our part, we have proceeded with thoughtful, inclusive, and measured steps. For example, we began overhauling Canada's environmental processes earlier this year when we adopted an interim strategy for reviewing and assessing major resource projects already in the queue. We have now turned our attention to a more comprehensive review of Canada's environmental assessment and review processes, including a modernization of the National Energy Board. We need to ensure that Canadians have confidence in the approvals of these resource development projects.

We are taking a hard look at our institutions, our processes, and our regulations to make sure they deliver the best long-term results for the environment and for the economy, and while we have been protecting our environment, we have also been working hard to enhance Canada's business climate. We are improving our competitiveness at home and creating new opportunities abroad by attracting more investments, improving access to new markets, and increasing trade.

That is what is behind the decision to approve the Trans Mountain expansion project: creating jobs and prosperity through a stronger, cleaner, and more sustainable energy sector, one built for today and for tomorrow.

● (1545)

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the well-thought-out information my colleague presented.

One of the things I have always firmly believed in and a lot of the things that I have been involved with is using incentive to change rather than the disciplinary aspect, when wanting change to happen.

We talked about a carbon tax and where that money goes. As my colleague mentioned, the technology has changed things. My belief, as I have known the oil and gas industry for generations, is that when there is incentive there, rather than a tax, that industry is incredible at making changes toward the safe and clean environment that we all want.

I wonder she would comment on a more incentive-oriented approach rather than a disciplinary tax approach.

Ms. Kim Rudd: Mr. Speaker, we have heard from industry across this country about the price on carbon pollution and the opportunities for innovation that it brings. As the member knows, all of the revenues from the price on carbon pollution will be provided to the provinces. It is revenue neutral to the federal government and the provinces can determine how to best use that tax resource. Whether it is to give other incentives to the oil and gas sector, whether it is to help with building new hospitals, roads, or whatever the case may be, that is a provincial decision.

I would say that after all of my meetings with the oil and gas sector, I agree it is an extremely innovative and determined industry. In the last number of years, we have seen some amazing innovations coming out of that sector across the country, and indeed, it supports the price on carbon pollution because it believes it has gotten it to where it is now.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary skipped over the reality that the Prime Minister, as opposition leader during the campaign, promised Canadians and British Columbians, more particularly, that there would be a new environmental assessment process for all projects, including Kinder Morgan. That did not happen.

The Prime Minister's hand-picked expert panel, which reported back just weeks ago, found that public confidence in the NEB is so eroded that it recommended it be completely replaced. The panel co-chair reported, "Everywhere we were there was this issue with confidence, transparency, independence, safety and security". The Prime Minister said the process was broken, the ministerial review panel on Kinder Morgan said the process was broken, and the expert panel on the NEB said the process is broken.

Business of Supply

How can the Liberals continue to stand behind a flawed review process? How could they approve this project? Why can they not keep their promise to Canadians and make sure we actually do it right?

Ms. Kim Rudd: Mr. Speaker, during the review of the Kinder Morgan process, the minister announced five interim principles that would help guide that process and make it more robust than it had been before. There was a recommendation, because there were projects in the queue, to ensure that we were fair to all parties involved.

Further to that, as we know, the minister also appointed a special panel of very well-versed, responsible people who went up and down the Kinder Morgan pipeline route and engaged in an even more robust way with communities, indigenous peoples, and industry, and all of that informed the decision that we made when the Prime Minister announced in November the approval of the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

• (1550)

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will begin by thanking the hon. member for Northumberland—Peterborough South for splitting her time with me.

I also want to thank the hon. member for Chilliwack—Hope for his motion on the Trans Mountain expansion project. It is one that I am happy to support. After all, it is a ringing endorsement of our government's decision to approve a project that will bring jobs and opportunity to thousands of Canadians, certainty for investors, and protection for the environment.

What I find surprising is that the opposition thought that by proposing the motion, it could embarrass our government or split our ranks. On the contrary, it provides an opportunity to speak to the merits of the decision and the comprehensive and thoughtful process that produced it. Unlike members opposite, our government has demonstrated its support for the energy sector, not simply with fine words but with firm action.

In nearly 10 years in office, the previous government got exactly zero kilometres of pipeline built to tidewater. It talked a good game and made all the right noises, but it just did not do anything. The result was that our producers were stuck being price takers instead of price makers. They were forced to sell, essentially, to one customer. When new technology, such as fracking, opened up that customer's own energy reserves, reducing the need for Canadian energy, what happened? Our energy industry was left holding the bag. Its assets became essentially landlocked, the markets few, and the future grim. That was the legacy of the previous government.

Despite pleas to build the infrastructure necessary to reach tidewater and new global markets, our predecessors remained unable to act. Why? It was because they preferred to bully opponents rather than build bridges, they preferred to issue orders rather than engage in dialogue, and through their determination to downplay climate change, to ignore the overwhelming scientific evidence of climate scientists, they earned dinosaur awards abroad and isolated even potential allies here at home. Quite simply, they lost the confidence of Canadians.

Our government took a different approach. We began by seeing the provinces not as enemies to be confronted but as allies to be consulted, and as partners to be included when we went to Paris to negotiate the agreement on climate change.

[*Translation*]

We followed through on our commitment to fundamentally rebuild our relationship with indigenous people by restoring the nation-to-nation approach. This meant taking a meaningful approach to resource projects by doing our best to ensure that opportunities are spread widely and that the benefits are shared widely.

We also took action to restore the regulatory process by introducing interim principles that were clear, inclusive, and fair and by modernizing the National Energy Board to ensure that it has the resources and expertise it needs for the 21st century. We have invested in the clean technology and renewable energy sectors, which are sure to generate a great many jobs and opportunities in this century of clean energy.

[*English*]

Engaging with Canadians, reaching out to indigenous peoples, modernizing our regulatory system, and investing in clean technologies reassured Canadians that our government understood their concerns, that it shared the view of climate change as the great imperative of our times, and that it was prepared to marry economic growth and environmental protection.

All of this made it possible to approve the Trans Mountain expansion project and other projects critical to ensuring that the vastness of our energy resources would be matched by the vastness of the opportunities to sell them to the world.

The Trans Mountain expansion project will deliver real benefits to Canadians: a \$7.4 billion investment for Alberta and British Columbia, and the creation of 15,000 new jobs during construction alone. Indigenous communities will benefit from jobs and business opportunities through the impact and benefit agreements they have signed with Kinder Morgan. For the first time in our history, indigenous peoples will remain engaged through monitoring the project over its lifespan.

This is what inclusive development looks like. It is what real progress looks like. It is what the future of resource development in this country looks like.

Business of Supply

[Translation]

Our government's commitment to this project's environmental integrity is not limited to the 157 legally binding conditions imposed by the National Energy Board. We have also taken extraordinary steps to protect the most sensitive areas with a pipeline to the Pacific Ocean by making the largest investment to date to protect our oceans and coastlines, the \$1.5 billion national oceans protection plan. We followed that up with a crude oil tanker moratorium along the north coast of British Columbia, specifically around the Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound. These are significant measures and reflect how important we believe it is to preserve the environment that is so vital to us all.

● (1555)

[English]

While I am happy to support this motion and to discuss this particular project, what is more important is to see it as part of a wider plan, a plan for economic growth in the 21st century, a plan that builds the infrastructure to get our resources to global markets and to use the revenues to fund Canada's transition to cleaner forms of energy. It is a plan that understands that even as we make the transition to renewable sources of energy, we continue to drive innovation in the oil and gas sector and export Canadian breakthroughs around the world.

This is a process that is already under way, as the parliamentary secretary has said, through Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance and a host of other initiatives.

That is why Alberta is legislating limits on oil sands greenhouse gas emissions, creating the conditions for innovation and demonstrating that a forward-thinking, energy-producing jurisdiction can also be a leader in combatting climate change. That is why virtually every province has agreed to put a price on carbon.

That is the way forward for Canada. That is our vision for the future: to use the coming decades to meet the rising global demand for oil and gas while funding the next generation of energy.

[Translation]

That is why projects such as the Trans Mountain expansion are so important and why our national oceans protection plan is crucial.

[English]

Today economic growth and environmental protection are not competing interests. They are vital components of a single engine of innovation.

When I was on the campaign trail, and since, when I have been knocking on doors in my riding, it has been clear from the comments I have received from residents of Edmonton Centre that they want to see us develop our oil and gas resources. They want to see us have markets that are more than just one client to the south. They want to see well-paying jobs in the energy sector from coast to coast to coast. They want to see that we are protecting our oceans, that we are protecting salmon stocks, and that we are protecting the planet for their children, their grandchildren, and all the generations yet to come. They want to see us as a government make sure that we keep the promise the Prime Minister made in the mandate letters to all the

ministers that there is no more important relationship to this government than the one with indigenous peoples.

The example of the expansion of the Trans Mountain project is an example of collaboration. It is an example of a new triple E: the economy, the environment, and energy, all fused together.

Opposition members may have thought to do some mischief with this motion, but that would only be possible if our government did not believe in the decision we made in November. Unfortunately for them, we do. It would only be possible if we were not prepared to stand firm. Unfortunately for them, we are. It would only be possible if this government was not ready to argue the merits of this project. Unfortunately for them, we are.

[Translation]

We believed that the Trans Mountain expansion was in Canada's best interest before the B.C. election, and we still do today.

We recognize and respect those who view things differently. Perhaps the opposition believed they could find a few on this side of the House.

[English]

Our government and I stand united, and we stand proudly behind the approval of this vital project, the Trans Mountain project. We are delighted that the members opposite do so too.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member for Edmonton Centre talked about there being mischief behind this. To be quite frank, this is not mischief. This is a very important debate we are having today.

The executive branch of government made a decision on the National Energy Board. As a member of Parliament, does the member not believe that the will of Parliament is important to express on this important issue? This is the opportunity before him. The executive branch made a decision. The will of Parliament is also important. Could he perhaps reflect on that?

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Speaker, at the time this decision was made, as a parliamentary secretary I was part of that extended executive branch of government. I fully supported the decision on Trans Mountain then, and I do so now.

As a parliamentarian, I think it is very important to stand up and talk about jobs, talk about the economy, talk about energy, and talk about the environment. It is important to work forward with indigenous peoples in contribution agreements that are not simply paper-based consultations. They are meaningful, they are going to see long-term jobs, and they are going to see shared stewardship and a co-management approach that makes sense in the 21st century.

● (1600)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to discuss with the member opposite one of the promises made in the election campaign, which was to "ensure that decisions are based on science, facts, and evidence, and serve the public's interest".

Business of Supply

The second was, “Use scientific evidence and the precautionary principle, and take into account climate change, when making decisions affecting fish stocks and ecosystem management.”

Being a coastal member of Parliament, my particular concern with this pipeline approval is that there has been no consensus on how bitumen, which is a raw, sticky, unrefined form of oil, would interact in a marine environment.

In January, in an interview on radio station CKNW, the transport minister said that this research has not been done. He said, “if certain products fall into the water...like bitumen...there is still quite a bit of research required to find out what happens when it gets into the water.... How it potentially disperses or sinks is very much related to a number of factors such as the sea state...the temperature of the water, the salinity...those are things where we need to do more research...and proper methods to recover”.

How did the government approve the pipeline without having that research done?

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Speaker, one of the first things our government did was unmuzzle federal government scientists. We committed to making sure that we had a robust census in this country and made sure that the long-form census went out to all Canadians.

As it pertains to this particular question, the decision on Trans Mountain pipeline was based on science and evidence and based on a robust environmental review and the great work of the National Energy Board. The \$1.5 billion put toward the ocean protection plan will address the concerns of members on both sides of the House.

That is the kind of leadership Canadians expect from our government, and that is exactly the kind of leadership they have received.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at the very beginning of his speech, the member said that the previous government did not approve any pipelines or see any pipelines built. I want to correct the record.

Being from Edmonton, the member should know that the Edmonton to Hardisty pipeline was approved by the NEB on April 19, 2014, and then built. It is 180 kilometres of pipeline.

The Bakken oil pipeline was approved on January 19, 2012. The Enbridge Bakken Pipeline Company built it. It is 123 kilometres long.

The Alameda to Cromer oil pipeline capacity expansion from Saskatchewan to Manitoba, which is also an Enbridge line, was approved in 2007, and is 60 kilometres.

The TMX Anchor Loop pipeline, connected to the current Trans Mountain project, is 158 kilometres of new pipeline that was expanded upon and was approved on June 21, by the NEB.

Here we have hundreds of kilometres of new pipeline that was approved and built by private companies. The member is obviously unaware of these important facts.

Mr. Randy Boissonnault: Mr. Speaker, it may be impolitic to call the member opposite's understanding of geography into question, but none of those particular projects are tied to tidewater. If we look at

the *Hansard*, my comments make clear that the last government made zero kilometres of pipeline to tidewater.

Let me share with members what we have done to create jobs in the natural resources sector since we have been in government: the Arnaud apatite mine, with 910 jobs; the Woodfibre LNG, with 700 jobs; the Black Point granite quarry, with 100 jobs; the Pacific North West LNG, with 4,800 jobs; the Nova Gas pipeline, with 3,000 jobs; Line 3 pipeline replacement, with 7,000 jobs; and 15,440 in this project. We are creating jobs and economic growth for Canadians.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that I will be sharing my time with the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

I am going to talk of the broad picture, in terms of the current state of oil in Canada, and the movement of oil. Then I will talk more specifically about Kinder Morgan and the motion we have in front of us today. By the way, it is an excellent motion, brought forward by our critic for natural resources.

As we know, on the east coast, we are importing oil from many different countries, which include Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, and others. The interesting thing is that the volume of oil being imported on the eastern coast is probably about 4,000 ships per year. On the west coast, we have 1,487 ships that are part of the movement of oil products. There is a big difference. We are importing a whole lot of oil on the east coast, and there is a lot less volume on the west coast. What is interesting about that fact is that, on the east coast, people do not seem to be very concerned about the oil tanker movement. We do not hear people saying stop the oil tankers from Saudi Arabia, but we hear great resistance to the pipeline that is proposed. In the west, we have relatively good support for the actual pipeline, but we have concerns about the very small volume compared to the east coast and to many other countries.

Of course, oil is more than just gas to heat our homes. There are many products that are important. There is jet fuel, gasoline, and diesel, but it goes into iPods, many plastics, some pesticides, food preservatives, and other things. Oil is not just about gasoline for our car or home heating, it is about many products that we use in day-to-day life.

This is why I thought it was an absurd comment that was made by the coalition Green leader in British Columbia. In Canada, we want to have good relationships among our provinces. We are one country and we are celebrating 150 years, and this was a very difficult comment to hear from the new coalition Green leader in British Columbia. He said, “For Mrs. Notley to tell B.C. that somehow... [choosing] the 20th century [is the way] for our future is not a good sign for her” and the Alberta economy. “Frankly, I think she should get with the program and embrace the 21st century as well.”

Business of Supply

There might come a day when we will not need these products anymore, and I recognize that we are moving toward better jobs with renewables. However, does Mr. Weaver ever get in his car? He lives in Victoria, but he probably still has to heat his house in the winter, and I expect that he probably has an iPad in his home. It was a very insulting comment. It is very wrong. Like it or not, oil is still a part of our needs. To be frank, I would rather have Canadian products being used than importing them from all over the world as we do currently. That is something we need to think about.

The Kinder Morgan pipeline is 980 kilometres long. Approximately 350 kilometres, about a third of it, goes through the riding of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, which I represent. I find it interesting to hear from the NDP member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley that the mayors are against this project, that the ones who are most affected do not want it to happen. The mayor of Vancouver and the mayor of Burnaby are not the ones who are most impacted by this decision. It is the mayors in the riding that I represent. It is the regional district, and the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District has given support to this project. Therefore, for the member to say they are the ones most impacted, when the vast majority of the pipeline is going to be through other communities, is wrong.

• (1605)

Not only does it have the support of the many mayors and regional district directors throughout the interior of British Columbia and Alberta, but the first nations communities have signed off on it also. There are 51 first nation communities that have signed community benefit agreements. Again, in my community, the first nations see there is tremendous opportunity and have signed off on the agreement.

It is interesting that the only thing we hear portrayed in terms of first nations is the lack of support from a few bands. I think they are the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish first nations. However, we never hear about Simpcw or Tk'emlups or many in Whispering Pines, who have said that this is a good project and they support it. They see opportunities and would like to see it go through.

I moved to Kamloops in 1999. That pipeline has been in operation since 1953. There was an awareness that there was a tanker farm and perhaps a pipeline, but, to be frank, no one really paid much attention. We knew that there was a pipeline. There was no discomfort with the fact that there was a pipeline going through our community. We knew it had an important terminus, which probably kept the price of our gasoline at a reasonable level and supplied much of the interior of British Columbia.

The other thing we know is that trains go right along our fish-bearing rivers, our salmon-bearing rivers. We know that although train transportation is safe, it is not as safe as pipelines. The other key issue is that there is only so much capacity on our rail system, and they are taking up capacity with the transportation of oil. By sending all these barrels via train, we are taking away the opportunity to transport our grain and wood. We are going to be detrimentally impacting the whole supply chain within Canada. Therefore, the pipeline is incredibly important in terms of the supply chain. We have great support for Kinder Morgan, the 980 kilometres through Alberta and through the communities I represent.

Of course, in Burnaby and Vancouver, they are a little more reluctant about it. I hope the people of Vancouver and Burnaby will look at this as being many things. It is for the good of the country. Calgary, Alberta, is having tremendous problems. In the interior of British Columbia, the vast majority of people would prefer to see oil go through by pipeline rather than train, and they see that there are opportunities.

We are one country, and today we are having this debate. The federal government, through the National Energy Board, has approved the project. We have an uncertain situation in British Columbia as to whether the coalition government will be taking over. The parties have clearly stated they are reluctant to support this particular pipeline and will do everything they can to stop it. They need to listen, and I hope that the Parliament of Canada will send them a very strong message that this is important. This project is supported by the Parliament of Canada, and not only the executive branch, the legislative branch, but many communities and many first nations.

The motion is absolutely accurate. It has social licence that is critical to the Canadian economy and the creation of jobs. It is safe and environmentally sound, as recognized and accepted by the National Energy Board. It is under federal jurisdiction with respect to approval and regulation. It should be constructed with the continued support of the government, as demonstrated by the Prime Minister personally when announcing the approval of the project.

In conclusion, there will never be everyone who is happy about projects such as this. However, in this case, it is clearly in the best interests of Canada and many communities within Canada.

• (1610)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have had a government that has been very proactive and sensitive to the needs of the project. We have had a great deal of consultation. This is a decision that was based on facts that have been provided and deemed in the best interests of Canada overall, both socially and economically. We also appreciate the motion that is being brought forward.

However, it is important for us to recognize that we need to work with stakeholders. For example, the Premier of Alberta is obviously very anxious to move forward on this and others across Canada. It is very much an issue that applies for all Canadians.

I wonder if the member would provide her thoughts on the importance of this to Canada as a whole, including British Columbia and all provinces?

• (1615)

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, it is important. For example, with the downturn in the oil sands, there are businesses in the riding I represent that have also suffered a downturn because they supplied product to the oil sands. We hear about workers in the Maritimes who have lost their jobs. This is a critically important project. We still have an oil-based economy. We might be transitioning, but we still need oil. Canada needs to maximize its opportunity in this area, absolutely.

Business of Supply

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about the support of indigenous peoples for the project but, as we know, there is mounting evidence in court challenges with respect to the Kinder Morgan expansion. In fact, there are some 17 challenges in the system right now.

I wonder if the member can comment on that in terms of the support of indigenous peoples?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, the pipeline goes from Alberta through the central area of British Columbia, and into the area of Vancouver. There are 51 first nation communities that have signed support and benefit agreements. The vast majority of first nations that are going to be directly impacted by the construction of this pipeline have said that they approve it. Obviously, we will never get to 100% consensus, but this is a very solid support level: 51 first nation communities all signing off who see the benefit.

Again, I would plead with the people from Vancouver and Burnaby to see that there is a need within British Columbia and Alberta, that there are opportunities throughout our country. This is in the best interests of the country, and perhaps they could rethink their reluctance to support this project and get on board.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague hails from British Columbia. I would like to ask her a question about this agreement that the B.C. Green Party and the B.C. NDP have reached, and get her thoughts on what she believes the government will actually do.

The agreement says, “immediately employ every tool available to the new government to stop the expansion of the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the seven-fold increase in tanker traffic on our coast, and the transportation of raw bitumen through our province.”

My question for her is, based on her political knowledge and knowledge of what the government is capable of, which is very little, what does she expect it to actually do on the ground? We know it is going to vote a certain way. It is going to pretend that it cares, like it cared about energy east. What does she think the government will actually do, on the ground, to ensure that Kinder Morgan is built?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, this project is clearly within federal jurisdiction. It is a project that has been deemed in the best interests of the country.

Again, I cannot speculate on what is going to happen in terms of the Green-NDP liaison, which I guess we would call a manifesto, for lack of a better word. There is obviously still a lot of process that needs to happen in British Columbia.

People talk about the volume of oil tanker movement. Contrast that to the east coast and many countries. We are not talking about enormous volume here. We are talking about an increase, but certainly a very reasonable, acceptable increase. Of course, the tankers of this day and age are much better designed. There are double hulled. There are many more safety mechanisms that have been put in place.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to speak on a subject that is particularly important in my own constituency of Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, the issues around pipeline construction.

I want to start with some context about how pipelines are built. Some members may know this already; some, unfortunately, may not. It is important that we start with an understanding of the context.

First, pipeline projects are proposed by the private sector. Already some people have made claims about the previous government not building pipelines to tidewater, and so forth. There needs to be an understanding that pipelines are proposed and then, if approved, built by the private sector, and it is up to the government to decide to approve or not approve pipelines for which there have been applications. That is one important point.

The second point is that after a project is proposed, there is a consultation process through the independent National Energy Board. The National Energy Board hears from different people in the community and from experts, considers the evidence, and weighs the facts of the situation. Then it comes forward with a recommendation to the government. Ultimately it is the cabinet's call, but in my view, it virtually always makes sense for the cabinet to approve projects that have been approved by the NEB. The NEB is, after all, the expert. It hears and weighs the evidence and then presents a recommendation.

Finally, it is important, as we think about how pipelines are built, to understand that these are clearly and squarely within federal jurisdiction. There was much discussion and public discourse about what particular provincial leaders and even mayors might think about pipelines. Of course, it is quite legitimate for these people to have opinions about where a pipeline should or should not go, and they are welcome to express that opinion, but we do not live in a country where different jurisdictions can decide what infrastructure goes into and out of their province. These are not countries; these are provinces governed by a Constitution that defines what is and is not in their jurisdictions. It is the federal government's responsibility to consider and rule on these applications, hopefully to listen to the NEB, and to do so in a way that reflects the best science and information.

That is the context through which we should view a discussion of the process of pipeline approval.

I am very proud to remind members that the previous Conservative government built four pipelines and approved a fifth. These were the applications that were brought from the private sector during the Conservatives' time in government. Of course, we were very supportive of other applications. We were very supportive of energy east and Trans Mountain, but obviously there is a process these projects have to go through. While we are supportive of pipelines, we are also supportive and respectful of that process.

Conservatives also, though, reformed the consultation process. We made the case, and I think we were right to do so, that the consultation process for any development project should not be unlimited. People with a particular political perspective who are never going to change their minds should not be able to do everything possible to drag out for years, even decades, good projects that should be discussed, considered, and ultimately decided upon. If the decision is not to proceed, okay; if the decision is to proceed, okay.

Business of Supply

A consultation process should be reasonably time-limited, should leave those who have an interest in the process, who are affected, as well as experts, the opportunity to present information, but that process of deliberation should lead to a conclusion.

This was a problem we had in the past with certain projects in Canada. That process of deliberation was not designed to allow for a reasonably timely conclusion, so we made changes to ensure that there was a full consultation where experts and affected people were heard but that ultimately led to, on the positive or on the negative, a conclusion that would allow some degree of certainty for the project proponents as well as for the communities.

Conservatives built the Alberta Clipper energy project, which carries 450,000 barrels per day; the TransCanada Keystone, which carries 435,000 barrels per day; the Kinder Morgan anchor loop, which increased capacity by 40,000 barrels per day; and the Enbridge Line 9B reversal, which carries 300,000 barrels per day.

● (1620)

I am very proud of those accomplishments, and of course we approved the northern gateway project. That is the record of the previous Conservative government with respect to pipelines: respecting the process, respecting expertise, and recognizing the value of the energy sector and the need to move forward.

What happened when this new Liberal government took power? The Liberals made certain changes that are very clearly bad for independent processes and bad for the energy sector. For example, they emphasized that they would be willing to reject projects that had been approved through the National Energy Board. They would not provide the certainty that after independent expert review, they would approve projects that were, through that process, found to be in the best interests of Canada.

What is striking is that members in the Liberal Party frequently talk about listening to the science and about evidence-based decision-making, but they have actually been very clear that their decisions with respect to pipelines will not be constrained by the facts and the evidence. They specifically said that. They said they will not be limited by the decisions of an independent process, but that instead cabinet may well choose to reject projects that are demonstrably in the best interests of the country.

That is what they said with respect to projects such as energy east, which is currently going through the process, but they have already done that with respect to the northern gateway pipeline. This was a pipeline that went through the process. It was a pipeline that was approved by the NEB with conditions, and then approved by the previous Conservative government with conditions, and then the government decided that it could not go ahead.

The Liberals have also gone further. They have legislation coming forward now that would exclude tanker traffic in northern B.C. I am very clearly in favour of tankers, because that is how oil gets from place to place. People here in this House in some corners talk about tankers as if they are a terrible thing, and frankly, they are living a little bit outside reality if they think that we should live in a world without tankers.

Not only am I pro-tankers, but I am particularly in favour of Canadian tankers, because off the coast of B.C. there are tankers

from other countries, tankers coming from Alaska, and there is every indication that we will see expanded development and expanded tanker traffic from Alaska, and if there is a spill, unfortunately, it is not as if the Canadian coast would be immune.

Instead of saying that we will not have any part of it and leaving the opportunities for energy development in the Asia-Pacific for other countries, let us instead encourage Canadian energy development while putting the necessary safety regulations in place to protect ourselves.

The government has taken steps that are of great concern to our energy sector, and now we are having a debate on the Trans Mountain pipeline, a pipeline that the government has uniquely decided to approve. It is important to note that this pipeline went through the same process as the northern gateway pipeline and that the government has made an arbitrary decision, based on its analysis of the politics of the day, to approve one pipeline and not the other.

Meanwhile, the politics of the day have changed. There is now a new provincial government in B.C.—I should not say that. There is a proposal for a coalition of a number of parties that did not get the largest number of seats in the election. That is what seems to be a possibility.

It is important that the government stand firm on Trans Mountain, of course, and government members have said they will, but it is also important that they develop some coherence in their approach to pipelines.

Our approach was coherent. It was based on evidence. It was based on listening to the NEB. It was based on a fair process that understood how pipelines were built. The government's approach is more arbitrary, which puts it in a much weaker position when it comes to defending pipelines across the board.

On the issue of pipelines in general, we believe it is important to address climate change, and to do so mainly through a discussion of consumption. That is how we reduce emissions: we reduce the amount of consumption. In the meantime, we have to use energy, and besides energy, we use manufactured petroleum products, which include things like election signs—even NDP election signs come from petroleum products—and we all fly in airplanes.

● (1625)

In the meantime, while we are still using energy resources, it makes no sense to try to limit the transportation of supply. Let us look for efficiencies that allow us to reduce demand, but supply and the transportation that facilitates supply are important while we are still using energy resources.

The government needs to do better in supporting vital energy transportation products that are important for our national economy.

Business of Supply

•(1630)

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Kinder Morgan pipeline is a critical pipeline to tidewater. In ensuring that this pipeline progresses safely and properly, the government has made tremendous efforts. It has announced interim principles to govern decisions on major projects, it has appointed a ministerial panel to travel the proposed pipeline route to hear from concerned citizens and provide further opportunity for public comment, and it has committed to co-develop indigenous advisory and monitoring committees to provide ongoing environmental monitoring for the project. That is how to get by and that is how to get approval for this kind of project.

When I listened to the hon. member in his address, I have to ask how it was that the previous government did not have meaningful engagement with provinces on these kinds of topics. How did it let the relationship with indigenous communities get so bad over that 10-year period that it was not able to get any project to tidewater? I think it is because it did not have a proper process, which is what this government is putting in place.

Could the hon. member speak to why the previous government failed to maintain those relationships?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, it will not surprise the member for me to point out that the premise of his question is entirely incorrect. If he listened to my speech, he would have heard me explain the fact that pipeline projects are proposed and built by the private sector.

In our government, private sector proposals came before us, and we approved them. We approved and saw the building of four pipelines, and we approved a fifth, which was then killed by the current government, so it is a complete mischaracterization of reality, bordering on the kind used by the heritage minister in question period, to suggest that we failed when it came to this issue.

With respect to relationships with indigenous people, it is really unfortunate that members mischaracterize the perspectives on energy development that come from our indigenous communities. We recognize that there is a diversity of opinion on energy issues within indigenous communities. There are some that oppose certain developments; there are many, though, that support them and have been vocal in their support. It is unfortunate that the government does not seem to listen to indigenous communities that very strongly defend the energy sector and are able to show the significant benefits to their communities that come from energy development.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in September 122 first nations signed a declaration of opposition to the Kinder Morgan pipeline and many other pipelines. That number is high.

I am finding breathtaking the member's revisionist history around the National Energy Board process and his dedication to, as he stated it, "respecting the process". Under the previous government, the Conservatives dismantled all kinds of environmental laws. They buried their attacks in budget bills. They targeted the Navigable Waters Protection Act, which triggered the indigenous Idle No More movement. They targeted the Environmental Assessment Act, the Fisheries Act, and the National Energy Board Act.

I was a participant in both the Enbridge process and the Kinder Morgan process. I promise they were entirely different processes. The Kinder Morgan process was a public hearing with no hearings. People were not allowed to say what was on their mind, and there was no cross-examination of evidence. Does the member now regret his party's role in creating the current legal challenges that face the Kinder Morgan pipeline approval?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, where shall I start? The member started her question by talking about indigenous communities. Of course, I am not here to pretend that all indigenous people think one way or another. There is a great deal of diversity within indigenous communities about these issues. Many of them are opposed to certain or all projects, and many of them are very supportive of many projects and, in fact, are directly involved in benefiting from them.

The member mentioned a number of indigenous communities. I think the number was about 100 that had signed some particular document. We know that there are far more than that in terms of the overall number of indigenous communities in this country, and I would be curious to know, in terms of those that signed, what the proportions were in terms of direct involvement with the energy sector or being along the pipeline route. However, regardless, we know that indigenous people disagree with and debate these issues just as everybody else disagrees with and debates these issues, and we should not try to present as if they are sort of a monolith in terms of perspective.

In terms of processes for pipeline approvals, I will make absolutely no apologies for the fact that the Conservative government took important steps to streamline the processes. It had credible reviews that involved expert testimony, as well as evidence and testimony provided by those who were affected, but it took the position that activists should not be able to indefinitely filibuster important energy projects. People should be able to express their opinions, there should be debate and discussion, and ultimately that process should get to a conclusion, which allows—

•(1635)

The Deputy Speaker: Before we resume debate, it is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Vancouver East, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship; the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith, Indigenous Affairs; and the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable, Government Appointments.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak in the House today to this motion and to reaffirm my opposition to the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion project, on the record once again, and therefore my opposition to the motion before us today.

Business of Supply

The motion mentions that it needs social licence to proceed. I must say I was incredibly disappointed to hear the Minister of Natural Resources suggest that somehow social licence was an outdated term, earlier this morning. Today, more than ever before, social licence is imperative for major initiatives, especially those that have significant impacts—and, I would argue in this instance, negative impacts—especially when we are talking about the environment and combatting climate change.

I am left with the assumption that the minister stated this because he is well aware that social licence for this project has not been obtained, so he would rather suggest it is not something that is needed. Sadly, this is just an extension of the Liberals backing away from their lofty election promises, hoping to break them without being noticed by Canadians.

The Liberal election platform states, “While governments grant permits for resource development, only communities can grant permission.” That was the definition of social licence then—before the election, of course—and now, after the election, not so much. In an effort to try to pull one over on Canadians, and particularly British Columbians, in the fall of 2016 a new, watered-down notion of social licence was stated. The new definition for social licence, according to the Liberal government, is about “ensuring public confidence in the decision-making for major resource projects”. Of course, the Liberals cannot even say that they have met the test of even this watered-down definition. Today, we learned that the government believes the term itself is actually outdated.

I have spoken to my constituents many times about this project, as I believe social licence is needed for a project like this. Their view was loud and clear: 78% of survey participants in my riding are against the pipeline expansion. It is an issue my office receives a significant amount of correspondence on, such as from Sarah, in my riding, who wrote that certainly economic prosperity is important in Canada, but not at the expense of our environment, wildlife, and the rights and resources of indigenous communities. She said taking such a gamble would be foolhardy, short-term thinking. Using basic risk analysis—what are the chances of something going wrong, and if something went wrong then how drastic would the impact be—reminds us of how serious the risks are in considering such a choice. She asked that we not approve this proposal.

This is not atypical but a common thread and a common theme of the messages that I get in Vancouver East from my constituents with respect to the Kinder Morgan expansion project.

The government said it has obtained the necessary social licence from Canada's first nation communities that would be impacted by this project. Can the government explain why there are currently numerous legal actions being taken by first nation communities to stop this pipeline? There are 17 court challenges, to be exact—so much for that promise of a renewed and strengthened nation-to-nation relationship.

The fact is that social licence simply has not been obtained, and no attempt to call the term outdated changes that.

With respect to the issue of the economy, which we have heard raised as well, the Simon Fraser University Centre for Public Policy Research found, on the Canadian economy issue, that 65% of the

fiscal benefit would go to Kinder Morgan, 32% to Alberta, and—guess what—all of 2% to British Columbia.

• (1640)

The report found Kinder Morgan was also seriously understating the potential cost of a serious spill. While it was suggested that the most expensive diluted bitumen spill would be from \$100 million to \$300 million, the report pegged those costs more realistically in the \$2 billion to \$5 billion range. What is more, the science is simply not there to clean up a spill, if there should be one. The real issue is not whether there would be one, but when there would be one.

I must take exception to the second claim in this motion as well. What is critical for the Canadian economy and for the creation of jobs is to help move Canada towards a more sustainable economy, one that ensures the Canadian environment, such as B.C.'s beautiful coasts, are respected and preserved, one that tackles issues such as income inequality and precarious work.

The motion also points to the NEB's approval of the Kinder Morgan pipeline's environmental safety issue. As my colleagues have pointed out throughout the day, the NEB's process is fundamentally flawed, and its approval of this pipeline is yet another of a growing list of broken promises made by the Prime Minister to Canadians.

The Prime Minister's personal approval represented a betrayal to all Canadians who expect better from government, who expect decision-making based on science, genuine consultation with first nations communities, and respect and protection of our environment.

Do not just take my word on the NEB, but let us take the word of the Prime Minister's—not one, but two—hand-picked expert panels that confirmed that the public has fundamentally lost confidence in the NEB and that there is a crisis in confidence in the decisions being made.

For good measure, let us take the word of the Liberals' election platform, which was highly critical of the NEB, and where they promised to “make environmental assessments credible again”, and that they would “immediately review Canada's environmental assessment processes”. Finally on this, the words of the Prime Minister himself assured Canadians publicly on August 20, 2015, that the NEB overhaul would apply to Kinder Morgan, when he said “Yes. Yes. It applies to existing projects, existing pipelines as well.”

There was clear acknowledgement from this government that the NEB was flawed, the government's expert panels were clear that the NEB is not trusted by Canadians, and the Prime Minister provided clear assurance that an overhauled NEB would be the body that approved the Kinder Morgan pipeline. However, here we are with yet another broken promise.

Business of Supply

We know there are serious environmental concerns should there be a spill from this pipeline, or as a result of the anticipated nearly sevenfold increase in tanker traffic. The results could be devastating for our environment and our coastal economy. The science is not there to properly clean up a diluted bitumen spill into the water. How can the government claim to be making evidence-based decisions with this serious question unanswered?

We know Canadians are seriously concerned about this project, and we know they have lost confidence in the ability of the NEB to make decisions for the greater public good. We also know that many first nations communities on the proposed pipeline route are staunchly opposed to this project. We know that, by pushing forward on this project under its current conditions, the Liberal government is breaking promises made to Canadians.

I, along with my NDP colleagues, both in this house and in the provincial legislature, will continue to oppose this project, and I will oppose this motion today.

• (1645)

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the opportunity to speak on this.

I am thankful that my NDP colleague has gotten up. She has been very consistent. Let us make no mistake: the NDP have consistently voted against pipelines. The member talked to some degree about the safety concerns of a pipeline.

I live in a rural Alberta constituency, where three weeks ago I got a phone call that there had been a rail derailment in my riding, with 29 cars derailed and opened up. Immediately, I wondered what kind of a mess we were going to have just outside of Camrose in a little town called Bawlf. It ended up being grain, and so the cleanup was easy.

Would my NDP colleague not admit that pipelines are the safest way to move our oil, the safest way to move our energy, and that it is really is the only way? The rail lines that are moving it now are by far the largest concern.

Although the member may talk about safety, the issue is really not safety, is it, but that the NDP consistently votes against every bit of energy and fossil fuels?

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, there is something to be said about consistency. The NDP is truthful. We say what we say and we act on what we say, versus the Liberals who say something and then do the very opposite, such as the case with Kinder Morgan or the case with electoral reform. I could go on for days but I am limited by time, so I will stop there.

There are critical issues around safety. The member said the safest way to do it was by pipeline. There are other ways. One option would be to look at rail but there are issues in terms of risks as well. Hence the issue. I am not advocating for this to be done by rail.

On the question around safety, we need to make sure that we have the science behind it. On the pipelines, if and when there is a spill, we need to have the science to be able to clean it up. In this instance, we all know that there is no science to do that, and that is exactly my point.

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Trans Mountain expansion project would create 15,000 new jobs in construction, engineering, and spill prevention. It would get hard-working Canadians back to work and put food on the table for middle-class families across Canada.

For example, in my riding of Oakville is Local 793 of the International Union of Operating Engineers. This local operates the Operating Engineers Training Institute of Ontario, which trains crane operators and heavy equipment operators on exactly how to build pipelines and how to work the equipment that puts them in.

Why does the hon. member not have faith in the operating engineers of Canada to build a safe pipeline? What would she say to the families in my community that are getting trained and those across Canada that she would put out of work on these kinds of important projects?

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, what I do not have faith in is the Liberal government and its inability to do what it said it would. It said it would bring back a new environmental assessment process so that projects like this can go through the proper channels so that Canadians can have confidence around the approvals. The reality is that we do not have that today.

We do not know what the science is around dealing with a spill, and the member knows that too. I ask the government to show us the science, to show us the evidence. I urge the government to do what it said it would do during the campaign and make good on that promise. The Liberals promised Canadians that there would be a renewed environmental process and the Prime Minister said yes that new process would apply to existing projects. Here we are today. All of those promises are false. There is also another word that I could use, which I cannot say in the House, but it starts with the letter “L”.

The government needs to do better if it wants approval for projects like these. The Liberals need to gain the confidence of Canadians and it could start with them honouring what they said they would do.

• (1650)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today we are debating a motion brought forward by the Conservatives asking the government to renew its commitments to the Kinder Morgan pipeline. This is precipitated by what looks like we hope will be a New Democratic Party-Green Party co-operative government in British Columbia, which has released its co-operative agreement saying, “immediately employ every tool available to a new government to stop the expansion of the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the sevenfold increase of tanker traffic off our coast and the transportation of raw bitumen through our province.”

Business of Supply

It is just for the public, I think, that we are debating this today because the Trudeau government has already given the green light for this project.

I am going to talk about the risks of bitumen spills for oil tankers—

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member used a personal name in her speech and that is not according to the rules.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member is correct. I would encourage the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith to avoid the use of other hon. members' names, which she reflected in one of her phrases earlier. Perhaps she could avoid that in her future remarks.

We will continue on.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, I am going to talk about the risk of bitumen spills from oil tankers on B.C.'s coast. I am going to talk about the fire risk at the Burnaby tank farm, the broken promises to respect first nations consent, the harm to Orca whales, and a long list of broken promises by the Liberal government in relation to the Kinder Morgan pipeline approval.

Some of those promises were:

...ensure that decisions are based on science, facts, and evidence, and serve the public's interest....

We will use scientific evidence and the precautionary principle and take into account climate change when making decisions effecting fish stocks and ecosystem management.

[And we will] give coastal communities more say in managing the resources around them.

As a representative of a coastal community, along with my New Democrat colleagues, we represent the waters that a 2013 tanker safety review panel identified as one of the four areas of Canada with the highest probability of a large oil spill and one of the two areas in Canada with the highest potential impact of an oil spill. I want to talk about that risk and what the government's plans are to accommodate it.

A sevenfold increase in oil tanker traffic laden with bitumen means that inevitably there is an increase in risk. The impact of bitumen is something that we are still learning about as a country. It is an unrefined product. It is viscous, sticky, and it needs a diluent in order for it to flow through a pipeline, and the volatility of diluted bitumen was identified in the Kalamazoo spill in the United States several years ago as being extremely volatile and having a big human impact.

At Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo, only two days after the spill happened, oil spill expert Riki Ott was on the scene. She came to Vancouver Island University and spoke about some of those impacts. She said the diluents, containing benzene, toluene, and micro polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, began gassing off in the area, causing symptoms of nausea, dizziness, and headaches among the local population. This had a big impact on the first responders to that spill. She was also on the ground after the Exxon oil spill back in the 1980s, and she reported that the same impacts caused cancer, asthma, and hormone reproductive problems by jamming immune system and DNA functions. Again, this is an enormous risk to first responders when there is inevitably some form of a spill.

Vancouver's Tsleil-Waututh Nation and Tsawout First Nation commissioned a study in 2015 saying "collecting and removing oil from the sea surface is a challenging, time-sensitive, and often ineffective process". Even in the calmest conditions it is very hard to control. Here we have both the human impact to people on the front line, and the environmental impact if we do have a spill in marine waters.

In 2013, Environment Canada said that spilled bitumen exposed to sediment in marine settings sinks and chemical dispersants sprayed on dilbit were not effective. In fact, they made the oil sink beneath the water, which made it even harder to recover. If we end up with tacky tar covering our seabed, our aquaculture leases, it would be a total mess for British Columbia, with impacts on the economy, tourism, and ecology. I do not understand how the government approved the sevenfold increase in oil tanker traffic if it did not know how it was going to clean up the marine environment, yet it approved the pipeline despite that lack of knowledge.

In 2011, when I was elected as the Islands Trust council chair, which is a local government in the Gulf Islands, we figured out that this was already a risk. We already had bitumen coming through the Salish Sea and the risk of the Kinder Morgan pipeline was really going to exacerbate that. We repeatedly wrote to the federal government and got no response. When there was finally late-breaking science that came to the National Energy Board, it refused to hear the evidence, so the pipeline was approved without any inquiry into that issue.

Another issue is the tank farm fire risk. The Burnaby Fire Department said the design of the tank farm for Kinder Morgan creates situations where firefighting is not possible, and there is a very real risk of inextinguishable multi-tank fire events.

My friend and constituent, Bob Bossin writes:

No-one wants a major tank farm...fire, including the oil companies. So everyone employs the best safety measures they can. And yet there are two or three disastrous oil depot (tank farm) fires every year. That is why, for decades, nowhere in the developed world has a facility like this been built in a city. Let alone on the side of a mountain in an earthquake zone, with a university above and thousands of homes below....

●(1655)

That is why tens of thousands of us on the coast, the people whose health and safety are at risk, are committed to protecting ourselves and our environment when our government refuses to.

I will move to broken promises to first nations. The government said it would recognize the relationship between indigenous people and the land, will respect their legal traditions and perspectives on environmental stewardship, yet over 50% of the pipeline and the tanker route involves first nations who are taking Kinder Morgan and the federal government to court.

Business of Supply

In my riding, Stz'uminus leader, Chief John Elliott, said that as a nation and a community, for a short-term gain, it will be a lifetime impact to our ecosystem.

In the Snuneymuxw First Nation in my riding, former Chief Kwulasultun, also known as Doug White III, said, "this project puts at risk our way of life." He also said the decision was "premised on a denial of aboriginal people's rights and voice."

We also had evidence from the Sechelt First Nation and from Raincoast Conservation Foundation at the National Energy Board that orca whales would be harmed by increased noise, decreasing their ability to communicate, acquire food, and to survive. That is from existing shipping noise, but exacerbated by the sevenfold increase in oil tanker traffic through the Salish Sea. Despite that evidence before the National Energy Board, the NEB approved the pipeline and specifically in its report acknowledged that adverse impacts would be extensive and unmitigable.

We also had evidence from Tsawwassen First Nation, which said it saw this as a serious assault both to the species at risk and also to their own way of life.

I will finish by saluting my friend and neighbour, Paige Harwood, who just two days ago was arrested at the Kinder Morgan site. This is a young person who is very discouraged by the Prime Minister's betrayal of his promise to renew the National Energy Board process before approving the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

For all these reasons, I will continue to support first nations and community opposition to the Kinder Morgan project. I will be voting against the Conservative motion that supports the Kinder Morgan pipeline. I will be standing up for the coast, and standing up for a renewable future and a sustainable coast.

● (1700)

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I started my environmental career in the 1970s and I remember the very first Earth Day. It is quite clear to me, regarding the NDP, that they are pure environmental phonies. They use the environment as a political tool to advance a left-wing agenda that otherwise they could not advance.

I find it quite hilarious that there are NDP members from Hamilton arguing strongly about the steel industry. They want the steel industry to grow to protect steelworkers. Pipelines are made of steel. What do they expect, empty pipelines made of steel? This is completely ridiculous.

At this point in time there are 2.5 million miles of pipelines in North America. That is a staggering number. They are 70 times safer, based on articles in *Scientific American*, than trucks or trains. To argue against pipelines is to argue against community safety.

I had the honour of working in the oil sands for a winter and I lived in a camp. There were senior couples there saving for a dignified retirement, young couples saving for their first home, and a father saving for his child's education. I lived with the workers in the oil sands and they are decent, honest, honourable, hard-working people. Why does the NDP hate working people so much?

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, that is a breathtakingly ridiculous question. I am standing up for my own riding, a coastal

community, for which this project is all downside and no upside. I would argue for workers along the pipeline route that Kinder Morgan's testimony at the National Energy Board said this project is going to create 50 permanent jobs. It would not even promise not to use temporary foreign workers in the construction of the pipeline.

Just last month from Simon Fraser University, academic Tom Gunton released a new assessment of the Kinder Morgan project viability. He said recent forecasts say there is massive overcapacity to move oil in North America, and that "there are clearly viable options to Trans Mountain that have significantly lower environmental risk". Therefore, "why would we risk B.C.'s coastline?" I could not agree more.

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this project would provide unprecedented access to global markets and generate significant direct economic benefits, including more than \$4.5 billion in federal and provincial government revenues. As I mentioned earlier, it would benefit operating engineers across Canada.

Kinder Morgan, to proceed with this project, has to address 157 legally binding conditions, demonstrating that it can meet engineering, safety, emergency preparedness, and environmental protection conditions before construction can begin, and it has to apply for regulatory permits and authorizations from federal and provincial governments and continue consultations all the way along. There is very careful thought in how to build this pipeline safely.

Are there any conditions whatsoever that the hon. member, or her party, would ever support to get Canadian oil to tidewater?

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, I question the premise of my colleague's question. Here is a headline from just yesterday, "Forget Any Economic Windfall from Kinder Morgan, Analyst Says". The article says:

In a brief yet damning report David Hughes, a former federal government energy researcher, concluded that tripling the pipeline's capacity won't deliver an extra \$73 billion in revenue over two decades as claimed by Kinder Morgan.

Again and again, we keep hearing this project is in the public interest. I do not understand how a multinational corporation, headquartered in Houston, Texas, unsafely transporting diluted tar to China through my backyard on our beautiful coastline is in Canada's national interest. It does not help our energy security. It does not give us jobs. It risks the marine jobs we already have.

● (1705)

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my good colleague for her very well thought out and informed comments.

There seems to be a continuing argument about the issue of safety. Particularly, I would like to focus in on the risks with safety; that is, when there is a spill. The question is not if there would be a spill but when there would be a spill.

Business of Supply

Is there science at this moment that can actually clean up the spill, and if not, what are the implications for all the other sectors of industry?

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, we have had a number of studies done; for example, by the environment commissioner, federally, who said that the federal and provincial governments are not prepared for an oil spill, for the existing oil spill risks that we already have in our marine environment. We have had repeated evidence, both heard at the National Energy Board and refused by the National Energy Board, that said it is not clear at all that there is any proven response to how bitumen would interact with a marine environment. However, based on the Kalamazoo spill, a spill in Venezuela, and another spill in Texas, in the saltwater environment and freshwater environment, bitumen will sink. That is a huge problem. We have a lot of work to do to handle the risk we have already for B.C.'s coast, let alone with a sevenfold increase in traffic.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I will notify the House that I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Calgary Shepard.

I rise this afternoon in support of the motion that is before the House, brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition. Of course, that means I am standing in support of the Kinder Morgan pipeline going forward, to which Conservatives have committed. This is a very important piece of Canadian energy infrastructure that will create wealth and prosperity not only for the current generation but for generations to come. Building this pipeline would create tens of thousands of permanent well-paying jobs not just within the province of Alberta but in the entire country of Canada. In fact, no other industry offers such high-paying jobs for youth and young people, therefore allowing those in the rising generation to pay off their students debts, purchase their first homes, and really get ahead in life, which is excellent for them.

Kinder Morgan would also ensure that our natural resources would find their way to market in the most environmentally sustainable way possible, which I think all of us in the House would agree should be a priority going forward. Of course this is proven. Because of the government's own extensive and evidence-driven review process, we know that this is in fact the case. The government has everything it needs to get started on this vital project: the studies are complete, it has jurisdiction, and it has social licence. In fact, the Prime Minister himself has said that he supports this project, so when we advocate for it in the House today, it is with great backing.

It is not stated enough in the House that Canada is, in fact, a natural resource superpower, and we should be taking advantage of that as a country. For the entire existence of our nation, our ability to process and export our raw materials has defined us as a nation. People who travel anywhere around the world will find homes built with our lumber, wedding rings made with gold found in Canada, and diamonds that are taken from the north. This speaks volumes about the exports that come out of Canada. There is no reason why our natural resource called oil and gas should not be the same.

By twinning the existing Trans Mountain pipeline, we would finally be able to get our product directly to international markets. This would create more employment across the energy sector, especially for young Canadians. In this time that we call job churn for young workers, the energy sector actually provides thousands of

Canadians their first well-paying jobs. Young people who are employed in the energy sector are able to buy their first homes more easily, pay down their debts sooner, and save for their futures a whole lot faster than if they were not provided this opportunity. Over the last decade, youth from all across Canada travelled west and spent at least some time in Alberta in order to save for these various things.

I recognize that Canadians do not just want a prosperous economy. They also want to make sure that the environment is protected. Pipelines make all the more sense when we consider environmental impact, because pipelines actually ensure that both of these objectives are met: our economy thrives and our environment is protected. Contrary to what the media or those on my left would like people to think, pipelines are actually nothing new. They have been in the ground for a long time and have been operational for decades. At the present time, thousands of Canadians actually live around pipelines and do not even know it, because the environment looks like it would if the pipelines were not in the ground. The reason people do not know is that pipelines are actually proven to be reliable, clean, and effective. As I stated already, the environment around them actually looks relatively normal. If we want to avoid costly and damaging spills, pipelines actually provide us with the best way forward for our country.

Study after study has shown that pipelines are the safest and most environmentally sustainable way to transport oil and gas and ensure it gets directly to international markets, which of course means we have to get it to tidewater. They are far safer than transport over rail or road, which are the only other alternatives at our disposal. Consider the number of derailments in environmentally sensitive areas in B.C. that take place or the national tragedy of Lac-Mégantic, which demonstrate the very real dangers of moving this product by rail.

• (1710)

In addition to this, these pipelines are also heavily scrutinized to ensure their safety to the environment. The National Energy Board's own extensive and robust report laid out 209 firm conditions for this Trans Mountain expansion for Kinder Morgan. Kinder Morgan must also do the same with the multitude of agreements that it has made with many communities and aboriginal groups along the line, which it has done.

What we need to note here is that there are many aboriginal groups. In fact I could argue that the majority are actually standing behind this pipeline. There are a few who are speaking out against it, but we have to keep in mind that it is only a few, a minority. With it being nearly impossible to get everyone on the same page, we have to choose what is best for Canadians as a whole and move forward with those who have shown their support and need this pipeline for their economic stability and well-being.

I do believe that Canada maintains some of the highest standards of environmental protection anywhere in the world, and this has been proven time and time again.

Business of Supply

Canadians are proud that our oil and gas sector is ethical and environmentally safe, which cannot be said of the alternatives, Saudi Arabia or Venezuela. These alternatives have proven quite the opposite. Some have referred to their oil and gas as blood oil because of the regulations being actually so slim within these countries.

Let us be clear about the choice that is facing us, because the choice is not whether or not to build a pipeline, but the choice is actually to build a pipeline in Canada under the strictest environmental regulations in the world or to allow some corrupt third world oil company with no regulations or oversight at all to devastate their local environment as they extract and ship their oil overseas. These are the two choices before this House today, and I would argue that we do need to make sure we are supporting our own oil production, which has been done in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner.

We know that if Canadian products do not reach international markets, China and other energy-dependent superpowers will get their oil from somewhere. This is why this debate is not really about the environment or saving the planet, but it is about politics. Therefore I call on the government to do what it said it would do, and that is to ensure this important upgrade of Canadian infrastructure happens.

I am glad to know that the Conservative Party is not alone in its support of this very important project moving forward. It would appear that the government has also seen the light and that it publicly supports this pipeline. I was encouraged by the words the Prime Minister delivered recently at a meeting in Rome. He said:

The decision we took on the Trans Mountain pipeline was based on facts and evidence on what is in the best interests of Canadians and, indeed, all of Canada.

I could not have said it better myself. The facts and the evidence have indeed not changed, and this includes the laws regarding federal and provincial jurisdiction.

Regardless of provincial politics in British Columbia, we are calling on the government to not lose its nerve, but to continue to support this important endeavour for the sake of our country.

Last, we trust the Liberals will commit fully to the social licence the many aboriginal communities have given them on this pipeline, and that they do not fail to deliver on the economic benefits that await.

I say this because I know that pipelines are not just a boost for Alberta but a victory for the Canadian economy as a whole. The supplies for the pipeline project include steel from Ontario, machinery from Ontario and Quebec, as well as parts, labour, and services from every province and territory across this great nation.

The reality is this. With the oceans of red ink the Liberal government is swimming in, the government really cannot afford any other alternative. We need to move forward with this project, yes, for our own sake to keep oil and gas here within our country because it will provide revenue for us. It will provide jobs, of course, for Canadian people, but it will also provide tax revenue for the government, which of course is much needed.

In conclusion, Canadians do in fact support the Kinder Morgan pipeline because it will provide well-paying jobs to young people

who desperately need them. Exporting our oil is the ethical and environmentally sound thing to do, because our oil and gas sector produces this product in compliance with the toughest, most responsible environmental regulations possible.

The Liberals cannot afford to let this project fail, because it would leave our fragile economy in even worse shape than what we see today. The federal government has already approved this project. Today we are calling on government members to insist that it go through and that we move forward to construction.

• (1715)

Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague from Lethbridge obviously has a lot of experience with the oil and gas industry. In terms of her experience with the safety of pipelines that run through southern Alberta, could she give us a sense as to how many pipelines transport Alberta bitumen, and how many times, that she knows of, there have been leaks? What were the measures taken to address those issues?

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, I caught part of that question, but not all of it, so I will do my best to answer. I apologize.

With regard to Alberta and the pipelines that exist there, Alberta, of course, is known for its pipelines. We know that in the Edmonton area alone there are over 37,000 kilometres of it, so we are looking at a lot of pipelines. In terms of their environmental impact through spills, to date I do not know that we have one on record. It would appear, then, that pipelines are actually a safe way to transfer oil and gas to get this precious commodity to market and to advance our economy, not only by providing jobs, but, again, by providing a form of taxation to the government to provide for social programs like health care and education, which are much needed by this country.

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear my colleague's views on the disappointment we felt on B.C.'s coast, which is threatened by the sevenfold increase in oil tanker traffic from the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

About the failed promises of the Prime Minister during the election campaign, in Esquimalt, he promised voters that ongoing pipeline reviews would have to be redone under stronger, more credible rules, including for the Kinder Morgan expansion project. The question was, "Does your NEB overhaul apply to Kinder Morgan?" The Prime Minister said, "Yes, yes... It applies to existing projects, existing pipelines as well." The question was, "Okay, so if they approve Kinder Morgan in January, you're saying..". The Prime Minister interrupted to say, "No, they're not going to approve it in January because we're going to change the government. That process has to be redone." We believe that a number of seats turned based on that promise. I wonder if the member can comment on what was perhaps our shared disappointment.

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, there is quite a bit of ground to cover here.

Business of Supply

Let us start with this. We do know that the party in power, the government, has made promises and then gone back on them. It has said one thing and then done another. There are definitely inconsistencies in the way that the Liberals have governed, in the decisions they have made, and in the actions they have taken. I have no problem agreeing with the member on that.

When it comes to Kinder Morgan, that is exactly the reason why we are putting this motion forward today. It is because we want to ensure that the Liberals are not going back on the commitment they have made to Canadians from coast to coast who would benefit from this project going forward. We want to ensure that in fact Kinder Morgan will go forward and that construction will take place on this pipeline. That is why we have brought this motion to the House today.

With regard to the tanker traffic, the member is referencing a very niche group who came forward with some concerns that are not substantiated with evidence or research. Therefore, we have to go with what the science and research shows us, which is that we should be moving forward with the production and the export of our oil and gas resources in the country of Canada.

* * *

• (1720)

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

The Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that messages have been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed the following bills, to which the concurrence of the House is desired: Bill S-3, An Act to amend the Indian Act (elimination of sex-based inequities in registration); and Bill S-5, An Act to amend the Tobacco Act and the Non-smokers' Health Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

* * *

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**OPPOSITION MOTION—KINDER MORGAN TRANS MOUNTAIN EXPANSION PROJECT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of the advantages of possibly being the last speaker on this opposition day motion is that I get to do a recap of the day's debate. I have been here for several hours and have heard what many members on all sides of the House have said.

One of the sad things is that if Motion No. 14 had been amended, as the opposition had wanted it to be, we would be speaking about the Trans Mountain pipeline late into the evening, until midnight. We could have made many more points, and we could have heard many more Liberal MPs speak to how much they like the pipeline. Also, possibly more B.C. Liberal MPs could have spoken to the advantages of the Trans Mountain pipeline and Kinder Morgan.

However, it also gives me an advantage. I do have a Yiddish proverb that I found in one of my books that I wanted to use. I think it speaks very much to the Liberal government position on this. It is, "Don't ask questions about fairy tales." I have a lot of questions to ask today. There are a lot of fairy tales on the government side about what they are actually doing.

The main fairy tale that the Liberal government continues to flog is that the Trans Mountain NEB approval means construction of the pipeline and all the jobs that come with it. It is essentially saying that the government has approved it, and the jobs have appeared out of thin air and are here.

The construction is the actual place where a lot of blue-collar workers, a lot of working people from Alberta, British Columbia, and all over Canada will get the income, and can use that income generated through their labour to provide for their families. It is not the dollars that matter, it is what can be done with those dollars that matters. The fairy tale is that the government has actually done something, has produced something, has helped someone, when it has not.

Approval is an expression of moral support. In this case, the NEB gave its approval. The government did approve it after vast amounts of evidence were provided to the fact that it was in the national interest.

What we are asking the Liberals to do is to walk the walk, do something, do more than what they are doing now. We do not want them to just talk. I fully expect the members on the Liberal side to vote for the motion. It is such a reasonable motion before the House. It will test the will of Parliament. It will see where Parliament is at. It will ensure that every single member of this House supports a project that is in the national interest.

What we want is confirmation of continued government support. We want to know that the Prime Minister will actually travel to British Columbia and advocate for this project, like he has advocated for other public policy initiatives that he has supported. We want to see other members, especially members from British Columbia, advocating for a pipeline that is in the national interest too. Alberta members would be more than pleased to do so as well. We have done so in the past.

The promotion of the project is also the promotion of the process that led to its approval. By voting for this motion, we are basically voting to confirm both, that the construction of the pipelines by private companies is in the national interest, and that it produces a good that allows another good to flow through it. It also provides an opportunity to confirm that the approval process was the right one, especially with what we see with the B.C. Green Party and B.C. NDP. What they are proposing is an immediate halt to any opportunity that this pipeline has of being built. The tens of thousands of jobs that come with it are absolutely at risk. The agreement says, "immediately employ every tool available to the new government to stop the expansion of the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the seven-fold increase in tanker traffic on our coast, and the transportation of raw bitumen through our province".

That is what the new coalition of political parties intends to do in British Columbia. We know that they are supported by a great many voters. There is a coalition of voters who actually voted for the federal Liberals in the 2015 election that support them. In great part, that support they received was on the broken promises that they would somehow no longer approve pipelines or grind everything to a halt. That was the greatest fear in Alberta, that the main industry that workers and families in Alberta rely on for the income that generates prosperity and the high incomes we enjoy would be taken away.

Private Members' Business

Alberta is landlocked. It is something that we all recognize, just as is Saskatchewan. Our only opportunity for export is through other provinces or through the United States. We would think that we could count on the federal government and our brothers and sisters in another province to allow us to export a product that generates so much wealth and opportunity.

The NEB approval and the Liberal government's news releases and carefully scripted speeches are not worth the paper they are written on, if they allow the political enemies of this pipeline to oppose it regardless of jurisdiction or the evidence.

● (1725)

It undermines the entire Canadian regulatory process. If we can do it on this matter, we can do it on anything else. If the provincial government, for any reason can oppose it, in whatever avenue it is done, then it undermines the entire Canadian regulatory process.

British Columbia has yet to issue dozens of permits to build and operate the pipeline. I think that is key. We focus a lot on the construction of the pipeline, but there is also the maintenance and the operation of it over time. We are talking about the doubling of the capacity of the line essentially.

What do investors into the Trans Mountain IPO think right now? We know that the company's share value is going down, but what are they supposed to think? What can they expect from the government? What type of signal does it send to the market when we are basically saying a provincial government, with allies I have mentioned who backed the present Liberal government in the previous election, is going to be actively now opposing it on the ground, whether it is through legal avenues, regulatory avenues, or permitting avenues, which are fully within the control of the British Columbia government?

Can they count on the words, from the heart out, from the Prime Minister? Is that the least they can count on? Is that all they will receive? Or will they receive actual help on the ground? I wonder. It is one of those fairy tales.

This pipelines and the tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs it creates are for the general advantage of Canada. I ask myself, are the 17 Liberal MPs from British Columbia going to fight for these tens of thousands of jobs in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, throughout all of Canada? Will they fight for them? Will they stand up to be counted?

An article in today's *Financial Post* spoke about the potential mess that might be left to the Prime Minister. It says, "Already, there is lots of talk in Alberta about retaliation involving obstructing passage of trains from the Port of Vancouver to the rest of Canada through Alberta, or of B.C. gas moving through Alberta to U.S. markets."

This is what happens when we have a lack of leadership from the federal government, when we have everyday people, everyday families, starting to pressure their government in these jurisdictional fights, pressuring them to block our goods, each other's goods. As a country, we do well when we are not 10 islands but when we are one island working together. The government has pitted different regions of the country against each other. We know that the Prime Minister travels to different parts of the country, saying different things in French and in English to different audiences. He simply does not

want to bear the political consequences of the promises he made in the last election.

I think that is wrong. What we say in Alberta and Calgary, and the nice words we share about pipelines and the energy industry, we should do equally in this House. Many members have done it, on both sides. I have heard that all day today. However, a vote in this House should mean something as well. If Parliament expresses its will, the Prime Minister should act on it, should actually go and promote the project. Being in government is not just about making the easy decisions. It is making the hard decisions and then actually following up on them. It is not enough to just do a bit of talk; one has to do a bit of walk as well. I do not see that.

I know many members have spoken about this before, about the previous government's record on pipelines, but we know this: pipelines were approved. To recount the comments made by the member for Edmonton Centre who said that no pipelines have been approved to tidewater, every single pipeline I mentioned to him, the Alida to Cromer oil pipeline capacity expansion, TMX Anchor oil pipeline loop, the Cochin oil pipeline, the Keystone oil pipeline, the Bakken, the Line 9D, Edmonton to Hardisty oil, all led to tidewater. It is part of a system, and it needs to be approved.

I am looking to the government, to these members of the government caucus, to walk the walk and to talk the talk.

● (1730)

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5:30 p.m., pursuant to order made on Tuesday, May 30, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings.

[English]

Pursuant to an order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the opposition motion are deemed put and a recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Tuesday, June 6, 2017, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

VENEZUELA

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC) moved:

Private Members' Business

That, in the opinion of the House, the extreme socialist policies and corruption of President Nicolas Maduro and his predecessor President Hugo Chavez have imposed considerable suffering on the people of Venezuela and therefore the House call upon the government to: (a) develop a plan to provide humanitarian aid directly to Venezuela's people, particularly with respect to alleviating the severe shortages of food and medical supplies; (b) condemn the continued unjust imprisonment and treatment of political opponents who, as reported by Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the Organization of American States on March 14, 2017, "fear repression, torture, and even death"; (c) call upon the Government of Venezuela to respect the right of the people of Venezuela to hold a free and fair referendum to restore democratic rule in their country; and (d) recognize that Canada's foreign policy should always be rooted in protecting and promoting freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

He said, Mr. Speaker, I have brought private member's Motion No. 128 to the House to urge the government to more actively respond to the ever-deepening crisis in Venezuela. This is a crisis not only in terms of the brutal denial of democratic process, free speech, free assembly, and the rule of law in Venezuela but because of the humanitarian tragedy that worsens by the day.

First, a little history.

Venezuela is a magnificently beautiful, resource-rich country on the northeastern top corner of South America. Simón Bolívar, born there in 1783, educated in France, and a disciple of Locke, Hobbes, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Napoleon, returned to the Spanish colony in 1807 and became the leading force, over succeeding tumultuous decades, in the liberation of the continent from Spanish rule and in the independence of Venezuela in 1830.

Jumping forward to modern times, after the Second World War a series of democratic governments presided over the then richest economy in Latin America, an economy driven by its vast oil and gas reserves. However, economic shocks, attempted coups and counter-coups, the impeachment of an embezzling president, and the collapse of public confidence in the government led to the 1998 election of a former coup-plotting soldier, Hugo Chávez.

Chávez launched what he called the Bolivarian revolution, rewrote the Venezuelan constitution, imposed extreme, often contradictory, socialist policies, and presided over the country's tragic downward spiral economically, socially, and democratically.

Chávez engaged in a close relationship with Iran and Cuba in support of terrorist groups like Hezbollah and anti-U.S. states. Under his gross mismanagement of the economy, his elimination of governmental checks and balances, and his survival of an attempted coup, Venezuela developed the worst inflation in the world.

As so many dictators have done over the centuries, Chávez blamed Venezuela's small but dynamic Jewish community for stealing the wealth of the country. His henchmen endorsed the Holocaust. Members of the Venezuelan state police were caught vandalizing and desecrating synagogues with crudely painted graffiti, the mildest being "No Jews wanted here".

As minister of state for the Americas in 2009, I visited Caracas to hear testimony and to observe evidence directly linking the virulent wave of anti-Semitism to the personal direction of Hugo Chávez.

I must make clear, on behalf of Venezuela's Jewish community, that the long-suffering people of Venezuela did not then or now buy into the anti-Semitism of the regime. However, as the focus of state-

directed anti-Semitic human rights abuse, many of the Jewish community have since fled to sanctuary abroad, a significant number now proud members of Canadian society in Thornhill, in the greater Toronto area, in Montreal, and elsewhere.

Under Hugo Chávez, poverty soared, as did crime and corruption. Malnutrition became common and chronic among children and adults. Chávez's death in 2013 and the election of Nicolas Maduro as his named successor, a vote widely considered to have been fraudulently manipulated, coincided with gross economic recession. In 2015, Venezuela's inflation rate passed 100%. Last year, inflation was estimated to have surpassed 700%.

To contain the rising outcry over severe shortages of food and medicines, Maduro last year imposed repressive states of emergency, renewed four times. Amnesty International has since documented a broad range of human rights abuses and crimes under international law.

Prison overcrowding and violence sparked by food and medicine shortages were blamed for a succession of deadly riots. Political opponents of the Maduro regime and pro-democracy protestors have been imprisoned without due process. Critical media companies have lost their operating licences. Unions have been hobbled and blacklisted. The supreme court, packed with regime loyalists, suspended an opposition referendum to recall Maduro and stripped Parliament of many of its powers. Public discontent has boiled over.

For the past two months, street demonstrations have been mounted in Caracas and other large cities and in smaller communities and villages across the country.

• (1735)

People are demanding elections, freedom for jailed politicians and pro-democracy activists, and foreign humanitarian aid for the sick and hungry masses, literally the masses. The street protests have seen steadily increasing violent actions by police, army, and vigilante groups that support the regime. Though the opposition leaders urge non-violent behaviour, protesters are increasingly responding to violence, unfortunately, with violence. At least 60 people have died on both sides of the recent protests. About 1,000 have been injured, and many hundreds of businesses have been looted and burned.

Private Members' Business

A recording obtained by one news agency is said to carry the words of an identifiable Venezuelan general ordering subordinates to prepare for the use of snipers against future demonstration leaders. Regime brutality in countering the demonstrations is already common. On one occasion last month, social media videos captured a government armoured vehicle deliberately driving into a crowd, killing and injuring civilians, and there are wide reports of civilians now being tried in military courts.

In March, the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Luis Almagro, called on the 34 members, which includes Canada, to suspend Venezuela from the organization unless Nicolás Maduro's government moves quickly to hold free and fair general elections. In a 75-page letter to the organization, Secretary General Almagro set these conditions: elections within 30 days, the freeing of all political prisoners, the appointment of independent supreme court justices, and the reinstatement of laws suspended by the top court.

I would remind the House that Lilian Tintori, the wife of Leopoldo Lopez, Venezuela's leading political prisoner, who has been in prison and held unjustly for three years, has travelled the world pleading for support, meeting with Secretary General Almagro, President Trump, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the presidents of Mexico and Argentina, and the Pope. Last month, in fact three days after we asked the Prime Minister in question period why he had not met with Señora Tintori, she was granted a meeting and met with other parliamentarians of all parties here in Ottawa.

When it came to a vote at the OAS, Canada, along with 19 other of the 34 member states, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the United States, Mexico, and Peru, voted to suspend. Voting against were a small number of Caribbean states, states dependent on Venezuelan cheap oil, along with Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, and Nicaragua, as expected. There were not enough votes. It was short of the two-thirds needed to pass.

In response, in anticipation of another vote, President Maduro petulantly denounced the charter of the OAS and announced Venezuela's withdrawal from the organization, more or less emulating Groucho Marx by rhetorically wondering why Venezuela would want to remain in an organization that would have Venezuela as a member. As well, Maduro compared the OAS demands for democratic renewal in Venezuela with the OAS suspension of Cuba in 1962 and quoted Fidel Castro's equally petulant quote then, when he denounced the OAS as the ministry of the colonies. That left the OAS still pondering next steps.

There has been increasing agreement among the majority of OAS members that Maduro's attempt to change the constitution would effectively be a form of a coup within a coup and that as the situation in Venezuela has intensified, the violent polarization is an increasing concern for other countries right across the region. As Secretary General Almagro has said from the beginning, the Inter-American Democratic Charter outlines two measures that can be applied: diplomatic mediation, or full suspension and effective isolation by members. It is not as though mediation has not already been attempted by the Union of South American Nations, known by its acronym, UNASUR; by the Common Market of the South, known as Mercosur; by the Vatican; by the U.S. State Department; and, of course, by the OAS itself.

As the democracies of the Americas, and beyond, ponder next steps to encourage or pressure the Maduro regime, there has been an unfortunate intervention by the big U.S. investment bank Goldman Sachs, which last week bought devalued bonds of Venezuela's state oil company. Goldman Sachs is reported by *The Wall Street Journal* to have paid about \$865 million, or 31¢ on the U.S. dollar, for bonds worth \$2.8 million.

● (1740)

The bank has defended its purchase, saying that while Venezuela is in crisis, it made the investment because it believes life has to eventually get better. It is often said that money has no conscience, and opposition politicians in Venezuela not yet in prison are accusing Goldman Sachs of exactly that. Julio Borges, who leads the opposition in the national assembly, wrote a letter to Goldman Sachs saying, "It is apparent Goldman Sachs decided to make a quick buck off the suffering of the Venezuelan people."

Venezuela's opposition has previously been urging American banks to avoid any financial investments in Venezuela on grounds that they would serve to bail out the Maduro regime, as the Goldman Sachs' bond purchase seems to be doing.

Was this a less than glorious moment for capitalism? Certainly opposition leader Borges said that he would recommend to any future democratic government of Venezuela to refuse to recognize or to redeem the bonds in question. However, I digress. I will turn back to the democracies of our hemisphere and the next possible steps.

Foreign ministers and ambassadors from 33 member nations attended a meeting yesterday in Washington. Venezuela did not show. Canada, Mexico, Panama, Peru, and the United States put forward a declaration calling for an immediate end to violence, the release of political prisoners, restoration of the rule of law, and a demand that Venezuela abandon plans to confect a citizens' assembly to write a new constitution.

Canada's minister said Canada was ready to do its part for a return to peace and stability. Brazil's foreign minister was somewhat more direct. Aloysio Nunes said, "We're taking about people dying." He said that democracy is not a luxury and that we must collectively rescue Venezuela's fundamental freedoms.

However, the resolution failed again to get the necessary two-thirds' support because the usual Venezuelan crony supporters like Nicaragua and Bolivia and a number of short-sighted Caribbean nations that depend on cheap oil from the Maduro regime put forward a blocking resolution of their own.

Private Members' Business

In sharp contrast, as diplomacy stalled in the OAS assembly and the foreign ministers and ambassadors dispersed with a vague plan to return in a couple of weeks or so, yesterday Venezuelan military forces were using tear gas and water cannons to block tens of thousands of civilian protesters attempting to march on the foreign ministry in Caracas.

Therefore, with the Venezuelan crisis deepening by the day, with 60 dead and thousands injured and many more held as political prisoners, with malnutrition on the rise and public health services and hospitals unable to function because of a lack of essential pharmaceuticals, I will return to the motion I bring to the House today, Motion No. 128. Let me remind members very briefly what it says.

Motion No. 128 calls on the government to first develop a plan to deliver humanitarian aid directly to Venezuela's people, particularly with respect to alleviating the severe shortages of food and medical supplies. It also calls for the government to publicly condemn the continued unjust imprisonment and treatment of political opponents, who, as was reported by Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the OAS, fear repression, torture, and even death.

Finally, Motion No. 128 calls on the Canadian government to again call upon the Government of Venezuela for a free and fair referendum to restore democratic rule to that country.

• (1745)

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Thornhill for bringing this motion to the floor today. He will know, as all members and Canadians should know, that Canada takes tremendously seriously its voice in the world and its commitments to the upholding of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

That has been the case as it relates to the ongoing situation in Venezuela. Canada will continue its leadership through the Organization of American States to call upon the Government of Venezuela to respect its international commitments to democracy, to human rights, and to the rule of law, and to release political prisoners, such as Leopoldo López, whom the member opposite cited in his speech.

I also had the chance to meet with Lilian Tintori when she visited Ottawa a few weeks ago. She recognized the leadership role that Canada has played, and certainly the minister yesterday reiterated that Canada will continue to play a significant leadership role on the world stage with our allies around the world.

Hon. Peter Kent: Mr. Speaker, Canada has indeed played a leading role to this point, but diplomacy within the U.S., as within the OAS, as my colleague knows, is slow, very methodical, sometimes ponderously overburdened by the need for a two-thirds majority to pass a vote. We are suggesting, as the situation has deepened since I tabled this motion, that Canada do more. To deliver humanitarian aid to the people of Venezuela will take more than any capacity that the Organization of American States has today. It would indeed take intervention by the United Nations.

I respectfully suggest that Canada might also spend a little more time not soliciting votes for an eventual Security Council position, but speaking sternly to those Caribbean nations and Bolivarian states

that have been supporting the Maduro regime in Central and Latin American to encourage them to respect and respond to this truly humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech. I must say publicly that it is always a pleasure working with him, particularly on the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development. I also want to thank him for bringing this important issue for discussion in the House. I share many of his concerns.

That said, I realize that the motion proposes the holding of a referendum, for example. We know that if a referendum were held last year, it would have resulted in a general election. Now that the president in place has served over half of his term, a referendum would have resulted in the vice-president becoming president. However, the vice-president is a drug lord. The U.S. seized billions of dollars from illegal activities.

Does my colleague really want to see the vice-president become president?

• (1750)

[*English*]

Hon. Peter Kent: Mr. Speaker, I certainly respond with mutual respect for the work that we shared together on the foreign affairs committee in working with government members to produce a number of unanimous committee reports and advice to the government.

To my colleague's point, the Secretary General of the OAS, Luis Almagro, has called for a free and fair vote and for avoidance of the creation of a constituent assembly, which would effectively disallow the democratic process. It would block the democratic process.

I think that the "free and fair" modifier applied to referenda or to elections is the secret. I suspect, given the past behaviour of the Maduro government, that sooner or later we are going to find a complete refusal to deal with the OAS, and there will be a suspension and isolation. One would hope that the other Bolivarian non-democracies—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. We are going to try to get time for one more short question.

The hon. member for Flamborough—Glanbrook.

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to go to the point of my NDP colleague, who is also very familiar with this file, I thank my colleague from Thornhill for raising this very desperate situation the Venezuelans find themselves in.

My colleague from the NDP mentioned the fact that the Maduro regime is littered with people with connections to illegal narcotics. I wonder if the member would expand on that criminal activity in that government.

Hon. Peter Kent: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for turning my back to the Chair.

Private Members' Business

Absolutely, until Goldman Sachs came in with the \$600 million-plus, which provided a certain amount of comfort for the Maduro regime, in fact the greatest single source of hard currency for that dictatorial regime has been drug running.

Venezuela has taken over from previous narco gangs and organizations that had transited from Colombia. Now the majority of drugs coming from Latin America are transported by Venezuelan fast boats up through the eastern Caribbean and eventually to North America.

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again I would like to thank the hon. member for introducing this timely motion. I welcome the opportunity to present the Government of Canada's position on Motion No. 128 and to elaborate on Canada's ongoing commitment to addressing the serious political and economic crisis facing the people of Venezuela.

Our government has repeatedly called on Venezuela to respect the democratic rights of the Venezuelan people. The Government of Canada supports all recommendations in the motion. The minister has consistently condemned the continued unjust imprisonment and treatment of political opponents and has called upon the Government of Venezuela to hold elections, as prescribed by its constitution.

On April 3, Canada co-sponsored an OAS resolution calling on the Venezuelan government to restore constitutional order and respect democratic rights. On May 4, the minister called on the Government of Venezuela to release all political prisoners and set an electoral calendar without delay. Yesterday, at the OAS ministerial meeting in Washington, D.C., the minister reiterated the need for solidarity among OAS members to protect the democratic and human rights of the Venezuelan people. Our government's actions and our words exemplify Canada's acute moral responsibility to protect and promote freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Against a backdrop of rising insecurity and deteriorating human rights, freedom of expression, and political governance, Venezuela is now in the throes of a severe political and economic crisis. This government is very concerned that Venezuelans are suffering from severe shortages of food and medicine, causing many people in state hospitals to die from preventable diseases or to seek treatment across the border in neighbouring countries. We understand that Venezuelans are fleeing the country in the thousands to escape this suffering. Many more have taken to the streets in large-scale protests, during which more than 50 people have already lost their lives. We offer our sincere condolences to the victims and their family members and call on all parties to show restraint.

We firmly believe that the OAS must stand united and ensure that the long-term resolution to the current crisis be rooted in respect for human rights and peaceful dialogue.

● (1755)

[*Translation*]

Canada is particularly troubled by the fact that political dissidents in Venezuela have been silenced. Media independence has been severely restricted and government opponents are threatened and jailed.

One case that attracted a lot of media attention was that of Leopoldo Lopez, leader of the opposition party Voluntad popular. He was sentenced to 14 years in prison for supposedly inciting violence when he encouraged people to demonstrate in 2014.

Many similar situations have also been reported. More than 2,000 Venezuelans have been jailed since demonstrations began throughout the country. Although some have been released, a growing number of demonstrators are being brought before military courts, a clear violation of Venezuela's constitution.

[*English*]

The Government of Canada has long emphasized that ending arbitrary detentions and freeing political prisoners are urgent and important steps toward reconciliation in Venezuela. Our strong position was exemplified by a statement issued on July 7, 2016, on the urgent need to release political prisoners following the appeal hearing of Mr. López. Later, in August of last year, Canada condemned the transfer of political prisoner Daniel Ceballos from house arrest to prison and called for an end to restrictions on political participation. At Venezuela's Human Rights Council universal periodic review last November, Canada placed the urgent need to release political opponents and uphold freedom of expression at the top of its statement.

In May, the minister restated our position. She said:

We call on the Government of Venezuela to release all political prisoners and set an electoral calendar without delay. Free and fair elections including all of Venezuela's eligible voters are required to solve the country's crisis.

Last month, I, along with my colleague, the hon. member for Mississauga Centre, met with Venezuelan human rights activist and wife of Mr. López, Lilian Tintori, to discuss the deteriorating situation and commit Canada's support for dialogue and respect for democratic rights. The Prime Minister also met with Ms. Tintori and repeated Canada's call on the Venezuelan government to release all political prisoners.

[*Translation*]

In addition to public statements, government officials have been working hard to keep bilateral channels open in order to directly convey our serious concerns to the Venezuelan ministry of foreign affairs and the Venezuelan ambassador in Ottawa.

[*English*]

Programming at Canada's embassy in Caracas continues to support the work of Venezuelan NGOs and human rights activities working on good governance and human rights issues. This includes an embassy-sponsored annual human rights award, which is now considered one of the most prestigious human rights awards in the country.

Private Members' Business

Canada will continue to criticize the Venezuelan government's treatment and imprisonment of political opponents, but we also recognize that ensuring that democratic rule is restored in Venezuela is fundamental for there to be respect for human rights, security, and prosperity for all Venezuelan citizens.

Since the national assembly began sitting in early 2016, their supreme court has annulled almost all legislation. In March of this year, the court declared the assembly in contempt and announced that it would take over the elected members' duties. While the decision was reversed, the assembly remains powerless. The international community, including Canada, was swift in condemning this action. On March 31, the Minister of Foreign Affairs issued a statement condemning the supreme court's takeover of the national assembly and calling for the Government of Venezuela to allow elected members to carry out their constitutionally mandated duties.

This type of behaviour is unacceptable and points to a lack of separation of powers between institutions in a democratic society. The Venezuelan people have a right to have their voices heard through their elected representatives. Meaningful progress is impossible without proper processes.

They also have a right to vote in constitutionally guaranteed elections. Unfortunately, not only has the presidential recall referendum launched late last year been indefinitely postponed, but so have regional elections that were due to take place in 2016.

The Government of Canada has not hesitated to raise its voice in support of democracy in Venezuela through the many statements and messages the government and our embassy in Caracas have issued.

At the North American Leaders' Summit in Ottawa last June, our Prime Minister, along with the U.S. and Mexican presidents, jointly issued a statement calling for democratic norms to be respected and for the recall referendum to be allowed to proceed. Similarly, since last July we have issued multiple joint statements with partner countries at the Organization of American States, insisting the Venezuelan government adhere to the principles of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

On October 21, 2016, Canada issued a statement explicitly conveying Canada's concern with the suspension of the presidential recall referendum and urging the electoral council to reverse its decision and allow Venezuelans to exercise their constitutional right.

On April 27, the Minister of Foreign Affairs again expressed Canada's regret about President Nicolas Maduro's decision to withdraw from the Organization of American States, appealing for a restoration of constitutional order, and on May 4, after President Maduro announced he would establish a constituent assembly to change the constitution, we issued a statement urging all parties to work together peacefully on solutions to the crisis and calling for the release of political prisoners and the setting of an electoral calendar.

Indeed, the Government of Canada is deeply concerned with the establishment of a constituent assembly without the guarantee of universal suffrage. We are also troubled by the increased tension and polarization this announcement has served to generate.

● (1800)

The Canadian government values its long friendship with Venezuela, and we recognize that only Venezuelans can determine their future. However, as a champion of the values of inclusive and accountable governance and the promotion of human rights, Canada has an important role to play in helping Venezuelans find a solution to the current crisis. A secure and prosperous future for Venezuelans is important not only for Venezuela and its citizens but for the entire hemisphere. Rest assured the Government of Canada will remain firmly engaged on this important issue.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, obviously, like so many others, I am deeply concerned about the current political, economic, and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.

I think that everyone closely following the situation has seen the images of the crackdown on demonstrators in Caracas. We have been seeing these troubling images for months. All this is occurring during a period of intense polarization within Venezuelan society, although this polarization cannot in any way justify the terrible abuses we are seeing.

The crackdown is steadily intensifying in Venezuela and is taking place in various forms. A good example is freedom of the press. According to Reporters Without Borders, Venezuela now ranks 137th in terms of press freedom. Human rights activists are being attacked, and political opponents are being jailed. I too met with Ms. Tintori, the wife of Leopoldo Lopez, two weeks ago here in Ottawa, and what she said was quite interesting.

I am fascinated by how the Venezuelan national assembly is being treated. We know that during the most recent election, the opposition won two-thirds of the seats in the national assembly. However, since then, the supreme court has been consistently overturning decisions by the elected members and even tried to dissolve the national assembly. In this respect, I agree with what was said earlier, that it looks like a coup within a coup. It is good that they have backed down, but they continue to overturn decisions by legitimate legislators, which is completely unacceptable, especially since the court is politically controlled.

Meanwhile, because of falling oil prices, corruption, populism, and the political situation, the people are suffering. Demonstrators are being dragged before military courts, and water and electricity shortages, hyperinflation, and the lack of necessities are quite terrible. As well, 76% of hospitals are facing serious drug shortages. One consequence of that is skyrocketing infant mortality.

Private Members' Business

•(1805)

[*English*]

In fact, Human Rights Watch makes a good summary of some of the problems, although it does not list all that we see currently in Venezuela. They say that the accumulation of power in the executive branch and the erosion of human rights guarantees has enabled the government to intimidate, censor, and punish its critics.

Severe shortages of medicine, medical supplies, and food have intensified since 2014, and weak government responses have undermined Venezuelans' rights to health and food. Security forces have arbitrarily detained and tortured protestors, and raids in low-income communities have led to widespread allegations of abuse.

[*Translation*]

These are comments by Human Rights Watch, a highly credible organization. Amnesty International, another organization I am delighted to work with, has also expressed deep concern about the situation. We must find a solution and restore dialogue, peace, and the rule of law in Venezuela.

The reason I have a problem with the motion is that I think the proposed measures are inappropriate and in some cases counter-productive.

I will start with the part of the motion that I agree with. It reads, "Canada's foreign policy should always be rooted in protecting and promoting freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law." I completely agree with that.

The rest of the motion, however, is problematic. In part (*a*), it calls on the government to "develop a plan to provide humanitarian aid directly to Venezuela's people". I am sorry, but that needs to go through international organizations such as the United Nations. The Venezuelan government says it is prepared to accept aid that comes by way of the United Nations. Aid should be supplied through multilateral organizations, not directly.

The other problem is that the motion condemns the imprisonment of political opponents. That seems feeble to me. I think we should actually call for the liberation of political opponents. This is an anemic suggestion that just does not go far enough.

However, the biggest problem I have is with the referendum. No one else is calling for a referendum. It is important to understand that, if a referendum had been held last year, before the president was halfway through his term of office, it would have led to an election. However, if a referendum is held at this point in the president's term, the vice-president would automatically become the president under the Constitution. There are some serious problems with that. The vice-president has been accused of being a drug lord, and the American government has seized billions of dollars of his assets for drug trafficking. One also has to wonder how he managed to earn billions of dollars in the first place. I do not imagine he earns that much in his capacity as vice-president.

That is a problem, and so the proposed solution is an even worse alternative. The proposed solution will only make the problem worse.

I am a bit disappointed to see that the resolution makes no mention of the crackdown on protestors, for example. I think that the crackdown on protestors has been excessive. The motion does not make any mention of that. It also does not mention the use of gangs or the need to respect the national assembly and its duly elected members. It is not rocket science. I am thinking of the resolution that was adopted by the European Union, for example. I am sorry, but I only have the English version of the document. It reads:

•(1810)

[*English*]

Calls on the Government and the Supreme Court of Venezuela to respect the constitution, in particular the powers conferred on all duly elected members of the parliament....

Calls on the Venezuelan Government to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners....

[*Translation*]

That is what we should be working on with the people of Venezuela. We also need to work on prevention. When the Conservatives were in office, they cut some of the funding for the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which was doing extraordinary work to encourage dialogue and prevent this type of situation. I would like to see the Liberals reinstate that funding. I have asked them before to do that.

[*English*]

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join this debate in support of the member for Thornhill on Venezuela, and I do have a Yiddish proverb, but I will say which one it is later. I want to start by establishing a couple of facts and very strong beliefs I have, having spoken a lot with the Venezuelan community in Calgary.

Hugo Chávez was a dictator. Nicolás Maduro was and continues to be a dictator. Hugo Chávez's rule was marked by the collapse of the private economy, from the nationalization of industries like cement, construction, a great deal of the food distribution system, wholesale markets, and the substitution of community groups for more central government, and we saw this throughout the Chávista rule. When Chávez was there, he started the slide of Venezuela from one of the richest countries, if not the richest country in South America, with the substitution of community groups by more centralized government, and the political party that he belonged to increasingly took over arms of the government. There was confusion between the two, just as there is today in the Russian Federation.

His rule was also marked by the erosion of the rule of law and of public institutions, which today has led to the collapse of public institutions, including the national assembly and the supreme court of Venezuela. People like Nicolás Maduro and people who support him look for opportunities like this to continue an autocratic socialist government. The fact is that, from Chávez to Maduro, Venezuela went from the richest country in South America to the poorest, most violent, and now the most autocratic and definitely the most dictatorial.

Private Members' Business

I want to dwell on the systematic abuses of human rights in Venezuela. Between April 1 and May 27 of just this year, we are talking about the arrest and detention of 2,950 peaceful opposition demonstrators, people who are tired of being abused, people who are tired of starving and being unable to provide for their families. Now, 1,329 of these people are still being detained today, 355 of them having received a trial and 189 being detained by military tribunals. These are civilians being tried before military tribunals. Some 60 people have been killed since April 19, and I want to update the numbers to the House because I spoke today with the executive director of the Canada Venezuela Democracy Forum, a Venezuelan expat who lives here in Canada, and he told me that, as of today, they are counting 78 people murdered by the Maduro regime. These are peaceful demonstrators who were simply going out into the streets to protest against a government they no longer trust, that they no longer believe in, and that they want out of power.

The *coup d'état* is what we hear from the Venezuelan opposition, but from many other groups too who have confirmed that the government of Nicolás Maduro now leads essentially an autocratic, dictatorial state with no basis whatsoever in Venezuelan law or international law. By decision 156, passed on March 29, the supreme court assumed the powers of the national assembly. These are the legislative powers that the national assembly had, so this violates the Venezuelan constitution. Recently Nicolás Maduro called to reform the constitution with a body of 500 members, so 50% will be appointed by Maduro himself—I can see a problem already emerging—and 50% from so-called grassroots organizations from government programs, which is all Chávista members; therefore all of them will be appointed directly by the government through whatever avenue he chooses. This violates electoral law in Venezuela as well as the constitution of Venezuela.

I and other members who have spoken have also had the pleasure of meeting with Lilian Tintori, who is the wife of a Venezuelan opposition leader who is illegally being detained in a military prison by the Maduro regime. I found her to be quite a fierce defender of human rights. She has become quite an activist for her husband, for the opposition parties, and also more broadly for the democratic push in Venezuela. She spoke of the hardships that people are experiencing there, such as the food shortages. Venezuela used to be a country where people could feed themselves. I know that the food shortages have been blamed by some on the collapse of the price of oil on international markets. However, Alberta experienced a collapse of the commodity market as well, and we are still able to feed ourselves. There is still food on the shelves. We can still go and purchase it. That is not the case in Venezuela.

There are drug shortages. Items like Tylenol are up 500%, a simple tablet of Tylenol, which can mean the difference between someone ending up in an emergency room and not.

● (1815)

In the case of those winding up in an emergency room in Venezuela, they are very likely not to get any treatment. There is simply no medication available at a reasonable price. People must go to the black market.

There have been month-long demonstrations where people have taken to the streets. It is easy to find out about these. They are on the

news now. They started on Facebook and Twitter. People were posting about it and showing pictures of what is actually going on on the ground.

Lilian also spoke about the illegal detentions, the rounding up of members of the opposition parties. They are being arrested, randomly at times, detained for hours and days and sometimes weeks, and then released, only to be re-arrested. The regime is doing such things to spread fear. It is a reminder of the times that I still remember, when Poland and other ex-Soviet controlled republics in eastern Europe experienced exactly the same thing. Opposition members there have fought for their freedom and for democracy.

That Yiddish proverb I spoke about earlier relates deeply to Venezuela's conditions today. Peace is to man what yeast is to dough. The reason I want to talk about dough is that Maduro's regime is making this ridiculous, almost comedy-like attack on the private market, the private economy, where people find ways to fulfill each other's needs. The regime has actually attacked bakers, as of two weeks ago. It declared bakers to be special contributors. One Venezuelan baker translated the regimespeak for us, saying they have to pay double in taxes while facing shortages of milk, eggs, cheese, and deli products. In March, 80% of Venezuela's bakeries were reported to have no flour.

To dwell on bakeries and dough and yeast some more, in something referred to as the bread wars online now, Maduro's regime has accused bakers of hoarding and being allied to the imperialists. In fact, in a recent speech, Maduro accused them of waging a bread war against the Venezuelan people.

Now there are police operations ongoing still today, which are seizing owners of these bakeries and accusing them of hoarding flour. Now it is getting ridiculous. We know how serious the situation must be for the government of a country to be in the business of seizing bakeries and seizing bakery owners and sending them to jail for the simple crime of making cookies. One baker told NPR that they can only serve five customers per day. Effectively, that means they are only open 40 minutes after opening, every single day.

Now I'll turn to a personal story. This reminds me of the stories my parents used to share with me. Many members know that I immigrated to Canada from Poland, and I still remember the store shelves being empty in Poland in the early 1980s. I was only a little boy of four. The only thing people were certain to be able to buy in the stores was vinegar. There was ample, copious amounts of vinegar. The stores never ran out of it. We would go to a local cafeteria called, in Polish, *bar mleczny*, a milk bar, which does not mean there was actual milk because there was never any. However, people could get soup, a peach soup, and my dad would tell us stories about how people could buy this peach soup and all it really was was half a peach in a bowl of water. That was peach soup.

Private Members' Business

When I hear these stories about what Venezuelans are going through, I identify with it. I know what that looks like. That is why my family fled here to Canada.

The tragedy of Venezuela continues. Eight out of 10 Venezuelans are poor. There is a critical lack of medical supplies and money for health care that contributes to infant mortality rates that have soared 30% in one year. Maternal mortality is up 66%. Hyperinflation has vaporized the savings of an entire generation of people. One economist who tracks a common food staple, chicken, has calculated the annual inflation at 700%.

One other member did mention the president of the national assembly, Julio Borges, who said, after tearing up a copy of the supreme court ruling:

Nicolas Maduro has carried out a 'coup d'etat'...this is a dictatorship

This is from the man who would know best. This is from the person who is the head of the national assembly in Venezuela.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has also condemned the regime for the militarization of the management of the protests. It has detained members, like the Contreras, who are now subject to military justice in full violation of Venezuelan law. They have been held completely incommunicado from any human rights groups.

This is all being tracked by organizations like Human Rights Watch. It says that, according to its numbers, there is abuse of prosecutions going on of at least 275 civilians by military records alone, official records.

I would say that this motion is extremely timely. It is time for Canada to act. It is not enough to go to the OAS. It is not enough to put out a warm-hearted press release. It is time to act and call for everything inside this motion. I am asking the government to support it. I am asking all members of the opposition to support this motion as well.

• (1820)

The Deputy Speaker: Before we resume debate with the hon. member for London North Centre, I will let him know that there are about eight minutes remaining in the time we are provided now. If he wishes his whole 10 minutes, of course he will have his remaining time when the House next takes up debate on the question.

The hon. member for London North Centre.

Mr. Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful to see general solidarity in this House today for the people of Venezuela who continue to suffer under a brutal regime, and it is indeed a pleasure to speak to this very important motion.

Canada has a strong voice within institutions of the inter-American system. Since joining the OAS, the Organization of American States, in 1990, we have been constant in our principled and rigorous defence of human rights and respect for democracy. As the leading multilateral organization of our region, the OAS has an important role to play in upholding democratic norms and in helping member states when they face challenges in maintaining the high standards that we have agreed to throughout our hemisphere. The countries of the Americas have made enormous strides over the

years. Throughout the region, constitutional norms have been strengthened, governments have deepened their commitment to democratic rule, and armed conflict has subsided. By bringing the countries of the Americas together, the OAS supports and strengthens these hard-fought gains. More important, member states have agreed to a coherent set of shared values, and individually they work with their neighbours to achieve these very important and shared goals.

It is thus with grave concern that Canada is closely monitoring the dramatically deteriorating political, social, and economic situation in Venezuela. Constitutional order has been suspended, political rights have been restricted, and violence is growing in the streets, while the people of Venezuela suffer under the ongoing humanitarian crisis due to the scarcity of food, medicine, and fuel. It is also with deep regret that Canada notes the stated intention of President Maduro's government to withdraw from the OAS, rather than to accept the assistance of the OAS and other member states that are willing to provide it.

The current situation in Venezuela cannot continue. It is not sustainable. While any lasting solution can only work if reached among Venezuelans, Canada firmly believes that effective multilateralism through the OAS can play a strong supporting role in helping Venezuela move forward in a peaceful manner. In line with Canada's values and interests, we have demonstrated leadership on this issue. Along with like-minded countries and other friends of Venezuela, this government has called upon its authorities to establish a credible and meaningful dialogue with the opposition to find an internal solution in line with basic democratic principles.

Canada continues to call for the release of political prisoners, the restoration of the powers of the national assembly, the establishment of a calendar for elections, and the willingness to allow the distribution of humanitarian aid to alleviate the ever more desperate situation in which the people of Venezuela find themselves. In addition, Canada's embassy in Caracas continues to support the work of Venezuelan NGOs and human rights activists working diligently on good governance and human rights issues.

Members of the OAS, both unilaterally and multilaterally, have fully agreed to uphold democratic values and principles. The standards for democratic behaviour are set out in the Inter-American Democratic Charter. Indeed, first envisioned at the 2001 Summit of the Americas held here in Canada in Quebec City, the charter is an important tool that encourages states to work with neighbours and to accept help when democracy is at risk. Member states of the OAS are making use of every instrument available to them to help Venezuela find its way. Canada has been among the most active countries seeking the OAS's action to address the crisis.

We have reached out to Venezuela in multiple ways and in good faith to help find answers, including on April 3, notably, when an OAS resolution for Venezuela to respect democratic rights was co-sponsored by Canada. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is actively seized of the issue and will continue to play an active leadership role on this issue, again, in solidarity with the Venezuelan people. Indeed, the minister has spoken with counterparts at an emergency meeting of foreign ministers of the Americas held on May 31 in Washington.

On that note, I have always had the opportunity on the foreign affairs committee, in collaboration with the hon. member for Thornhill, who put forward the motion, and with other colleagues here in this House who sit on that committee, to hear of very important human rights abuses taking place around the world. Venezuela is one of those issues. I sat in on a session as a member of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights where Ms. Tintori, the wife of the activist and very important democratic leader, Leopoldo López, told us of the suffering of the Venezuelan people. We were all moved by it.

•(1825)

Again, this country, this government, continues to recognize the abuses that are being perpetrated by the Maduro regime, and we are, as I say, actively seized with this important challenge.

Canada will continue to repeatedly speak out and to act, with our partners and neighbours, to ensure that the Americas remain a region that takes very seriously our commitment to democratic governance. We hope, through inclusive and effective dialogue, that Venezuela will accept our offers to help it respect international commitments to democracy and human rights in order to move beyond the current crisis peacefully.

•(1830)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired, and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

CANNABIS ACT

The House resumed from May 30 consideration of the motion that Bill C-45, An Act respecting cannabis and to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code and other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-45, on the legalization of marijuana, addresses findings by various stakeholders over many years. For example, these include the 2002 Nolin report, which calls for the end of criminalization for simple possession, as well as dozens of reports by community groups and provincial and national organizations explaining that the war on cannabis is not working.

I personally support the principles of the bill, such as limiting cannabis possession for an adult or to combat illegal trade. While we may agree with the public safety and security aspects of the bill, I wonder about the public health aspects. This is just one of the major holes in the bill.

In my speech, I will focus on three of them, namely, the government's decision to leave young people with criminal records; the burden placed on the provinces with respect to managing distribution and the handling of impaired driving charges by the courts, and on youth organizations that currently bear the prevention

burden; and the lack of a vision with respect to youth prevention and education.

The Liberals have been making the legalization of cannabis a central theme since March 15, 2015. The leader of the Liberal Party announced at a Vancouver radio station that he wanted to legalize marijuana as soon as possible. He said that we needed to look at the situation south of the border and that having a criminal record has serious consequences for young people. He was right. Indeed, the current legislation has many negative impacts. Over 54,000 people were arrested for simple possession. A great many of them have criminal records. The people most affected by this are of course young people, especially young people from different cultural backgrounds and first nations. This kind of discrimination was no more tolerable in 2015 than it is today.

Now, the leader of the Liberal Party, who has since become the Prime Minister, has changed his tune and is pursuing his policy of leaving thousands of young Canadians with criminal records. I remind the House that once someone is stuck with a criminal record, it is very hard, if not impossible, to get a passport and travel abroad, or even to the U.S., to find a job, to find decent housing, or to volunteer anywhere. When someone has a criminal record, they are stuck with that black mark for the rest of their lives.

The NDP is not proposing to put the brakes on legalization, but rather to learn from the mistakes of the United States, for example, and to adopt what has worked elsewhere, unless the member for Eglinton—Lawrence believes that 17 U.S. states, Australia, Belgium, and Portugal are wrong about decriminalization.

Some organizations, such as Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy, are asking for the immediate decriminalization of cannabis. This would free up our courts and allow us to better address the consequences of the Jordan decision. Above all, it would give certainty to police officers who must enforce the law.

To prevent discrimination and life-long consequences for youth and to help our judicial system, I am asking the government to decriminalize marijuana immediately and to give an amnesty to those with a criminal record for simple possession of cannabis. That is also one of the recommendations of the minister's task force on cannabis legalization.

There is a serious lack of information about public health in the bill and in the document provided by the Department of Justice. According to the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, or INSPQ, the legalization of cannabis and its sale cannot be done for purely commercial purposes. I completely agree. Even if we approve the provisions of Bill C-45 that prohibit false advertising, sponsorship promotion, and the like, there are still too many details missing on other issues. Under clause 139, the matter of plain packaging and displaying information such as the level of THC, the active ingredient in cannabis, will be covered by the regulations, which will be developed after the bill is passed.

However, the government has not given any indication as to what it intends to do. Take, for example, dried products. The Netherlands have imposed a 15% limit on the concentration of THC. Why are the Liberals not setting any limits on the concentration of THC for every product covered by the bill? No limits have been set at all.

Government Orders

●(1835)

Public health organizations such as the INSPQ tell us that concentration levels in several cannabis-related products have increased dramatically in recent years. Why, then, did the government not improve the bill? The task force also told it that the bill lacked teeth in this respect.

A major part of public health is prevention. However, this aspect is missing from the bill. The word prevention literally appears nowhere in Bill C-45, and yet, prevention is mentioned in all the papers I have read and all the conversations with organizations I have consulted. My staff and I spoke with many organizations in Salaberry—Suroît as well as provincial and national organizations. They all talked about the need to know more about the bill, since the information is not getting out, as well as the need for prevention and education funding.

PACT de Rue, an organization involved in street work, is asking for funding to be made available to community groups as well as schools to educate young people who may be between 11 and 17 when they start smoking cannabis for the first time.

The Association québécoise des centres d'intervention en dépendance, which includes Liberté de choisir, an organization in my riding, is calling on the government to reinvest that revenue in prevention and education.

National organizations, such as the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, are sending the same message. Even the working group that the government created made the following recommendation:

Implement as soon as possible a...public education campaign...with an emphasis on youth, parents and vulnerable populations.

It also made this recommendation:

In the period leading up to legalization, and thereafter on an ongoing basis, governments invest effort and resources in developing, implementing and evaluating broad, holistic prevention strategies....

Quebec's minister, Lucie Charlebois, was disappointed in the federal government's announcement:

We need more money to do prevention, to make sure parents have the information they need. How are we supposed to educate people? How are we supposed to prepare parents for this and do awareness programs in schools?

I just want to point out that the government goes on and on about how it wants to set up prevention programs for young people, about how it wants to protect them and stop organized crime in its tracks. That is all well and good, but it is not actually ponying anything up for effective, long-term measures to protect young people.

The Minister of Health announced a whopping \$9.6 million over five years, less than \$2 million per year, or less than 6¢ per Canadian per year for prevention. How is prevention work possible with so little funding? Do we need to dip into federal transfers, even though they do not even meet needs now? That is not a good idea.

Let us look south of the border, as the Liberal Party leader invited us to do in 2015. Colorado is spending over \$45 million per year on prevention and education. That is 30 times more than what is being proposed.

Officials interviewed by the task force advised it to launch prevention campaigns before the official legalization date, supposedly one year from now, if the Liberals are to be believed.

For now, the federal government's message to the provinces is "I am legalizing it, but you figure out how to deal with the public health issues."

I find it is irresponsible of the federal government to recklessly say it is making decisions based on science. Everyone we consulted and the experts in the field are saying that investments in prevention are sorely needed to educate young people about the risks of cannabis use.

However, there is no political will, no vision, or no leadership to carry out a proper prevention campaign.

Even worse, there is not one word about research either. Several reports find that there needs to be more scientific research into the effects of cannabis. The government itself wants to change the regulations but is not contributing the resources to come up with scientific data. However, Canadian society has already accepted the bill and the social change that legalizing cannabis represents.

The University of New Brunswick created a research chair. Will the federal government help them? We do not know.

Deciding to legalize without a prevention, education, or research plan is a major flaw as well as the height of arrogance.

The government says, "It is not a problem. We will keep our promise, and the provinces will foot the bill. Tough luck".

●(1840)

In closing, Bill C-45 introduced by the government deals with the public safety aspect, but not the public health aspect. It legalizes cannabis, the most common drug used by young Quebeckers and young Canadians, but it ignores those who will be arrested over the next year for having a single joint.

We need prevention, not a government that plays sorcerer's apprentice with marijuana legislation. We need research on THC concentrations. We also need revenues to be invested in prevention in the provinces to ensure the future of these programs.

Since I am a former teacher, on a report card, I would give the government a mark of "C-, 45, and I would write "could do better, not reaching its potential".

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary for Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her speech.

I was also a teacher, in professional and technical training for adults. For about 20 years, I worked with this demographic, that is, young people who used cannabis. I gained a certain amount of experience working with these youth, and I can say that this bill does have the goal of preventing young people from accessing cannabis.

When we talk about youth, we have to remember the importance of distinguishing between a minor and a young person who would legally consume marijuana under the new legislation.

Government Orders

How can the member opposite say on the one hand that the bill is well structured, promotes public health, and stands up for kids who have committed a crime, and on the other hand, want to go ahead with decriminalization before the bill even passes?

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, I will ask my colleague the same question: how can the Liberals say they want to protect the health of young people when they cannot invest in prevention?

According to youth centres, organizations working in the area of addiction and, this week, teachers, it just makes no sense. At present, young people believe that cannabis may even be not such a bad thing to consume because the government is going to legalize it. There is no information. There is no money for teachers and people on the front lines and on the ground to conduct public awareness campaigns about the effects of cannabis on health and behaviour, and all the legal aspects. At present, youth who are arrested may wind up with a criminal record, but they might not realize that. The information is unclear.

There have been several studies on the decriminalization of marijuana. Even the minister's task force recommended immediate decriminalization. I am not the only one calling for it. For years, many reports have said that it is important that these youth not have a criminal record because it will follow them for the rest of their lives, affect their work and ability to find housing, to travel, and even to do volunteer work. They cannot do volunteer work if they have a criminal record.

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

I would like to remind her that, during the last campaign, the NDP promised to balance the budget. If the NDP were in office, it could not make any of the investments that my colleague is talking about. It is easy to tell the government to make investments. However, since the NDP said that it was going to balance the budget, it would not have been able to make those investments.

Since I know that my colleague is from Quebec, I would like to remind her of what the Institut national de santé publique du Québec said:

By giving the provinces a leading role in the distribution of the substance, the bill on the legalization of non-medical cannabis introduced today gives Quebec all the latitude it needs to implement a system that would allow people to access safe, high quality cannabis without boosting demand...

Does my colleague think that the Institut national de santé publique du Québec is wrong?

• (1845)

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, I think that the members opposite are in complete denial about what I said in my speech.

What I said was that we agreed with the principles of the bill but that there was a lack of measures to protect young people and to make them aware of the consequences of cannabis use.

I will once again quote Lucie Charlebois, the Quebec minister for rehabilitation, youth protection, public health, and healthy living. She said:

We need more money to do prevention, to make sure parents have the information they need. How are we supposed to educate people? How are we supposed to prepare parents for this and do awareness programs in schools?

I am not the one saying this; it is the Quebec minister. There is a huge lack of vision and not nearly enough investment here. Many organizations have said that we need to invest in prevention, treatment, and major awareness campaigns. Colorado alone invested \$45 million in prevention, while Canada is investing a measly \$2 million a year. This will not work.

In fact, that \$2 million will not be dedicated just to marijuana legalization, but to all issues related to all drugs, including the opioid crisis. That is whole other matter. The Liberals are way off the mark. They need to make massive investments now. They cannot wait until next year, because it will be too late. There will be many problems and young people struggling with addiction, when young people are the ones this bill was supposed to protect.

[*English*]

Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured today to contribute to this debate on Bill C-45, legislation that proposes to legalize, strictly regulate, and restrict access to cannabis. Protecting the health and safety of Canadians is a priority for our government, and the focus of the bill.

Despite decades of criminal prohibition, Canadians, including 21% of our youth, and 30% of young adults, continue to use cannabis. In fact, Canadians use cannabis at some of the highest rates in the world.

As is well known, large quantities of cannabis are grown and sold illegally, profiting criminals and organized crime. This is done with no regard for public health or safety.

[*Translation*]

Too many young Canadians can access cannabis too easily. Young people often find it easier to buy cannabis than cigarettes. This situation cannot go on. Young people run the risk of being exposed to criminals whose only motivation is to maximize their profits.

[*English*]

Simply put, the current approach to cannabis is not working. That is why our government is proposing a public health approach for cannabis legalization and regulation. Our aim is to minimize the harms associated with cannabis use.

Scientific evidence shows that the risks of cannabis are higher for youth than adults, and these risks increase the younger people are when they start using it and the more often they use it. Our objective is to keep cannabis out of the hands of kids, both through the legislation and through early and sustained public education and awareness.

[*Translation*]

Bill C-45 currently before the House is the cornerstone of the government's approach.

Government Orders

[English]

The bill is about protecting our youth and reducing their access to cannabis. It would impose serious criminal penalties for those who provide cannabis to young people or enlist them in committing a cannabis-related offence.

Beyond that, the bill is about creating a legal and regulated market for cannabis, taking profits out of the hands of criminals, and protecting public health through strict product requirements for safety and quality.

Bill C-45 is informed by the recommendations of the task force on cannabis legalization and regulation, which was led last year by the Honourable Anne McLellan. The task force heard from experts in many fields, including health, public safety, justice, and law enforcement, and received more than 30,000 responses from Canadians.

Today, I would like to focus on four key components of our government's approach: protecting youth; education and awareness; product safety and quality controls; and the roles and responsibilities, and implementation.

Let us begin with protecting youth. To reiterate what is already well known, too many young Canadians have easy access to cannabis. During its extensive consultations across the country, the task force on cannabis legalization and regulation heard the same thing: how easy it is for young people to obtain cannabis. Therefore, Bill C-45 is not just about taking action on illegal cannabis markets, which my colleagues will expand on in further detail. It is also about protecting the health of Canadians, and most importantly, the health of young people and children.

● (1850)

[Translation]

Young people are at the heart of the government's strategy to regulate cannabis and restrict access to it for three reasons.

First, there are risks associated with the use of cannabis. Even though some people use it for medical purposes, it can still be harmful to a person's health. Second, young people are particularly vulnerable to the effects of cannabis on the development of the brain and brain function because their brains are still developing. Third, the younger one is at onset of use, and the more one uses, the greater the health threat.

[English]

The combination of these factors is why we seek to restrict youth access to cannabis, to penalize those who sell or give to youth, and to restrict its advertising and promotion.

Specifically, as drafted, the cannabis act would prohibit anyone from selling or providing cannabis to any person under the age of 18, but provinces and territories would have the flexibility to set a higher minimum age should they wish to do so. In addition, the act would create two new criminal offences, with maximum penalties of 14 years in jail for giving or selling cannabis to youth or for using a youth to commit a cannabis-related offence.

The act would also prohibit certain marketing practices. Cannabis businesses would not be allowed to produce or sell products that

appeal to youth, such as gummy bears. In addition, they would not be allowed to use any packaging or labelling that is attractive to youth, including depictions of persons, celebrities, characters, or animals. Also, cannabis could not be sold through self-service displays or vending machines.

The bill proposes a number of restrictions on promotion to protect youth from being persuaded to consume cannabis through marketing or advertising. Promotion would be permitted only when it provides factual information and is communicated in a way that cannot be seen by youth. In addition, false, misleading, or deceptive advertising would be prohibited, as would sponsorship, testimonials, or endorsements, or other forms of promotion or branding that could entice young people to use cannabis.

[Translation]

We are confident that these measures will prevent children and youth from obtaining cannabis. At the same time, adults must have access to clear and objective information in order to make informed decisions about their consumption.

[English]

Therefore, the legislation would permit information-type promotion. This means it would allow factual, accurate information about cannabis products, such as the ingredients and the THC levels. Information that allows consumers to tell the difference between brands would also be permitted. Again, in all cases, these types of promotions would be allowed only where they could not be seen by youth. Penalties for violating these prohibitions would include a fine of up to \$5 million, three years in jail, or both.

When it comes to enforcement, the bill seeks to avoid criminalizing youth and subjecting them to the lifelong consequences of a criminal record. To this end, I should note three points. First, individuals under the age of 18 would not face criminal prosecution for possessing or sharing very small amounts of cannabis, up to five grams. Second, violations of the proposed legislation by youth would be subject to the Youth Criminal Justice Act and addressed in the youth justice system, and third, provinces and territories would have the flexibility to prohibit the possession of any amount of cannabis by youth, thereby permitting police to seize any cannabis a youth has in their possession.

[Translation]

I will move on to education and public awareness. We know that Canadians need information about cannabis. We have to talk about it with our children, make informed and responsible decisions, and ensure that our roads are safe. That was the very clear message that our government heard thanks to the working group's consultations. We have a plan to address the situation.

Government Orders

•(1855)

[*English*]

We are also hearing from the experience of jurisdictions in the United States, whose officials told us that it is important to communicate early and to communicate often about the risks of cannabis consumption. One of the challenges we face when it comes to protecting youth is that they are less likely than adults to see cannabis use as a significant risk to health.

[*Translation*]

To that end, our government is investing in robust measures to make sure all Canadians, especially young people, are aware of the risks associated with cannabis use.

[*English*]

In budget 2017, our government committed \$9.6 million to a public education and awareness campaign to inform Canadians, particularly young people, of the risks of cannabis use, as well as to fund surveillance activities. This campaign has begun and will continue over the next years. In collaboration with the provinces and territories, the campaign will raise public awareness about the risks associated with cannabis use and monitor the impacts of providing strictly controlled access.

It will also monitor patterns and perceptions of cannabis use among Canadians, especially, youth. To do this, we have launched the Canadian cannabis survey to gather information on the rates and patterns of cannabis use, as well as perceptions about cannabis. This annual survey includes detailed questions on how often and how much Canadians use cannabis, how they acquire it, and whether they consume it with other substances or before driving.

[*Translation*]

In addition to monitoring and measuring the impact of legislative measures, the survey will enable us to orient and better target our public education activities and to reduce the risks associated with cannabis use.

I will now talk about product safety and quality requirements.

Bill C-45 would permit adults 18 years or older to legally possess up to 30 grams of legal dried cannabis in public, or its equivalent in other forms.

[*English*]

Adults would also be able to legally access cannabis through various mechanisms. Primarily, they could purchase it from a provincially licensed retailer or could grow it themselves at home. Sharing of cannabis would be limited to no more than 30 grams of dried cannabis or its equivalent, and personal cultivation would be limited to no more than four plants per residence, each with a maximum height of 100 cm.

To deter criminal activity and protect the health and safety of Canadians, our government is committed to ensuring that there is a safe and legal controlled supply of cannabis available for sale when the act comes into force. Under the proposed legislation and regulations, our government would establish industry-wide rules on the types of products that would be allowed for sale, standardized serving sizes, and potency. We would also have rules on the use of

certain ingredients and good production practices, as well as the tracking of cannabis from seed to sale to prevent diversion to the illicit market.

Canada already has experience with product safety and quality requirements for cannabis. Our current system, which provides access to cannabis for medical purposes, is recognized as one of the best in the world. It includes a number of safety and security features, such as frequent inspections of production facilities and clear regulations around pesticide use.

[*Translation*]

We will be using the authorized production system in place as the plan of action to control cannabis production under the proposed cannabis legislation.

While on this topic, I would like to say a few words about the Canadian medical marijuana system. This system will continue to exist when bill C-45 goes into effect, subject to parliamentary approval.

[*English*]

This was recommended by the task force to ensure access to cannabis for individuals who have the authorization of their health care practitioners. The task force also recommended that the government monitor and evaluate patients' reasonable access to cannabis for medical purposes during the implementation of the new law and that it evaluate that framework within five years. We intend to do that.

Health Canada has introduced changes to its program overseeing the medical cannabis industry to accelerate the licensing of producers to enable the industry to meet the increased demand for cannabis.

The existing rules surrounding product safety, good product practices, and restrictions on which pesticides can be used will remain in place. Health Canada will continue to inspect producers and enforce the regime. This will ensure that production is safe and quality controlled.

•(1900)

[*Translation*]

Finally, I would like to talk a little about the roles and responsibilities with respect to Bill C-45 and its implementation.

As I already mentioned, the proposed cannabis law would establish a rigorous national framework to limit the production, distribution, sale, and possession of cannabis in Canada.

[*English*]

All levels of government in Canada would be able to establish requirements with respect to cannabis, consistent with their jurisdictional authorities and experience. Again, this follows the advice of the task force.

Under the proposed cannabis act, the federal government would be responsible for establishing and maintaining a comprehensive and consistent national framework to regulate production, set standards for health and safety, and establish criminal prohibitions.

Government Orders

The provinces and territories would license and oversee the distribution and sale of cannabis. Together with municipalities, they could tailor certain rules in their own jurisdictions and enforce them through a range of tools. These rules could include setting additional regulatory requirements to address issues of local concern, such as prohibiting the consumption of cannabis in public or setting zoning requirements for where cannabis businesses could be located.

Active involvement of provincial and territorial governments by, for example, setting strong retail rules to prevent cannabis from being sold to young people, will be critical to ensure that young people do not have access to cannabis.

[*Translation*]

Earlier, I mentioned that our government's budget 2017 included a \$9.6 million investment over five years for a comprehensive public awareness and information campaign as well as monitoring activities.

As health is a responsibility shared by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, the provinces and territories can complement federal public health programs.

This could include managing health and public safety issues, as well as providing public awareness activities and counselling in schools.

Our government is committed to continuing to work with the provinces and territories to address this complex issue.

[*English*]

When it comes to the implementation of Bill C-45, I should note that cannabis for non-medical purposes will remain illegal as the bill moves through the legislative process. Currently, it is illegal to buy, sell, produce, import, or export cannabis unless it is authorized under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and its regulations, such as the Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulations.

Subject to approval by Parliament, the government intends to bring the proposed cannabis act into force no later than July 2018. Under the proposed act, possession, production, distribution, and sale outside the legal system would remain illegal and be subject to criminal penalties proportionate to the seriousness of the offence. These could range from ticketing up to a maximum penalty of 14 years' imprisonment.

[*Translation*]

In the weeks and months to come, our government will be working with those who share with us the responsibility for the legalization and regulation of cannabis. In particular, we will be working with provincial and territorial governments, municipalities, and our partners in indigenous communities.

[*English*]

To conclude, I would like to reiterate that Bill C-45 uses a public health approach to strictly regulate and restrict access to cannabis. Our focus will remain on protecting youth, on educating the public and raising awareness, on ensuring product safety and quality requirements, and on establishing clear roles and responsibilities.

Our government is confident that the proposed cannabis act will protect the health and safety of all Canadians.

Based on these points, I call on my colleagues to support Bill C-45 at second reading so that it can be considered by the Standing Committee on Health.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since this legislation was first introduced, I have had some unease about a number of areas.

About three days ago, the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* published an article entitled "Cannabis legislation fails to protect Canada's youth". This is a professional organization to which the minister would probably belong. I am sure she must be aware of what it is saying.

The article states, "The purported purpose of the act is to protect health and safety, yet some of the act's provisions appear starkly at odds with this objective, particularly for Canada's youth." That is a pretty strong statement from the experts.

They go on to talk about the areas of concern, first and foremost being age. The brain is still developing at the age of 18, so age is a significant concern. Being able to grow it in one's home, with the issue of quantity and quality and toxicity, is a concern. The organization has a number of areas of concern.

I would like the minister to perhaps respond to her association and tell it why it is wrong in terms of its concerns about her proposed legislation.

● (1905)

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the report that came out from the Canadian Medical Association, and I have had the opportunity to discuss that with the leadership of the organization.

As the member said, there are concerns about the potential harms associated with cannabis, particularly for young people, and I alluded to those issues in my speech.

I know that the member is aware, and also the Canadian Medical Association is aware, that Canadian young people have among the highest rates of cannabis use in the world, particularly the age group between age 20 and 24. Thirty per cent of young people in that age group use cannabis. This is a rather high rate.

The reality is that when a product becomes legal, that is not to say that it is without risks. We recognize that there are risks associated with cannabis use. There are many products that are legal that are not without risks, and the best examples are, of course, tobacco and alcohol. I wonder if the member is proposing that perhaps we should make tobacco consumption illegal. Of course, I would think that is not her perspective, because we know that criminal prohibitions are not the way to address public health issues.

We know that criminalization of a product is not how to do it. It needs to be done with a public health approach to minimize the harms associated with it.

Government Orders

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on one hand, the Liberals have acknowledged many times the harms that come from the continued criminalization of cannabis, particularly as it affects small possession charges. These affect our youth and racialized Canadians, and the Liberals have admitted that it clogs up our justice system. On the other hand, the Liberals say that we just need to wait another year, because it is still illegal and that will continue to happen. However, I want to leave that aside for a moment.

What I want to ask the Minister of Health is specifically on the issue of pardons. Pardons cost \$631. That is a lot of money for people on the margins of society to clear their names and move their lives forward, which is something I think everyone in the House wants to encourage. I want to know from the Minister of Health if her government is going to consider amnesty for people who were previously convicted for possession of small amounts of marijuana, yes or no. I think the House, and Canadians, deserve an answer on that.

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his concern with respect to the criminalization of young people. As I mentioned in my speech, and as we have heard in the House before, that is one of our concerns as well. However, it is important that we take a proper approach, a thorough and thoughtful approach. Decriminalization would not in fact address our policy objectives here, which are to keep cannabis out of the hands of kids and to keep the profits out of the hands of criminals. We are proceeding in a thoughtful manner in doing this, along the advice of the task force, and are making sure there would be a regime that would strictly regulate access.

In terms of his question about pardons, it would be premature to discuss that. I encourage him to continue to support the bill, to make sure we proceed in an orderly manner, and to know that the law is the law, unless the law changes.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member referenced the age limit being 18 and talked about the need for education. I can appreciate that there certainly is that need. However, I disagree with the legal age being 18. I think the scientific and medical evidence shows otherwise. Nevertheless, there is a need for education.

The government has provided \$9.6 million. However, it is worth noting that this is over five years, which is very little per year. It is also worth noting that this money is not made available to implement education before this legislation comes into effect on July 1, 2018.

Given that fact, it would seem that marijuana is being put into the hands of our young people before there has ever been any sort of public education initiative with regard to the health impacts of marijuana. Why is that? Why are we not putting the well-being of our young people first and foremost and making sure there is education readily available to them before making marijuana readily available?

• (1910)

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question and for her support of public education as part of a public health approach to substance use. In fact, we have lots of good evidence from other substances of how important public health

education is. We look at something like tobacco use. There used to be extremely high rates of tobacco use, and they are now much lower because of public education.

As she acknowledged, we have put \$9.6 million in the budget to advance public education. We have already begun our campaigns of public education, and those will continue to advance. We will continue to resource this over time and continue to make sure we do so. I have to acknowledge as well that the federal government is not the only partner in the business of public education. Of course, we are working with our provincial and territorial colleagues. We are working with ministers of education at other levels of government as well and with municipalities. This will require all levels of government, and in fact all levels of society, to work together.

I can assure the member that we will work in concert with the Public Health Agency of Canada and other federal partners to enhance education.

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by not only thanking the minister for her speech but for her extraordinary leadership on this file, and so many other matters of government. She brings a wealth of experience but also values that have enhanced the government's approach.

I reflected, as I listened to the questions and earlier comments by the members opposite, about this concern and suggestion that we should prohibit anyone under the age of 25 from having legal access to this regulated substance. I reflected on my life before I was 25. Before I was 25, I was married. I was the father of two kids by then. I owned a house. I had a mortgage. I was a cop. I carried a gun. I was entrusted with all the powers of a police officer, including the authority to restrict a person's liberty and to use force, perhaps even deadly force. I could buy a drink, and I could smoke a cigarette. That was how I was trusted, yet the members opposite suggest that Canadians between the ages of 18 and 25, who are adults, could not be trusted to make an informed choice about their own health.

Therefore, I would like to ask the minister if she could reflect on the public health lens she has advocated for and brought forward to this important bill.

Hon. Jane Philpott: Mr. Speaker, I must return gratitude to the member for his tremendous work on this file. He has been going across this country to talk to people about this issue, and we are indebted to him for his work.

This is a conversation that I have had with him in the past about the approach, particularly for young adults. They are such an important group when we are thinking about the work of this bill. I would remind him again about something like tobacco. There is no young person in this country who should consume tobacco. Yesterday was World No Tobacco Day. We know that it will kill one in two regular users of tobacco, but there is no one proposing that we criminalize the use of tobacco by young adults.

Government Orders

We know that a public health approach means to maximize education and minimize harm. As the member indicated, adults are mature people who are able to take risks into consideration. We know that as they become educated on who may or may not be more at risk for use of cannabis, in fact they will make informed decisions, and they will be able to make those decisions in a way that will reduce and minimize the harms associated with these substances.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak on Bill C-45, the government's legislation to legalize marijuana. Without more, Bill C-45 raises more questions than answers. The government has yet to explain how legalization is going to make it safe for our kids, safe for motorists, and frankly safe for all Canadians.

One of the arguments that the government has put forward is that somehow the legalization of marijuana is going to keep it out of the hands of our kids. Let us think about that for a minute. The government wants to keep marijuana out of the hands of our kids. So far so good. I think any decent reasonable Canadian would want to keep marijuana out of the hands of our kids. Therefore, what is it proposing to do? It is proposing to legalize marijuana, normalize marijuana, to see the proliferation of marijuana everywhere. That is somehow going to keep it out of the hands of our kids. It seems to be a whole lot of hazy logic to come up with the assessment that somehow legalizing marijuana is going to keep it out of the hands of our kids. One need only look at the state of Colorado to see that legalizing marijuana does not keep it out of the hands of our kids. On the contrary, it has the exact opposite effect.

Let us look at some of the numbers from the state of Colorado. Before legalization, Colorado youth ranked 14th in the U.S. for marijuana use. After legalization, Colorado youth ranked number one in the U.S. for the use of marijuana. Before legalization, the usage of marijuana among Colorado youth was 39% above the U.S. national average. After legalization, that number skyrocketed to 74% above the U.S. national average. In the two years following the legalization of marijuana in the state of Colorado, overall usage among youth increased by 20%. By contrast, over the same two-year period, usage among youth in the U.S. declined by 4%. Those are some of the statistics. They are clear, unambiguous, out in the open, and available to the government. For a government that talks so much about evidence and evidence-based decision-making, let me say that on the question of the legalization of marijuana, the evidence on keeping it out of the hands of our kids is clear: it does not keep it out of the hands of our kids. It provides it, and increases the likelihood of our youth accessing and using marijuana. Those are the facts.

When one looks at some of the measures in Bill C-45 that the government is proposing to supposedly keep marijuana out of the hands of our kids, one of the things in the bill is a provision that provides that youth—in other words, Canadians between the ages of 12 and 18—are prohibited from possessing more than five grams of marijuana. What happens if someone 12 to 18 possesses four grams of marijuana, three grams of marijuana, two grams of marijuana, or one gram of marijuana? The fact is that right now, if a police officer found a grade six kid, an elementary student who is 12 years old, with five grams of marijuana, which is the equivalent of 10 joints, by the way, the police officer could confiscate the marijuana. However, Bill C-45 would change that. A police officer might not be able to do

anything about it, because that grade six student, that 12-year-old with five grams of marijuana, would be within the full confines of the law.

• (1915)

In fairness, the government would say that the provinces will step in and legislate on this. That is true. It is potentially true. We do not know yet whether the provinces will or will not do that. Nonetheless, it can hardly be said that this is a step in the direction of keeping marijuana out of the hands of our youth.

Then, there is the issue of homegrown marijuana. Under this legislation, it provides that any residence in Canada of someone who is 18 years of age or older can have up to four marijuana plants in the residence. Now, I do not know if it occurred to anyone in the government, but just about every youth in Canada, everyone under the age of 18, lives in a residence with someone over the age of 18. Who would have thought of that?

It maybe did not occur to the government that someone who is under the age of 18, with marijuana growing in their house, might actually try to gain access to that marijuana. Who would think that? I cannot think of an easier way for youth to access marijuana than homegrown marijuana—marijuana growing in their own home.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I guess we are getting very excited, very defensive over there, but we know that this legislation is not keeping marijuana out of the hands of our youth. Those two measures, on their face, do exactly the opposite. Speaking of homegrown marijuana, it certainly is inconsistent with the alleged objective of the bill to keep marijuana out of the hands of our youth. It is also inconsistent with other aspects of Bill C-45.

One of the other objectives of Bill C-45 is to control and regulate the production, sale, and distribution of marijuana. What would homegrown marijuana mean in the context of controlling and regulating the production, sale, and distribution of marijuana? What it would mean is that it would increase the risk of diversion to the black market. It would make it all but impossible to enforce quality and potency controls. It would make it very difficult for law enforcement to enforce against diversion and overproduction. It would result in hazards, like fire hazards. It is perhaps obvious to everyone except the members of the government that it would make it a whole lot easier for kids to access marijuana.

It is no wonder that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police have come out strongly against homegrown marijuana. It is no wonder that this past week an article in the Canadian Medical Association Journal slammed the government for Bill C-45 for, among other reasons, homegrown marijuana. Homegrown marijuana makes Canadians less safe. It puts vulnerable Canadians and youth at risk. It creates an enforcement nightmare for the police.

One of the things we hear a lot about from the government in terms of Bill C-45 is the assertion that it is taking a public health approach to marijuana. The marijuana task force recommended what it characterized as a public health approach to the legalization of marijuana.

Government Orders

• (1920)

One of the reasons the marijuana task force recommended taking a public health approach is that it recognized there are serious risks involved with the use of marijuana, particularly among youth and vulnerable Canadians. In addition, the marijuana task force also noted that there was a lot of misinformation out there about the use of marijuana, particularly among young people. On that basis, one of the recommendations of the marijuana task force was for the government to move forward with an immediate and sustained education campaign. The marijuana task force recommendations were issued at the end of last year. It is now June 1, six months later, and I ask the government, where is the campaign? Where is the public education campaign? It is nowhere to be seen. If there is a campaign, it is a pretty bad one.

The Minister of Health stood up in her place just minutes ago and bragged about \$9.6 million toward an awareness campaign that is invisible. It is \$9.6 million over five years. That is less than \$2 million each year. When one contrasts that with Colorado, the State of Colorado spent tens of millions of dollars on public education and awareness. It goes to show that when it comes to a so-called public health approach from the current government, it is nothing more than smoke and mirrors.

An hon. member: Is there a fire alarm going off?

Mr. Michael Cooper: I know there is a lot of smoke, Mr. Speaker. Another major issue arising from the legalization of marijuana—

An hon. member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, these guys think it is so funny, all of these issues. I will tell them something that is not funny. It is called “drug-impaired driving”. That is going to be one of the biggest consequences of the legalization of marijuana.

We know that with legalization, more and more Canadians will use marijuana. If in doubt, one can look to the state of Colorado where, in the two years following the legalization of marijuana, usage of marijuana among adults increased by some 20%. We know that marijuana is going to be used more widely, and that is going to mean more people are going to get behind the wheel drug impaired. In the state of Colorado, the percentage of motor vehicle deaths involving drug impairment increased by a staggering 62% in the year following legalization. Therefore, legalization would mean more injuries, more deaths, and more carnage on our roads.

In the face of that, law enforcement faces a number of challenges. Among the challenges that law enforcement agencies face is detecting individuals on the road who are drug impaired. Bill C-46 would try to deal with that by providing that police officers who have a reasonable suspicion that someone is drug impaired could require a motorist to take a roadside screening test. It would be an oral saliva test that would test for THC.

• (1925)

There are significant questions about whether the test would be reliable and scientific. There are a whole lot of questions about whether police officers would be able to effectively stop someone and test for drug impairment, even though the government is moving full steam ahead with this legislation, for which we are going to see

many more people on our roads who are drug impaired. In addition to that, obviously police departments across Canada have to get police officers trained to detect drug impairment. That is complicated. It is a lot more complicated than detecting alcohol.

The number of drug recognition experts in Canada is around 600, according to the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse and Addiction. The capacity required in the face of the government's legislation, which again the Liberals are moving full steam ahead with in a year, is around 2,000. There is a lot of work for law enforcement to do. On those two issues, police departments across Canada have to acquire new roadside screening devices, and they have to train police officers to detect drug impairment. Training, by the way, costs on average about \$20,000. We are talking about significant costs.

What is the government doing to help police departments across Canada get the equipment and get police officers trained? The answer to that is zero, zip, nada, nothing. I see that as an abdication of leadership, and it is the absence of a plan from the government. Indeed, about the only plan that the government seems to have is that July 1, 2018 date. It is an arbitrary timeline, a rushed timeline. It is a problematic timeline given the amount of work, the amount of planning that is involved in terms of implementation and enforcement of this legislation.

The costs to the provinces and municipalities are going to be significant, and we see no commitment at this time from the government to work with the provinces to help them move forward with the costs of implementation and enforcement. Instead, the government members would just like to take political credit, to say they actually kept an election promise. Imagine that. Now that they can pat themselves on the back and take credit for keeping at least one election promise, provinces and municipalities will bear all the costs, do all the hard work, and the Liberals will wash their hands of it. That is just unacceptable. It is why we heard so many concerns raised by the provinces and municipalities.

We say in closing that what we have from the government is a lack of a plan. At the end of the day, if this legislation is passed, it is going to mean that our kids are going to be less safe, motorists are going to be less safe. Frankly, all Canadians are going to be less safe, and it why this legislation needs to be defeated out of hand.

• (1930)

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for his hard work on the justice committee. He always brings a very important perspective and energy to that work, for which we are grateful. As he was talking, particularly about some of the impaired statistics that he referenced from Colorado, I was reminded of the tendency of some people to use statistics much as a drunk uses a lamppost, far more for support than illumination.

Government Orders

As an example, the member suggested that in the year following the legalization, without regulation of cannabis in Colorado by the way, there was a significant increase, 62%, in the detection of impaired drivers. I would simply remind him that the year before that he is comparing that to, there was no technology or training available to the police in that jurisdiction to detect that substance. We saw that when they were given the ability to detect—as we dealt with in part yesterday as we discussed and passed Bill C-46 for second reading—and when we give law enforcement the tools, the technology, and the training they need to detect this, they will be far more effective in its reduction.

I would also point out that in that same period of time since the legalization of cannabis in Colorado, and this is a correlation and not necessarily a causative relationship, we have seen overall impaired driving drop by more than 50%. We have seen a 10% reduction in crime overall, and a 5% reduction in violent crime in that jurisdiction.

I wonder, in reflection of the fact that when we give the police the tools they will actually be able to detect this offence—and that is the work we have been doing—if the member might agree that we are at least on the right path in that aspect of maintaining public safety.

• (1935)

Mr. Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice for his hard work on a very complex file. He has shown leadership in a lot of respects on this matter. However, I have to say that I was struck by his comments about giving law enforcement the tools and technology. That is part of the problem. We do not know if the right tools are in place, or if they are reliable and have been scientifically tested and approved to be used today. Even if there are such tools, what is lacking is a commitment from the government to help law enforcement get those tools in time for July 1, 2018.

With respect to some of the statistics that he referred to in the state of Colorado, the fact is that there has been carnage on Colorado's roads. There has certainly been a significant increase in marijuana use among youth. For a government that talks so much about taking a public health approach, that should be very concerning, and for a government that talks about taking an evidence-based approach, that should also be very concerning. When one looks at what the Canadian Medical Association or the Canadian Paediatric Society have found, their opinion is that marijuana use among those under the age of 25 impairs brain development. If the government is serious about public health and says its approach is based on public health, then it should take heed of the very troubling statistics in the state of Colorado, which has seen a proliferation in the use of marijuana among youth.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I certainly enjoy serving on the justice committee with my Conservative colleague.

In his speech, the member touched on the fact that a person 18 years of age or older who distributes to a younger person could be liable, on an indictable offence, to a term of imprisonment for 14 years or, on summary conviction, a \$5,000 fine or six months in prison. There are 17-year-olds and 18-year-olds in the same household, and if marijuana is in the household, we do not want

those people to be inadvertently caught in these harsh punishments. That is something the government has to take note of.

In his speech, the member also touched on the ability of youth to have up to five grams of marijuana. In the government's briefing document, it states that this would prevent youth from entering the criminal justice system for possessing or distributing small amounts. It still allows for a ticketable offence and for police to seize it. I have talked to Conservative colleagues, and a lot of them seem to be in favour of ticketable offences. I am wondering if the member would agree that it would be in society's interest to prevent youth between the ages of 12 and 17 from having to go through the criminal justice system, while still allowing police to have the power to seize the marijuana and also issue a ticket if necessary. Would he not agree that is a somewhat better approach than using the criminal justice system, which can have far-reaching consequences for youth far into the future?

Mr. Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford raised the point about 18-year-olds getting caught up with very serious charges, and the possibility of serious penalties, including extended periods of imprisonment. He touches on a reasonable point, which speaks to a broader point. When we look at Bill C-45, there is a whole lot of arbitrary cut-offs in the legislation when it comes to those who are 18 versus 17, or 12 versus 11. He is absolutely right in raising that as a point of concern.

With respect to the issue of making it a ticketable offence, I am in agreement with the hon. member that this is something that needs to be carefully looked at. In fact, it is the position of the Conservative Party that we should not move toward legalization but decriminalization, with a ticketing regime for small amounts of marijuana. I cannot speak for everyone, but I think the vast majority of members in the House and the vast majority of Canadians would agree that 17-year-olds or 16-year-olds or 20-year-olds should not be going to jail, and should not have criminal records potentially for the rest of their lives, or an extended period of time, because they were caught with a small amount of marijuana.

• (1940)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague across the way. I know he is an articulate guy, but I have not heard him say a single positive thing even though we have plenty of positive solutions.

Earlier, you said—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Yves Robillard: Let me finish. People were talking earlier about communication. We have a program in the works. I have a suggestion for you as a former professor. We need to reach out to our Quebec professors too.

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is not supposed to address other people directly. I think the tension will rise pretty quickly if this keeps happening.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker: That is a very good point. If the hon. member could address the Chair, that would be great.

Government Orders

Mr. Yves Robillard: Mr. Speaker, they have to give us this one. I was in teaching for 16 years, so I did a lot of communications. If I went back to teaching, I would invite professors not just from Quebec but from all over Canada to get involved and put the information out there. We would see that young people are not that crazy after all.

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Cooper: Mr. Speaker, the member talked about a public education campaign that he said was coming online. I think that is what he said.

The marijuana task force did not talk about a campaign that should come online sometime, somewhere, at some point in the future. Rather, what the marijuana task force recommended was an immediate and sustained education campaign on the very serious risks involved in the use of marijuana, particularly for youth, as well as on the misinformation that is out there, again particularly among youth, with respect to the use of marijuana. That is something the government has failed to do.

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to talk about Bill C-45. Before I begin, I would like to let you know I will be splitting my time with the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

I am thrilled to speak about this piece of legislation, because I had the opportunity in March to invite the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and member for Scarborough Southwest to my riding, to the wonderful town of Whitby. I would like to thank him for his dedication to this file, for coming to speak to community groups, and especially for coming to Whitby.

When he came to Whitby in March, he had the opportunity to have a round table with various individuals in our community. There were mayors and councillors from Whitby and the Durham region. There were police, fire, EMS, bylaw enforcement officers, health organizations and departments, mental health professionals, nurses, and individuals from Durham College and UOIT, which is the university in Durham region.

During that round table they had a number of questions, which I highlighted and which we indicated that with the tabling of the legislation should be answered. I want to answer seven of those questions today in my speech, but I also want to speak to the parents in Whitby. Whitby is a bedroom community and there are a lot of families within Whitby, and I would like to speak to the parents because I am a parent myself.

The first question they asked was about resources to the municipalities and how they would be compensated for security, safety, and building resilience. I want to let my colleagues within Whitby and the Durham region know that we will be investing additional resources to make sure there is capacity within Health Canada, the RCMP, the CBSA, and the Department of Public Health and Emergency Preparedness to license, inspect, and enforce all aspects of the proposed legislation. Some might be saying, “That’s not municipalities, Celina.” I understand. I will get there.

The task force recommended that we work with provincial and territorial governments to determine a tax regime that includes equitable distribution of revenues. The bill provides legislation and authority via the various acts, but the government is committed to ensuring that law enforcement and our courts have the legislation, technology, training, and resources required to keep our roadways and communities safe. We have committed to invest the revenue into research, prevention, public education, treatment, and rehabilitation. I think that addresses some of the concerns we have in terms of our municipalities getting the resources.

The second question was around effectively enforcing the four-plant rule. The legislation would allow the municipalities to set conditions as to where and how cannabis can be grown within their jurisdiction. Whitby, as I mentioned, is a bedroom community. It is different from other communities, and not all communities are the same. It is a growing community. Therefore, giving the municipality the capacity to determine where and how cannabis can be grown is an important part of this piece of legislation.

The third question asks about the resources for public education for cannabis. We heard some of that debate here in the House. I would like to quote the Minister of Health.

She said yesterday and in her speech again today that our emphasis is on a public health approach to the introduction of the legalization of cannabis, and it is based on a strict regulatory regime. A public health approach means that we are sure to maximize education and minimize harm. Our government is committed to having a broad public education campaign for Canadians of all ages to the proposed legislation, including the penalties for providing cannabis to youth and the risks involved with consuming cannabis. We have committed \$9.6 million in budget 2017 over five years, with \$1 million per year in ongoing support of public education. The campaign will be focused on helping young Canadians to make the best choices for their future and to understand the risks and consequences of cannabis.

● (1945)

I would also like to quote the parliamentary secretary, who said, “Under decriminalization, cannabis remains unregulated and this means that users know little or nothing about the potency or the quality. ... As long as cannabis use is illegal, it is difficult [and often impossible] for health care or educational professionals to effectively address and prevent problematic use.”

This speaks to the task force recommendation for a comprehensive public education campaign. We have learned lessons from Colorado and from Washington, where their education campaigns used the revenues from cannabis to support that education campaign, and it happened too late. We are following the recommendations, and while I agree that we could have a more robust campaign, we are committed to public education.

Government Orders

The fourth question related to the additional revenues from cannabis going to treatment facilities. The Prime Minister has said that cash that flows to the public coffers from cannabis taxation should go to treatment of addiction, mental health support, and education programs, and not to general revenues. As a very strong advocate for mental health, I am particularly pleased with this approach, because we know that there is a slippery slope between mental health and addiction, and it is important to ensure that we are looking at treatment.

The fifth question was around setting the age at 18. I am a mom of an 18-year-old, as well as a 13-year-old and a nine-year-old, for that matter. Earlier this week, I had the opportunity to go back to Whitby and help my daughter get ready for her prom. It was a great moment, and I want to say congratulations to all the students across the country who are graduating, but in particular to the ones from All Saints in Whitby who attended prom with my daughter. Also, this weekend is the Brooklin Spring Fair, and while, like many others, I would be at the fair with my family during the day, many of our young people tend to go to the fair at night. The message that I have to my daughter and to all young people is not to use drugs.

I say so because currently it is untested, unregulated, and potentially unsafe. We would be naive to think that if we said, "Don't use drugs", our kids would not use them, because we know that in Canada a high percentage of 18- to 24-year-olds use cannabis. In fact, it is 30% of the population. We want to make sure that when we are talking about 18-year-olds or above using cannabis, we understand that these individuals have reached the age of majority. They can vote. They can join the military. My daughter, in a couple of months, is going to be flying to England to go to school, and she will be living on her own. They have the capacity to make choices.

We are not encouraging the use of cannabis; we are saying that well-informed adults have the ability to make a decision on their own.

The sixth question was about data collection and surveillance. We have learned from Colorado's experience to establish good baseline data. The bill would permit the establishment of a cannabis tracking system. The minister spoke about surveys that would be going out, so there is that investment in research.

Last, what did we learn from other jurisdictions? Number one, we learned that we should take a public health approach and not a commercialization approach to cannabis. We have looked at making sure that we limit our young people's access to promotion of cannabis. We saw a couple of days ago that a young girl in Fredericton drank vaping fluid that was in a package that had rainbows on it. That would not be allowed with this legislation. Our public health approach is directed entirely at reducing both the social harms and the health harms.

As a parent, I firmly support this piece of legislation and I am thankful to the parliamentary secretary, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Justice for putting forward this piece of legislation.

● (1950)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member mentioned being a parent.

As a parent, then, if one of her children had a criminal record because of marijuana use, because of simple possession of marijuana, does she think she would have appreciated the government including pardons for offences that will cease to be?

[*English*]

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes: Mr. Speaker, what I do teach my children is to follow the law.

Right now, cannabis remains illegal. It is illegal to buy, to sell, to produce, to import, to export. The current laws remain in force. As a parent, I tell my daughter, who as I have mentioned is 18, not to use drugs. There will be a responsibility on her, if she were to break that rule.

I am not naive with my children. I am not going to give them a free pass to break the rules or break the law. The law is the law, and they should follow it. As a parent, I expect that from my children.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, I will rephrase my question.

Of course, as parents, we all teach our children to obey the law. However, many young people have a criminal record because of an offence that will soon no longer be an offence.

I think it would have been better if the bill had solved this issue immediately. What is to be done with the criminal records of people arrested for simple possession of marijuana? The bill could have included provisions to wipe out these criminal records immediately. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

Does my colleague think that this issue should have been resolved instead of leaving it hanging? Ultimately, thousands of people will have to apply for a pardon, since this offence will soon no longer be an offence.

● (1955)

[*English*]

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes: Mr. Speaker, the simple answer to that is no. It would be premature for us to have introduced decriminalization along with the legislation.

The legislation is in place to strictly regulate the use of cannabis, to get the profits out of the hands of criminals, and to reduce the impacts to our children and our communities. We introduced a couple of pieces of legislation, one that will legalize and one that will make enforcement of our laws, especially with driving, a lot more comprehensive.

I do not think we should have decriminalized at the same time as we introduced the legislation.

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member not only for her speech but for one of the best experiences, quite frankly, I had while involved in the development of legislation and travelling across the country, which was the opportunity I was given when I received an invitation from the member to attend a round table she had organized.

Government Orders

At that round table, there were senior elected officials from the municipality, representatives of the police service, fire service, and public health, people who were involved in problematic substance use, and people who were involved in working with children and delivering services in their community.

For me, it was an extraordinarily good learning opportunity. It was also a great reminder about the important role that local officials will have in making sure that this works. I want to share with the House that at that meeting, what we encountered, as I had right across the country, was an overwhelming consensus that the current system is failing our kids and we must do a better job of protecting them, that it was completely unacceptable to leave this business in the hands of organized crime, which causes so much violence and victimization in our communities, and, finally, that we had a responsibility to protect the health of our citizens.

Upon reflection of that experience and her involvement in her community, does the member have any other advice for the government on how we might strengthen that relationship in working with local officials?

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague again for his work on this file, and in particular for coming to Whitby and talking to our municipal leaders.

We have taken a comprehensive approach to the legalization of marijuana with Bill C-45 and also with Bill C-46 to ensure that our communities are safe, to ensure that drugs stay out of the hands of children, to ensure that the packaging is done in a way that does not promote the use of marijuana, and to ensure that it becomes illegal to sell or use children to sell or promote the use of cannabis.

Having the community involved in this discussion and present questions is critically important. I thank the parliamentary secretary for his duty in doing so.

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise and speak today in support of Bill C-45, the cannabis act. I want to explain that the objectives of this act are to put in place a national system that better protects our young Canadians, keeps profits out of the hands of criminals and organized crime, and where responsible adults will have controlled access to a strictly regulated source of cannabis.

Before I go on, I want to explain some of the options that we previously had. They were the status quo, which we know does not work; the Peter MacKay approach, where he wanted to ticket people until former prime minister Stephen Harper ticketed him for even saying so in public; or the advertising economic action plan approach, which does a lot of advertising with very little benefit to society.

We chose a different approach and a key feature of Bill C-45 is to protect youth and public health by restricting the advertising and promotion of cannabis.

[*Translation*]

Our government knows that there are very real health risks associated with cannabis consumption. Scientific data do not lie. Those risks increase considerably when cannabis consumption begins in early adolescence. For instance, research shows that the brain does not fully develop until the age of about 25. Young people

are particularly vulnerable to the effects of cannabis on brain development and brain function. THC affects the biological mechanisms of the brain that allow it to develop.

● (2000)

[*English*]

Canadian youth have one of the highest rates of cannabis use in the world. In 2015, 21% of youth aged 15 to 19 reported using cannabis in the past year. Given the high rates of cannabis use among young Canadians today, protecting youth and minimizing harm are paramount objectives for government, along with keeping profits out of the hands of criminals and organized crime. This is a key reason why our government has committed to legalizing, strictly regulating, and restricting access to cannabis in partnership with the provinces and territories with the goal of keeping it out of the hands of Canadian youth.

[*Translation*]

I would like to point out that young people often find it easier to buy cannabis than cigarettes. I remember this well, for it was not all that long ago that I was young. We believe that creating a strong regulatory framework based on the lessons we have learned from regulating tobacco and alcohol will lead to better results, particularly regarding our children.

[*English*]

In particular, the way the federal government regulates tobacco advertising provides a sound basis for dealing with cannabis. The Tobacco Act sets out a comprehensive framework for limiting advertising and promotion in a reasonable and promotional manner to ensure that young people are protected from strong inducements to consume tobacco.

The proposed advertising and promotion restrictions proposed in Bill C-45 are similar to these existing restrictions dealing with tobacco where promotional activities are prohibited except in certain circumstances. Let us face it. The advertising and promotion of consumer products is a valuable tool for industry so they can generate demand for their products and increase their revenue. We have a responsibility to establish reasonable checks and balances on these activities to ensure that important public policy objectives such as protecting the health and well-being of our young persons are achieved.

I strongly believe the promotion restrictions proposed in Bill C-45 represent a balanced approach. These measures will help protect youth from being encouraged or tempted to use cannabis while also providing responsible adult users with factual information so that they can make informed decisions about the cannabis they choose to purchase and consume.

Government Orders

[Translation]

The approach our government is taking to limit promotional activities was developed in response to the influence and the impact of advertising on the general population. We know that advertising influences consumers' decisions and behaviours. Public health research confirmed that advertising can have a significant impact on the appeal, social acceptance, and normalization of a particular product and, at the same time, on the frequency of use, especially among youth.

It has also been proven that promotion can foster use by youth exposed to advertising that primarily targets adults.

[English]

In addition, there is evidence that some interventions, such as partial restrictions on promotional activities and public information campaigns, may not be effective, especially when they are competing with industry marketing and advertising campaigns. In light of this evidence, our government is proposing a comprehensive set of restrictions in Bill C-45 for the promotion of cannabis, which will protect youth and adults from being persuaded or attracted to using cannabis.

However, businesses will still be able to provide factual information to adult consumers about the products they have available so that adults will be able to make informed choices. As well, businesses will be able to provide information that allows them to distinguish themselves and their products from others in the legal cannabis market.

[Translation]

The prevention and reduction of inducements to cannabis consumption by youth and others is an important public health objective for our government. This objective is clearly articulated in the section dealing with the purpose of Bill C-45 and is confirmed by tough, new penalties for those who break the law, including those who target youth in their promotion of cannabis.

[English]

The following are some key measures proposed in Bill C-45 to support our government in meeting the objectives of keeping cannabis out of the hands of youth and protecting them from being encouraged to consume it. Bill C-45 proposes to prohibit the promotion of cannabis in any manner that is appealing to youth. This would include promotions featuring cartoon characters, animals, or celebrities. The use of testimonials or endorsements that are popular these days in social media or sponsorships would also be banned. The bill would also prohibit the branding of merchandise that could be considered appealing to youth, such as skateboards and lunch boxes.

Lifestyle promotions would also be banned. This would include any promotion that creates an association with cannabis that, for example, evokes a way of life that is trendy, active, or exciting. For example, cannabis advertisements would not be able to associate cannabis with success in sports or daring stunts. I do not believe we will be seeing any Crashed Ice events anytime soon.

Bill C-45 would also prohibit any promotion that includes false, misleading, or deceptive information. This measure is important

because such promotion could result in a false impression about important matters, such as potency of the product or potential health effects.

● (2005)

[Translation]

The proposed measures are consistent with the advice of the expert task force our government established last year. They told us that an overwhelming majority of stakeholders strongly recommended that the government take a public health approach and impose reasonable restrictions on efforts to promote cannabis. By adopting a public health approach, our government is acknowledging this recommendation.

These measures are necessary to protect youth and others from any inducement or temptation to consume cannabis. They will be even more important given the health risks associated with cannabis consumption which, as we know, are even greater for Canadian youth.

[English]

I am pleased to say that the legislative measures proposed in Bill C-45 will be supported by investments and efforts to increase cannabis-specific public health awareness and education that will target young Canadians and other groups. Our government is committed to early and sustained public awareness and education activities. As we know, in budget 2017, our government committed \$9.6 million over five years to a public education and awareness campaign and surveillance activities. I believe this is vital to increase awareness and understanding the risks associated with cannabis use and to promote responsible consumption.

As I previously mentioned, Bill C-45 does strike the right balance by allowing industry to promote its products and brands in an appropriate and controlled manner. For example, Bill C-45 would allow information-type promotion directed at adults. This type of information would include factual and accurate information about cannabis products, such as price, THC levels, ingredients, and the use of pesticides. It would also allow the promotion of information for the purpose of distinguishing brands. This would include information about the characteristics of a cannabis brand.

This type of promotion would be permitted in places where it cannot be seen by anyone under the age of 18. This would include places young people cannot access by law or a website where there is an appropriate tool to verify age. For the packaging and labelling of cannabis, the cannabis act would also work to protect youth and Canadians. The restrictions would include measures to ban any packaging appealing to children and the use of false or misleading information on a package.

I am confident that the proposed approach for the advertising and promotion of cannabis provides the best balance of protecting youth and public health while enabling adults to make educated and informed decisions.

Government Orders

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully as my colleague read his notes, which were likely prepared by cabinet or the health minister, since they contained a lot of details about advertising. However, he did not say what he thinks about whether the bill trivializes the use of marijuana in Canada. Does he really believe that young people who do not have access to nicely packaged cannabis will just not buy or use it?

I want to remind my colleague that, when I talk to my constituents, most high school students say that they are opposed to using marijuana because they have seen the effects that it has had on their friends.

Does my colleague encourage the use of marijuana among young people between the ages of 18 and 25?

• (2010)

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

He just drew attention to the fact that young people are currently using marijuana, so now we need to figure out what to do about it. We can take the same old approach that is not working, as demonstrated by the fact that Canada has one of the highest rates of cannabis use in the world, or we can come up with a new approach.

I remember that it was much easier for me to buy marijuana in the school yard than it was for me to buy alcohol. To do that, I had to cross the border into Quebec, even though it was not very far since I am from Hawkesbury. Marijuana dealers do not ask to see ID. Unfortunately, that is not what happens. With a regulated system, young people would not have such easy access to cannabis.

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am a little baffled to hear the member opposite saying that the Liberals want to protect our young people and public health by focusing on prevention, and that they are doing so by imposing sanctions. That is not what prevention means to me.

The Minister of Health and my colleague said several times that awareness campaigns were a priority in Bill C-45. I am happy to hear that, but there is no new funding associated with this bill for prevention programs in our schools or in community groups that work directly on the ground with young people in the areas of addictions, crime and mental health.

Why is the government not allocating the necessary funding? Colorado allocates \$45 million a year, whereas this government plans to allocate less than \$2 million. In five years, it will be only \$1 million a year. That is not nearly enough to run a decent and much-needed prevention campaign. The provinces, teachers, and community groups are asking for funding for prevention, as are all of the experts who work with young marijuana users.

Mr. Francis Drouin: Mr. Speaker, the NDP seems to be saying that there is currently no prevention campaign in Canada and that the rate of cannabis use is suddenly going to skyrocket all across the country because of Bill C-45. That is not what is happening and that is not what the evidence shows.

I attended two sessions in schools designed to prevent the use of cannabis and other drugs. There are already measures in place. What

we are proposing is a partnership between the federal government, the provinces and the municipalities.

The NDP likes to say that it wants us to spend more money, but it wanted to balance the budget. If it had balanced the budget, it would not have had any money left for health transfers, which also play a big role.

[English]

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government recently introduced Bill C-45, which aims to provide legal access to recreational cannabis and to control and regulate its production, distribution, and sale.

The Liberals are on record as saying they hope it receives royal assent before July 2018. Numerous studies cite marijuana as one of the most abused drugs across the world. The Liberal call for its legalization has a significant impact on governments, businesses, and individuals.

In an August 1, 2016, opinion piece, Richard Berman of *The Washington Times* wrote:

Proponents like the Drug Policy Alliance claim that legalization should occur partially for “health” reasons. The Marijuana Policy Project has called pot “harmless.” Others say it is “safe” and even “healthy.” Nearly all proponents seem to deny or minimize its risks. Popular culture reinforces this view portraying use generally as a risk-free endeavor. And big business looking to cash in on legalization is all too happy to propagate this claim.

But here’s the problem: This view is out of step with the medical literature. In fact, a scientific consensus exists that marijuana has serious health implications—even for casual users.

Despite marijuana gaining greater acceptance in our society, it is important for people to understand what is known about the adverse health effects and extenuating implications of its use in a society. Parliamentarians, in particular, are entrusted with the health and well-being of Canadians and should not overlook these risks.

Recreational marijuana has a very different use from the already legal medicinal marijuana. Recreational marijuana is used with the intention of altering how one feels by achieving an altered state of consciousness by getting high. THC is the main psychoactive or mind-altering chemical in marijuana and the one responsible for the intoxicating effects that people are seeking.

According to an April 2017 paper published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, advancing an addiction science letter to the director:

When marijuana is smoked, THC and other chemicals in the plant pass from the lungs into the bloodstream, which rapidly carries them...[through the bloodstream and into]...the brain. The person begins to experience effects almost immediately...

If...consumed in foods or beverages, these effects are somewhat delayed—usually appearing after 30 minutes to 1 hour—because the drug must first pass through the digestive system... Because of the delayed effects, people may inadvertently consume more THC than they intend to.

...THC stimulates neurons...to release the...chemical dopamine at levels higher than [attained normally by the human body. It is this assisted]...“high” that... recreational marijuana [users] seek.

The American Society of Addiction Medicine marijuana fact sheet states that pleasant experiences with marijuana are by no means universal:

Government Orders

Instead of relaxation and euphoria, some users [due to their age, previous exposure, and toxicity levels] experience anxiety, fear, distrust and panic.... People who have taken large doses of marijuana may experience an acute psychosis, which can include hallucinations, delusions and a loss of the sense of personal identity.

Richard Berman, *The Washington Times* writer, goes on to state in his August 1, 2016, report:

According to research published in the medical journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*: "Someone who uses marijuana regularly has, on average, less gray matter in his orbital frontal cortex."

Another study finds that the hippocampus—the part of the brain responsible for long-term memory—is abnormally shaped in daily marijuana users.... Studies show even casual marijuana use causes abnormalities in the density, volume and shape of the brain.

He concludes his argument by stating:

I don't want to be associated with the fear-mongering "This is your brain; this is your brain on drugs" commercials from last century, but their underlying message was essentially correct.

In January 21, 2014, John Hawkins, a *Townhall* columnist, wrote:

A recent Northwestern University study found that marijuana users have abnormal brain structure and poor memory and that chronic marijuana abuse may lead to brain changes resembling schizophrenia. The study also reported that the younger the person starts using marijuana, the worse the effects become.

● (2015)

Marijuana has been shown time and again to distort perception and impair short-term memory and judgment. This reality played out in an even larger legal recreation forum has major future implications for our youth, industry, and government institutions, and the above seems to be just the start of our concerns.

In addition to the various mental health studies cited above, we cannot overlook physical health as well, specifically lung health. The National Institute on Drug Abuse states that because of how it is typically smoked, with deeper inhale and held for longer, marijuana smoking leads to four times the deposition of tar compared to cigarette smoking. Believe me, I am not suggesting that cigarette smoking is a better choice. Further, it stated that people who frequently smoke marijuana had more outpatient medical visits for respiratory problems than those who do not smoke. It states:

Like tobacco smoke, marijuana smoke is an irritant to the throat and lungs and can cause a heavy cough during use. It also contains levels of volatile chemicals and tar that are similar to tobacco smoke, raising concerns about risk for cancer and lung disease.

Marijuana smoking is associated with large airway inflammation, increased airway resistance, and lung hyperinflation, and those who smoke marijuana regularly report more symptoms of chronic bronchitis than those who do not smoke....

Marijuana smoke contains carcinogenic combustion products, including about 50 percent more benzoprene and 75 percent more benzanthracene...than cigarette smoke.

In short, marijuana smoking is terrible for one's physical health. It is even more toxic than cigarette smoke with the side effects manifesting themselves much earlier than found in tobacco users. In addition to lung health concerns, there is also concern for the effect of second-hand smoke and ingestion. Here is just one example of what I mean. We are all aware of the horrendous effects of fetal alcohol syndrome and how it has wracked our society. The same alarm bells can also be raised on marijuana use during and after pregnancy. A U.S. Department of Health and Human Services study published on December 11, 2013, states:

Smoking tobacco or marijuana, taking prescription painkillers, or using...drugs during pregnancy is associated with double or even triple the risk of stillbirth, according to research funded by the National Institutes of Health.

I note that the previous speaker commented on some of the health concerns and also talked about packaging and what would be on that packaging for adults purchasing it. I did not hear about anything on that packaging that would indicate any of the health concerns that we are mentioning here today. The American Society of Addiction Medicine marijuana-use fact sheet says two alarming facts that parliamentarians need to take particular note of:

Brain development may be negatively affected by THC exposure very early in life. Research in rats suggests that exposure to even low concentrations of THC late in pregnancy could have profound and long-term consequences for both brain development and behavior of offspring.

Evidence from human studies shows that pregnant women who use marijuana have babies that respond differently to visual stimuli, tremble more and have a high-pitched cry, suggesting problems with neurological development.

Although laws will be put in place respecting age restrictions for the drug, we are all not so naive in this day and age as to expect that, with increased accessibility, those younger and below the legal age will not also access it. The April 2017 National Institute on Drug Abuse study raised additional concern for increased potential for youth exposure to the drug:

Considerable evidence suggests that students who smoke marijuana have poorer educational outcomes than their nonsmoking peers. For example, a review of 48 relevant studies found marijuana use to be associated with reduced educational attainment.... A recent analysis using data from three large studies in Australia and New Zealand found that adolescents who used marijuana regularly were significantly less likely than their non-using peers to finish high school or obtain a degree. They also had a much higher chance of developing dependence, using other drugs, and attempting suicide.

In the face of these revelations, for my fellow Liberal parliamentarians to want to rush to legalize this drug by July 2018 is deeply concerning.

● (2020)

Whose needs are truly being met here? As *Townhall* columnist John Hawkins further states:

Movies portray potheads as harmless, fun-loving people who spend their time giggling and munching Cheetos, but they don't show these people when they are flunking out of school, losing their jobs, frustrated because they can't concentrate or losing the love of their lives because [of their addictions].

Denver Post writer, Joanne Davidson, wrote, and quotes Dr. Drew Pinsky in a September 19, 2014, article:

Make no mistake, says addictions specialist Drew Pinsky, marijuana is addictive—and the earlier one starts to use it, the greater the consequences. "It acts like an opiate and causes severe addiction," Pinsky said during a Colorado visit this week. "It affects the white matter of the brain, and for kids who start using marijuana when they are 12, or even younger, those bad consequences tend not to reverse."

Do we need that to deal with as well?

It is not lost on anyone here that potency levels are a lot higher than they were 20 to 40 years ago. Not only are legalization alarm bells being raised by our respected health and youth institutions but also by industry.

Government Orders

As Tim Bradley writes in his October 2016 article, “No, We Should Not Legalize Recreational Marijuana Use”:

Some argue that marijuana use is merely a private vice—if it is a vice at all—and that it does not have much of an effect on others. But...private acts of vice can imperil important public interests when the private acts begin to multiply.

No one sits down to smoke a joint hoping to avoid getting high. No one ever seeks out a seller and says, “I want some marijuana, but not enough to get high on.” Even those who might try marijuana experimentally are intending to get high.

With legalization of this drug will come increased use by our workforce and with that, unintended consequences and costs for others, with increased risks for injury or accidents.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse, in April 2017, said:

One study among postal workers found that employees who tested positive for marijuana on pre-employment urine drug tests had 55 percent more industrial accidents, 85 percent more injuries, and 75 percent greater absenteeism compared with those who tested negative for marijuana use.

On February 17, 2017, on *CBC News*, Newfoundland and Labrador Radio One, Stephanie Kinsella interviewed Dan Demers, an occupational health operations manager at CannAmm Occupational Testing Services. It is well reported that detectable amounts of THC remain in the body for days or even weeks after use. Mr. Demers states:

Marijuana and dangerous activities, safety-sensitive duties, can't mix. The issue is, the use the night before work actually affects performance the next morning... reaction time and depth perception can be affected even if someone uses marijuana the night before. If you're working at heights in the construction industry, your ability, for instance, to take into account somebody beside you, their facial expression changed because something is falling, the part of the brain that's responsible for recognizing facial expressions gets impeded for over 12 hours...

It's going to become much easier to access and there's going to be less cultural stigma towards it...

Which is what will happen,

... and the consequence is we're going to see it more frequently on our roadways, more frequently on our work sites...that's going to have some consequences.

Mr. Demers is right in citing this concern. According to a May 10 2017, *CBC News* report, Saskatoon police handed out over \$18,000 in speeding tickets to 50 drivers in construction zones in one day over two hours. That is a lot of workers lives needlessly already in danger, without additional marijuana impairments added to the mix.

When speaking to industry stakeholders in my own constituency, similar concerns are being levelled. As Dean Beeby, senior reporter for the CBC Parliamentary Bureau, notes in a March 15, 2017 article:

“More stoned workers will be showing up in Canada's workplaces with the coming legalization of marijuana, but companies have few tools to cope with potential safety risks.... We're caught in a potential Catch 22: how do you protect the worker and those around them as well as deal with legalized marijuana?” said Cameron MacGillivray, president of Enform, a Calgary-based oil-and-gas safety group. “It is a pressing concern for the industry because of the...catastrophic impacts of somebody doing a critical safety job when they're impaired.” The Liberal government is expected to introduce legislation by the summer making recreational marijuana legal, at a time when the science of detecting and measuring impairment is incomplete.

● (2025)

Even more disturbing is a news development cited, on April 17, 2017, in *The Globe and Mail*, in an article by Robert Weir and Adam Pennell, “How Canada's marijuana legislation will affect employers”. It says:

In the meantime, Canadian employers have questions about how to respond to this changing legal landscape. This uncertainty also extends, to a somewhat lesser degree, to the Canadian judicial system. Coincidentally, on April 3, 2017, an Ontario Superior Court judge declined to grant an injunction striking down a random drug testing policy sought by the union representing employees of the Toronto Transit Commission.

Think about that. With legalization, what challenges will existing employee protection laws be under? It is alarming to think that safety laws are already starting to be questioned and challenged. Although marijuana users will be subject to similar rules as alcohol users, the propensity of THC to remain in the system and impair judgment long after use remains in play.

The article goes on to say:

...section 25 of the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act requires that employers take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker. Safety-sensitive positions, such as those involving the operation of heavy machinery, may include essential duties or requirements that create safety concerns when a proposed accommodation plan includes marijuana use.

Right now, workers' compensation rates for Saskatchewan for injury time losses are down. What toll on these otherwise encouraging statistics, personal and economic, will legalized marijuana have in this instance? We need to think about the added time and cost for both small and large businesses to monitor marijuana toxicity in their work sites. As well, there are looming safety implications for workers in industries like Alberta's oil sands plants and Saskatchewan's potash industry, industries that require thousands of operators a day to run some of the largest equipment on earth. I have to shudder at how at ease the Liberal government is putting this additional weight on our industry stakeholders to fulfill a poorly thought through election promise to garner the votes of a special interest group. Is that the priority of the Liberal government? Is this worth putting at risk the health and safety of Canadians impacted by illness, addiction, injuries, and death on our roads and in the Canadian workforce?

Two junior high boys stopped me on the street while I was campaigning for the election and asked if I was supporting the guy who wants to legalize marijuana. The response to my “No, definitely not”, was “Good, we don't want that in our town.”

Government Orders

At every school I have visited since becoming the MP for Yorkton—Melville, classrooms have always asked why the government wants to legalize marijuana. These concerned young people told me that they know doing so will increase access, use, and negative repercussions for their generation. I share their concern with the government today, and on their behalf, indicate that the common sense and concern they have toward this issue is refreshing and affirming and should be heeded by the government.

• (2030)

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's remarks. She did lay out quite a number of good facts, but the sentiment of her remarks is this: that attitude is burying one's head in the sand in terms of what the reality out there in the world is today. That is what it really is, burying her head in the sand about the reality of what is happening out there today. They are good facts, and we have a problem in terms of marijuana use we have to deal with. What is the best way to deal with that?

If members ask young teenagers who are in school, or 11- or 12-year-olds, which it is easier to gain access to, legal liquor or illegal marijuana, if they are being honest, they will answer illegal marijuana. By legalizing marijuana, we will know what the strength of the marijuana is. We are establishing education programs to talk about its dangers. We are controlling the product. We are moving to set up roadside testing.

Is the member burying her head in the sand, or is she looking at the reality of the world and what legalization can do in improving and lessening marijuana use, ensuring that it is a safer product, and having an education system to take it out of the hands of young people?

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: Mr. Speaker, talk about burying one's head in the sand. This is before us today because the Liberal government made a promise, one of a gazillion, to simply gather the vote of a particular group. I can assure the member that when I hear the Minister of Health saying that we need to legalize marijuana because 30% of 20- to 24-year-olds are using, the rationale is—

• (2035)

Hon. Wayne Easter: That is low.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, but his minister said 30%.

The reality is that the government somehow thinks that if it legalizes this drug, it is going to be used less. I have worked in addiction circles. I have individuals who are very near and dear to me, and I can assure members that they know that legalizing this drug will not keep it out of the hands of young children. As a matter of fact, they are the ones telling me that this will not be the case.

Clearly, this is not a good move for the young people in our society. It is not a good move for adults who want to use it. When the government says what will be on the package, there is no reference to what we know are the dangers of this particular drug. The education the government is suggesting it is going to have will not even come out before it makes it legal in our communities. It is very disconcerting.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Yorkton—Melville very clearly laid out some of the concerns that still exist in society, and

that is why we in the NDP have taken the strong position that on this road to legalization, the government must be very clear and must have the resources to make sure we have that public awareness and that public health approach.

When I was listening to the facts and figures, it seemed to me that the member was building a stronger argument against the status quo, because if there are a high number of youth using it in an unregulated system that is illegal, where we cannot keep track of it and have a public health approach, it seems to be an argument against the status quo, and we need to move beyond that.

I want to reference something for the member. What prevents people from getting the help they need is the stigma attached to using drugs when they are criminalized. I will point out the example of Portugal. Portugal, which decriminalized all drugs in 2001, now has a rate of overdose deaths of three for every one million citizens. That compares to about 44 in the United Kingdom, where drugs are illegal. By removing that stigma, perhaps we can take a more public health approach and encourage people to get the help they need without fear of being criminalized for their actions.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that legalizing any of these drugs does not mean that our health system will better deal with it. Why is our health system not dealing with it now? Why do we need to legalize it? Why do we need to regulate the height of a plant in a house and how many there are? Who is going to do that? No one is going to be doing that. There is no way the government has the amount of money it needs to set up a regulation system like that. It is going to be in homes and available to children, children who never thought about using it in the past. It will be there, and they are going to be tempted to use it. This is not the approach we should be taking. If we are serious as parliamentarians about the health and safety of Canadians, this is not the route to take.

One individual talked about brown packaging somehow making it less appealing. Why are we not doing that with beer or wine products? We do not do that. It does not make a difference. I can assure everyone that from the interactions I have with youth in my communities, access to these drugs is available to them now, and the government will not have the money it needs to compete, because it is overextending itself in every direction.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a father of three children and a grandfather of nine, I can say without question that I am very concerned about the direction the government is going. The government claims to be basing its decisions on science-based evidence, and so on, but clearly, science is not on its side on this one.

Government Orders

The Canadian Medical Association has been very clear in its recommendations. In fact, just this week, Dr. Diane Kelsall, in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, said, “Simply put, cannabis should not be used by young people.” She provided a number of statistics and then said, “If Parliament truly cares about the public health and safety of Canadians, especially our youth, this bill will not pass.” I wonder how my colleague would respond to that.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: Mr. Speaker, this is the part that confuses me the most. A government that says it enacts legislation only on the basis of sound science is completely turning a blind eye to the recommendations from organizations such as that health organization that know that this is not a good move for our country. This is not something that is going to improve the lives of young people, right up to the age of 25.

Yes, we all get to make those decisions. As the member across the floor said, “We're adults, so we get to make these decisions.”

Why, as a government, empower making negative decisions? I do not understand it.

• (2040)

Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, some of the reasons for the bill is to have a controlled marijuana industry, to bring more money to the government, and to remove organized crime from the market. Would she elaborate on that, please?

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: Mr. Speaker, I think the government has a misconstrued idea of what it can do to remove organized crime. There is availability of pretty well any of these vices in our country. I do not believe the government has the capacity to compete in a way that would enable it to wipe out organized crime in this area. Look at what is happening with prescription drugs in our country that are legal and are being abused. We cannot seem to get a handle on that.

We need to do everything we can in our power to say to Canadians, from a very young age, “This is something that is not healthy. It will impact you negatively. We have all the evidence in that regard. It will make you unsafe among other Canadians when you are working. You will impact your ability to learn.”

Where is there an upside in the government saying, “We're going to encourage you to do this in a safe manner”?

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of Bill C-45 not because of ideology, not because of my belief, my presumption, or my assumption, but because it is an evidence-based piece of legislation. When we look at what is going on in Europe and other countries, and look at the evidence where they have decriminalized or legalized marijuana, we see that in fact consumption has gone down.

The bill is extremely important, and the police do not spend their time picking up people who are smoking a joint on the street. They go after organized crime and people who are selling heroin on the street.

Why is this an important bill? UNICEF did a study in 2015 that showed that Canada has the highest number of youth who have access to and who smoke cannabis. At the same time, that same UNICEF study showed that Canada has the lowest number of youth using cigarettes and having access to cigarettes.

What is the difference between cannabis and cigarettes? Cigarettes are legal. Alcohol is legal. What do cigarettes, alcohol, and cannabis have in common? They are psychoactive drugs. They have an effect on one's behaviour. They have an effect on a lot of things people do. The legal drug, tobacco, is the only thing that when used exactly as directed would make someone sick and kill them, yet it is legal. It is being sold in this country. We have brought down smoking to the lowest level in the OECD for cigarettes, because we have taken steps to look at packaging. We have taken steps to ensure that they are not sold to people under the age of 18.

This is what we are trying to do, because when our young people have the highest access in the OECD to cannabis, it means they are getting it. They are getting it illegally from street pushers and users whom we cannot moderate. We do not want people to have to buy substances that have an impact on youth from street dealers. We had an opportunity to deal with opioids under the last government, and we did not. Now the dealers who are selling opioids on the street are lacing them with fentanyl and carfentanyl. They do not care about quality control. They do not care about the potency of what they are selling. They do not care about any of those things. They just care about selling, and if people die, who cares?

We want to keep this drug out of the hands of our young people. Why young people specifically? We would legalize and regulate this drug because we know that young people have not had their frontal lobes fully developed and we know that cannabis has an impact on cognitive behaviour, and therefore, on the frontal lobe. We do not want them to use cannabis.

Let us look at the three drugs that are psychoactive, two of which are legal at the moment. We have prohibitions on the sale of alcohol, and we have prohibitions on the sale of tobacco. We know that tobacco causes disease and it kills. I do not know of any particular medical properties that tobacco brings to anyone. There are no benefits to using tobacco. There are only side effects.

Let us look at alcohol. We have heard arguments that if we drink a glass of red wine every day it will help us. The jury is out on that. There are still some medicinal benefits for alcohol, but there are negative effects too. MADD would tell us that, in fact, the largest number of motor vehicle accidents in the country come from drunk drivers. We have had to legalize alcohol to ensure young people do not get a hold of it, look at tracking who drinks it, and make sure we set very clear guidelines for what the level of alcohol should be if one is driving, etc.

Cannabis does have medicinal properties. We know it is used for pain, for chronic disease, and it brings down levels of anxiety. We also know that cannabis oil is used in certain amounts for people with epilepsy. Therefore, we know there are medicinal properties, but like anything that has good effects, there are side effects. What we know is that these side effects impact youth more than anyone else, and we do not want youth to have access to it. Therefore, we are doing what we successfully did with alcohol and with tobacco to ensure that young people do not get hold of it.

Government Orders

Why do we have the lowest number of people smoking cigarettes in our country? It is because it is legal and regulated, and we are ensuring that young people cannot buy them. We have very clear penalties and guidelines for anyone who sells it to young people. It is very clear. We are talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars in penalties.

● (2045)

This is the reason the bill is so important.

The bill also authorizes who is allowed to sell, just like with cigarettes and alcohol. If one is an unauthorized seller, for example a street dealer, then that seller will face a penalty of 14 years, especially if he or she sells to a young person. It is a 14-year penalty for people who use a young person to sell cannabis on the street.

We will be tracking this. Like MADD we will be able to educate people about the use of cannabis and the dangers of cannabis. We will be able to track who buys it. We will be able to keep pace with what is going on. All sorts of penalties are going to be available to people who sell cannabis to people who are under age or anybody who is an unauthorized seller.

This is about evidence-based information. This information picks up evidence from other countries to see what has happened. It looks at the sale of alcohol and cigarettes in our own country, and it asks what we did not do. We are not doing anything at the present time. Fifty-one per cent of young people in this country are using cannabis and that level keeps going up. Whatever we are doing right now is not working. When we have the highest level, and I want to harp on this, of young people in the OECD having access to and using cannabis, then we are not doing anything right.

Let us get it right. Let us look at our own evidence in Canada with regard to the sale of cigarettes and alcohol. Let us look at European studies and results. We can then say we are using evidence-based information to stop cannabis from getting into the hands of our young people, who are particularly susceptible because of the cognitive impact of cannabis on them.

I have heard people say that we presume this is going to happen. We put money in the 2017 budget just for a public awareness campaign. We put money in the 2017 budget just to make sure that we have all the money we need for the tools that we need. We are going to train police on how to test for levels of impairment if someone is caught driving with cannabis.

As a physician, I can tell the House that I do not know very many people who were caught impaired after smoking cannabis. Someone has to smoke a lot of cannabis to get to the impaired level, and that means the individual will fall asleep at the wheel of the car before the ignition is even turned on. We know what cannabis does.

We need to do this because it is important. We need to prevent our youth from getting access to a drug that impairs their cognitive ability when their frontal lobes have not completely developed. We need to authorize who sells it just like we do with the other drugs I have talked about. We need clear penalties to deal with their use.

This is clear. I do not understand what the debate is about. This is an easy thing to understand. There is a problem, there is evidence on how to deal with the problem, and that evidence shows success in

other drugs that we have legalized. It is a fait accompli. It is simple. We are trying to get at a simple thing. We are trying not to allow cannabis to get into the hands of our youth. The only way we can do that is to legalize it and regulate it.

● (2050)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think I heard my colleague use the term “evidence-based” at least a dozen times in her speech. As a medical doctor, she should know that the Canadian Medical Association came out in its last journal and said:

Drawing on current evidence that suggests that the human brain appears to mature until about age 25 years, the Canadian Medical Association, in its response to the federal task force report, recommended that the minimum age of purchase and consumption be set at 21 years. Along with others, the CMA also called for restricting cannabis quantities and potency for those under the age of 25 years, because higher potency increases the risk of adverse effects.

The report goes on.

My question is simple. The Canadian Medical Association recognizes that brain development is mostly finished by age 25 and recommended 21 as the minimum age, yet the Liberal government in its wisdom, using so-called scientific evidence, has chosen to use the age of 18. It has also chosen not to have any penalties for children between the ages of 12 and 18 who have up to five grams in their possession. Where is the scientific evidence when it comes to the use by youth?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, having helped the Canadian Medical Association to write its dissertation on cannabis, I know, and we all know, that cannabis has the same tar and benzopyrenes that are in cigarettes. Should we make cigarettes illegal, then, because cigarettes have tar and benzopyrenes?

What the Canadian Medical Association is talking about is the age limit. This is going to go to committee, and at committee we can talk about whether the age limit should be 18 or 21. These are the kinds of things that we amend at committee. The government is open to listening to that kind of amendment in terms of age limits.

We do know that in fact the Canadian Medical Association has said that it does not like smoking, but vaping may be a way of maintaining it to get rid of the tar and benzopyrenes. It also talks about the use of cannabis oil and cannabis edibles, so smoking is not the only way.

We cannot control the quality or potency unless we legislate it and we control the potency levels. If people buy it from a street dealer right now, it could have the worst potency and have all kinds of contaminants and additives in it, in the same way that we have fentanyl and carfentanil in opiates.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's speech. She laid out some very clear reasoning as to why we do need to change from the status quo.

Government Orders

I think it was a couple of months ago that the Prime Minister admitted in an interview that when his late younger brother got caught with marijuana, his father, the late Pierre Elliott Trudeau, was able to use his connections in the legal community to get his brother off the charges. I think the Prime Minister went on to say that there are two kinds of justice systems, one for the wealthy and well connected and one for everyone else.

Many people are saddled with criminal records for possession of minor amounts of marijuana, and the cost of a pardon is \$631, which is a huge cost for the marginalized in our society. We have not heard a commitment from the government on the issue of pardons, and I would like to know the member's personal opinion. Does she think that amnesty should be granted to those who were previously convicted for small possession charges, given that the government is moving ahead with legalization? I would like to know if she would support pardons in those cases and if she would pressure her own government to move ahead with this issue.

Hon. Hedy Fry: Mr. Speaker, one of the stated objectives of this bill is to ensure that we do not have the situation we have now, with the courts being tied up with people who have been charged for possession of a small amount of marijuana. The courts should be used for other things that are far more important.

I visited Europe and drove around Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands with the police. They did not pick up marijuana smokers, nor were they interested in them, because that just blocked up the courts. We need to deal with a lot of the backlog in our courts.

If people are going to be charged with cannabis possession, we have to look at their age, because we are still talking about a legal age. We have clear guidelines for how much cannabis someone is allowed to have on their person. We want to make sure that we are not treating a person with simple possession and a person who is selling on the street in the same way, and it is very clear in this bill that there are going to be distinctions on both.

On what has happened in the past, I do not know. Whether there are going to be any pardons is something the committee can discuss and debate. I am not discussing that right now. We are talking about whether we should legalize this drug, whether we should regulate, and whether we should have clear guidelines in terms of potency and who should be authorized to sell it. This is to get the street vendors off the street. It is to deal with the pushers and organized crime who are making money off our young people. We do not see organized crime selling alcohol on the street anymore.

• (2055)

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise again in this House to speak about Bill C-45, the cannabis act. One would think that once would be enough for a member to stand in this House to speak about it, but it is not. Bill C-45 is flawed. I am appalled that the Minister of Justice would present such an ill-prepared bill and arbitrarily force it on Canadians.

Last night I sat in on the debate on Bill C-46, which deals with impaired driving. If people are going to get high over Bill C-45, I can only say it is not going to happen with Bill C-46. One tends to get depressed dwelling on it.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and I are both former police officers with similar years of service, he an urban city police officer and myself a rural RCMP officer. My hon. colleague must be having difficulty over his party's two bills, and I really feel for him. Making marijuana legal in Canada is wrong. It is simply wrong. Those members across do not understand.

The 2016 report on legalization of marijuana in Colorado should have stopped the Liberals in their tracks, but it did not. Here are some simple facts. We heard a few of them earlier.

Traffic deaths have increased 62% since 2013. That was people using marijuana, by the way.

Use of marijuana by youth increased 20%, yet the American national average declined by 4%.

Do members know that in Colorado youth are ranked number one in the use of marijuana overall in the United States? If we go back to 2005-2006, they were ranked 14th. The education really worked well.

However, let us not blame the youth. Adult use is up 17% in Colorado since they brought the legalizing legislation out, and it has only come up 2% nationally.

Also, adults in Colorado are the number one users in the United States, but if we go back to the same years I mentioned with the younger people, in 2005-2006, they were only number eight. These numbers scare me. They are high.

Did members know that Colorado's adult use increased 63% in the first two years that marijuana was legalized there? That is 42% above the rest of the U.S.A.

I wonder what was causing their numbers to get higher. Oh, yes; maybe it was marijuana.

Did members know that the state of Washington has very similar statistics since it has legalized marijuana?

I have said it before and I will repeat it again. I spent 35 years watching the growth of marijuana use in western Canada from its infancy to what we see today.

Maybe a story or two may help convince our Liberal friends across the way. We all know about second-hand smoke. It is not good. I am just going to give members a scenario.

A group of 18-years-olds went out for a night to some community 100 miles or so from their town. Billy is the driver. He is the designated driver, because Billy does not drink, he does not use marijuana, and he does not use drugs. His carmates are Ralph, Jody, Jane, and Justine. Members might recognize some of these names. I am just using them for certain purposes.

Government Orders

● (2100)

They all celebrated for the night and smoked up a portion of each of their individual 30 grams of marijuana. They continued to do that as Billy drove them home, which was a two-hour drive back to their community. However, what happened was that 15 minutes from home, Billy overcorrected on a sharp corner and lost control, and the vehicle rolled. Billy had not noticed that their speed was at 150 kilometres per hour. None of the five made it home that night alive.

Most people would think that maybe Billy was an innocent person, but the smoke probably made him disoriented. We have not looked at that. The government has not talked about it. I am sorry to be so cynical and depressing, but that is the reality that this legislation will create in this great country of ours.

I have heard people talk about how the legislation will protect our children from organized crime. Well, if I was a drug dealer, all of my street people would be under the age of 17, and I would make sure they never carried more than five grams on their person. It would be a pretty safe way of doing business. That is the shocking part of it. The government has not thought about that.

While I was waiting to speak here, I read a story about an accident that happened in Colorado. It seems strange that it would happen there. A 20-year-old man was turning right on a red light. At the same time, an eight-year-old girl was crossing the intersection with her father. He ran over that eight-year-old girl, and she died under the right and left wheel of his F-250 Ford pickup truck. Actually, the driver never even noticed what he had done. It was only the waving of the father's arms that made him stop. The police arrived and tested him under the procedures that the government is talking about, a legal testing device, although we still do not know if that will be approved. The government is talking about it. We do not know what it will be calibrated to or what the legal limit for THC will be. However, in this particular case, the THC level was at 1.5, which is below Colorado's legal limit of 5.0. However, this person was still charged with impaired driving because the specialists—whom we so lack in this country—came to the scene and were able to verify and prove that this young man was impaired by the drug even though he was substantially under the limit set by the law.

The shocking part of all of this is that this young man was 20 years old, weighed 195 pounds, was on the varsity football team, was in the prime of his life, yet he was so impaired that he did not realize he had driven over a young girl, and he was at less than one-third of the legal limit.

Just imagine, Mr. Speaker, if it was you and your daughter, and the guy driving the vehicle weighed 120 pounds. What would he be at?

I have appeared in courts in British Columbia and given expert evidence as to the effects of alcohol consumption on an individual. I was a breathalyzer operator for over 20 years, and I know how it affects a person and how it is dissipated in a person: the lighter the weight, the greater the effect. However, I do not want to dwell on that too much.

Let us just take a look at one of the most recent studies done in the state of Washington, which states:

The percentage of drivers involved in fatal crashes who had traces of marijuana in their blood has doubled since marijuana was legalized in Washington state....

That has just recently come out.

● (2105)

The researchers also found that 70% of the drivers who failed these sobriety tests and whose impairment was attributed to marijuana by drug recognition experts still had blood levels of THC lower than the five nanograms, which is the level in the state of Washington.

I apologize for doing a bit of shock therapy, but I am appalled by the lack of common sense that I see across the floor, and people bringing legislation out when history shows us what is happening. I do not want to see that happen to my kids, my grandchildren, and my great-grandchild, who was just born.

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my friend opposite and I are family, because as he indicated, he and I both served our communities in uniform and dedicated our lives to protecting kids and keeping communities safe. He will always have my respect for that.

I accept the commiserations that the member offered and the spirit in which they were given, but I want to assure him that they were unnecessary. I cannot say how proud I am to be a member of this government and to have been given the privilege and opportunity to work with and on behalf of the Minister of Justice in finding ways in which we can do a better job of protecting our kids, to restrict their access to a drug that I believe can be very dangerous for them, and to do a better job of keeping our communities safe by taking billions of dollars of criminal enterprise away from organized crime. Like the member opposite, I have spent a great deal of my life fighting organized crime. I know, as he does, what organized crime does in our communities, and the violence and victimization that it is responsible for. I also believe that we have a responsibility to protect the health of our citizens, and I know that the poison sold by criminals is often contaminated with dangerous chemicals and adulterated with even more dangerous drugs.

I have travelled across this country and spoken to families whom I have also worked hard to protect. They have told me they are worried about the health of their kids. They have told me they are worried about the outcomes for those kids in exposing them to those criminals. They are worried that their kids are going to end up with a criminal record.

I would ask the member whether he has given it any thought. Doing nothing is not an option. If not strictly regulating the production, distribution, and consumption of cannabis, restricting the access that kids would have to it, and taking this profit away from crime, what would the member do instead?

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Mr. Speaker, I consider the hon. member a friend and I respect his career in law enforcement. We might have different paths, but the same goals. I do remember one thing he said. He was 25 years old when he was out there protecting, and they gave him a gun and he may have had to use it for legal action. I actually beat him. I think I was only 19.

Government Orders

I totally agree with what the member across has said. We need to do something, but making it legal is not what we need to do. We need to spend money on education, education, education, and not only the public. I heard earlier about \$5.9 million being spent on education. That is in the budget. There are 11 or 12 provinces and territories in this country, so that is less than \$200,000 each. The ICBC, when I was in British Columbia as a police officer there, was spending approximately \$5 million a year on its program against impaired driving. It started to work, but it took a long time. Therefore, we need education, but not only with the children. We need it with the parents, through the schools, to the police officers. We need to get the message out that marijuana is bad.

• (2110)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the process that led to this bill and that, I think, raises a number of questions.

In particular, in the drafting of this bill, we learned that a consultant was asked to do a study. The consultant, a friend of the Liberal Party, was paid \$74,000 to find out how much marijuana costs on the street. Over time, we also learned that a number of Liberal Party friends are shareholders in marijuana companies, and that they stand to make money off this legalization.

Would the member care to comment on that, or on the fact that some people stand to make money on the legalization of marijuana?

[*English*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Yellowhead has about 30 seconds.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: Mr. Speaker, I know that the hon. member is deeply concerned. I see her carrying her child around here, and I am deeply concerned for her child's future.

Big business will benefit from this move being made by the Liberal government. Let us not mix anything. Just watch the stock market going up for those companies that have invested in legalized marijuana grow operations. Is it going to stop there? Absolutely not. The criminal element is also going to climb and prosper in this country, and I will tell you why, Mr. Speaker. I have yet to see anything in the legislation proposed by the Government of Canada to tell me how we are going to test the level of the marijuana that kids under the age of 18 are carrying, or even those—

The Speaker: Order. I am afraid the hon. member will have to tell me why later.

[*Translation*]

Resuming debate. The member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to this bill because it is important. While I do support it, I have some reservations, and we need to ask a lot of questions.

Why is the government choosing to do this?

The member for Vancouver Centre said clearly in her speech that unlike alcohol or tobacco, using cannabis could be justified for certain medical conditions.

I do not understand why the government did not decide to make marijuana an over-the-counter drug instead of legalizing it for recreational use. That option could have been studied, but apparently it was not. It could have been safer for people to go into a pharmacy if they wanted to buy marijuana and speak to a pharmacist every time. Marijuana could have been an over-the-counter drug.

This substance can interact with medication and other health conditions. Speaking of recreational usage, the government is trivializing the possible side effects associated with the drug. This approach and word choice is unfortunate. In a good many cases, recreational usage is not limited to having fun. Many people have told us that they use marijuana without a prescription because they have a hard time sleeping and it helps them fall asleep.

These people are not using marijuana for fun. They are using it to treat a health problem. They are self-medicating. “Recreational use” implies that anyone who uses marijuana without a prescription is assumed to be doing so for fun. That trivializes marijuana consumption and causes a problem.

Some of the bill's provisions will be difficult to act on because they are so vague. They lack clarity. For example, the bit about people being allowed to own four plants up to 100 centimetres is not very clear.

First of all, who is going to go into people's houses and measure those plants? Second, what if the plants are two centimetres too tall? Will the offending centimetres have to be cut off? Is there a fine per centimetre?

There are a lot of factors to consider here, and a bunch of measures that will be hard to implement because nobody has come up with concrete ways to implement them.

I mentioned the plant height, but who is going to be responsible for going to people's houses to see if they have four plants or not? How is that going to be monitored?

This is very complicated, and it downloads a lot of responsibility onto the provinces. I mentioned the \$74,000 paid to an outside consulting firm to find out what marijuana sells for on the street so some kind of pricing scheme can be developed. The government gave a consultant a contract and then ended up telling the provinces to set their own prices.

That is a pretty strange way to do things. There is going to be a lot of pressure on the provinces even though they were not necessarily consulted during the process. The government put all of this out there expecting the provinces to do all the work.

The biggest problem was that a health problem was being treated as a crime problem.

Government Orders

● (2115)

This resulted in young people having a criminal record. It also put pressure on the judicial system, which is ongoing, because we were still prosecuting people for simple possession of marijuana for personal use. The biggest problem is that we are clogging the judicial system. In light of the Jordan decision, it is even more important to eliminate from our courts cases that should not be prosecuted and could be handled differently.

In my opinion, drug use should be viewed as a health issue. We must provide the tools to fight addiction, do screening tests, provide support for prevention, and provide clear guidelines to health professionals so they know what to do.

At present, we do not have a lot of information about marijuana and medical marijuana. For example, we still do not know the exact profile of drug interactions. We know that cytochromes affect metabolism, but we do not know which ones. Although we know something about it, the profile of drug interactions is still not completely understood. We often look to past cases rather than a complete biochemical analysis. Thus, there is a lot of information missing.

The most serious shortcoming of the Liberal bill is that it does not leave enough room to do an about-face. Once it becomes legal, the product will be on the shelves, companies will have been set up, and there will be an important lobby. We will not have the breathing room to gradually move forward with the bill. We go straight to legalization whereas we could have gone step by step, with the first step being the decriminalization. Then, we could have gradually moved forward if legalization were required. At present, we are heading straight for legalization, a commercial legalization that is going to create companies and lobbies. It will not be easy to reverse this legalization.

Even though I support the bill, I think the government's approach does not leave a lot of room to manoeuvre. We will be stuck with this decision without really knowing if it was the best way to proceed, when what the government could have done was simply decriminalize marijuana immediately and stop treating a health problem like a crime problem.

What we have here is a bill that raises a lot of concerns. Unfortunately, there are some answers we will not have until well after the bill is passed. Once the law has been in force for a few years, we may start to realize that legalizing marijuana too quickly caused some problems, but by then it might be too late for a do-over.

Globally, we do not know exactly what the impact will be in jurisdictions that have legalized marijuana because the measures have been in place for just a few years. Some of these measures may be re-evaluated in 10 or 20 years, but by then it may be too late to take action.

● (2120)

[English]

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I think both my colleague and I would agree that young people should not have barriers for the rest of their lives, trouble finding employment, housing, or travelling because they have been convicted for possessing a very small amount of cannabis. We heard the Prime

Minister talk about his experience in his family when his late brother was able to avoid that happening to him.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on how she feels about the fact that many young people are going to continue to be convicted for something that will be legal in the next 15 months.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, that is one of the things that I find the most problematic.

Since we know that cannabis will be made legal a little over a year from now, it does not make sense to continue prosecuting people and bogging down the court system. Right now, murderers and people who have committed serious crimes are being allowed to go free because of the Jordan decision, and meanwhile, we are continuing to bog down our court system with cases like this.

The government could have decriminalized cannabis right away and implemented a system that would have allowed the police to give out fines and seize cannabis, since it would still be illegal. Rather than initiating a long legal process, the offence would be punishable by a fine. I think that measure should have been put in place immediately. It would have made it possible to avoid legal proceedings while still punishing offenders.

Most importantly, it would have helped reduce the burden on our courts and prevented people who have committed serious crimes from being released because of procedural delays.

● (2125)

[English]

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am sure my colleague is well aware that in 2013 Uruguay became the first country to legalize all aspects of marijuana use, and the intended purpose was to shrink the black market. I would be interested in hearing the member's comments on if she feels this legislation would have any effect at all on shrinking the black market for this product.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, I am not an expert on the black market, but from what I have read recently in the media, there is no guarantee that this legislation will eliminate the black market because, unfortunately, there is still money to be made.

Although it could happen, there is still a risk that the legalization of cannabis does not have the intended effect on the black market. For example, if the government does not manage to set a low enough price, then people may turn to the black market. That is what is currently happening with cigarettes. Many people buy cigarettes on the black market because of the high price of tobacco.

There is no real guarantee that the black market will be eliminated. It will depend on the price. It remains to be seen. However, some people who have done research on this seem to be calling into question the Liberals' claim that this will eliminate the black market.

The Speaker: The member for Marc-Aurèle-Fortin has time for a very brief question.

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on her decision to support Bill C-45. I would like to know what you plan to do as a member of Parliament. I know what I am going to do in my region. I would like to know how you will—

The Speaker: Order. I would remind the hon. member that he must direct his comments to the Chair.

Since he is out of time, I now recognize the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, I think we all make an effort to share information when people ask us questions. I recently took part in a documentary on this issue at the Abitibi-Témiscamingue CEGEP. I explained all the arguments, both for and against legalization. I think what matters most is getting information out there.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have more proof that the Liberal government is headed in the wrong direction with the marijuana legalization bill, which has Canadians, public safety organizations, and associations like the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police very worried.

This leads me to ask myself a basic question: do we have a sober statesman with clear and responsible ideas in charge of the country?

Setting up a task force on marijuana is smoke and mirrors. We are all familiar with the ravages of drugs. How can we accept the possibility of making pot legal and profitable to the detriment of our social and economic prosperity? It really took a Liberal cabinet to make that happen.

I am the member for the riding of Lévis—Lotbinière in Quebec, which is a great place to live, where our neighbourhoods are safe and sound, and where we can sleep peacefully at night. Today, I am also speaking as a responsible parent and father who, in all humility, wants to protect all children.

Drugs are a scourge. They may be illegal across the country, but they are still in our schools, our parks, and our streets, and they are still a threat to the future of our children.

Making the leap from medical use in the privacy of a person's own home to recreational use trivializes the real dangers that so many experts have identified and runs counter to creating a responsible society in which people focus on earning a living and making wise choices for the future. With typical reckless abandon, the Liberals spent thousands of dollars last fall on a report that told us what we already knew.

It confirmed that Colorado and Washington state, which legalized marijuana, are spending over \$13 million on prevention and education about the dangers of marijuana for a combined population of 12.7 million. The Liberal government must be under the influence of its own bill if it thinks that budgeting \$1.9 million for a population of 36.5 million will prevent cannabis legalization from having any impact on Canadians.

Fatal accidents caused by drivers who had consumed marijuana doubled in the state of Washington and tripled in Colorado. As for organized crime activity, there was no decrease after the drug was legalized.

Government Orders

The Health Canada document on the health impacts associated with cannabis is very clear. Youth aged 25 and under are most at risk in the short and long term. The short-term effects of cannabis on the brain include confusion, fatigue, impaired ability to remember, concentrate, and pay attention, and reduced ability to react quickly. How will our young people perform at school or at work?

Cannabis use can also result in psychotic episodes characterized by paranoia, delusions, mood disturbances, psychotic symptoms, and mental health disorders. The THC in cannabis can impair one's ability to drive safely and operate equipment at work. It can also increase the risk of falls and other accidents because THC can affect coordination, reaction time, ability to pay attention, decision-making abilities, and ability to judge distances.

I take no pleasure in telling you the true story of a young girl who could be my or anyone's daughter. She is now living every day with the long-term effects of a few years of cannabis use at the critical age of adolescence, as is her family.

We must also never forget that marijuana is the perfect gateway to other harder, stronger, more chemical-based, and more addictive drugs. That is a fact that should not be overlooked.

● (2130)

Fanny agreed to share her story so that we can help prevent other children from using marijuana. As a result of marijuana, Fanny faces major challenges every day, but, as they say, there is no use in regret. The damage has already been done.

Fanny was a very cheerful and bright little girl. In junior high, her first boyfriend introduced her to pot with a group of friends at the park in front of the school. Over the weeks that followed, there were more and more opportunities to use it and Fanny's marks plummeted. Her parents were devastated because they no longer recognized her. She started to sneak out at night, and she dropped out of school before finishing grade 8.

The decade that followed led exactly where one would expect marijuana use to lead. Fanny worked various jobs but could never hold one down because of her drug use. Over the years, she had a baby that she did not raise. She even ended up homeless and in a psychiatric ward because she was a danger to herself.

Fanny has still not kicked her addiction, even after an intensive seven-month stay at a treatment centre for women and dozens of Narcotics Anonymous meetings.

At 24, Fanny is sad about her condition and is trying to make a life for herself, even to survive, because she is really struggling. She has now been diagnosed with mental health issues and admits that she will have a lifelong addiction.

Government Orders

Like thousands of young adults who seek out help, trying to get off drugs and learning to lead a stable life are now two of Fanny's biggest challenges. As a child, she had bigger dreams, like becoming a veterinary assistant and having a family. Today, she regrets believing what others told her, that it was just pot.

With the Liberals providing unrestricted access to pot, it will be easier than ever for our youth to start using it. Marijuana has many long-term effects on the brain: it affects memory, concentration, intelligence, also known as IQ, and the ability to think and make decisions.

These effects may be irreversible even after people stop using cannabis. The long-term effects on mental health combined with frequent cannabis consumption increase the risk of suicide, depression, and anxiety disorder. Since pot reduces anxiety, fear, and panic in the short term, it is a never-ending spiral.

There will be no end to heartbreaking stories like Fanny's once marijuana is legalized. Our health care system is already maxed out. Social services centres are struggling to help neglected children whose parents are grappling with serious issues related to marijuana, among other things. Does anyone really see this getting better once people can smoke pot in public? It most certainly will not.

Who is going to pay for these wasted lives? The Liberal Party fund? That would sure be nice. How much personal responsibility is the person whose idea this was in the first place going to take for the social disaster that is about to befall us all? I am talking about the Prime Minister himself. Are we going to accept this vision of society for the people we love and cherish? I myself most certainly will not, and I hope the Senate will do likewise.

The infamous framework for the legalization of cannabis in Canada was only drafted, in my humble opinion, to ease the conscience of the Liberal Party, which must feel as though it is about to make an irrevocable mistake. What that report does not say is how many people could even die, in the short and long term.

You cannot put a price on human life. I truly hope that some kind of miracle will happen and that this Liberal bill, like all the other Liberal Party promises, will somehow be forgotten and that the Conservative government will, as usual, return to power to undo all the damage done by the Liberals.

• (2135)

[English]

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when I am in Oakville I get into the high schools as much as I can. I talk to kids there about the dangers of marijuana.

The member told a very powerful story about a young woman who in high school began to use marijuana, and that took her down a very difficult and disastrous path in her life. That is exactly what this bill is trying to prevent. It is trying to stop marijuana from getting into the hands of young people in high schools and stop the black market that is feeding them.

If we do not pass this legislation, what else would the member suggest we do to stop that path for that young woman?

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, we are going to legalize marijuana and allow people to grow plants in their homes. What are teenagers going to do?

They will grow it, they will smoke it, and they will dry it. When it is illegal, they do not know how to do all that. Now, however, our entire society is going to learn to grow and smoke cannabis.

What will happen in 10, 15, 20, or 30 years? Half of all Canadians will be in some sort of limbo.

Who is going to pay for all this? This will be the decline of Canadian society. The Liberals will remember this for a very long time.

• (2140)

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague a question.

Had we opted for decriminalization, cannabis would not be legal, police officers could seize it, and people would be fined rather than prosecuted. Would my colleague be in favour of such a system?

Under that kind of system, marijuana would be decriminalized, but police officers could still intervene by seizing the marijuana and handing out fines.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question, and I congratulate her on her second child.

Our young adolescents are victims. The real culprits are those who supply drugs to our children through very sophisticated networks. Cannabis may be a soft drug and not as harmful as other drugs, but people start with that and then want stronger and stronger drugs, chemical drugs that create a dependency.

One child with an addiction is one too many. It affects the entire family: brothers, sisters, grandparents, cousins, and friends. It can result in suicide. There have been suicides in my riding; that is not something people tend to forget.

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at my colleague's attitude. His party just had its leadership race and the member for Beauce was in favour of legalizing cannabis.

I imagine that his chief organizer did a survey to find out what members of the Conservative Party between the ages of 18 and 25 think about this.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Mr. Speaker, I think that, as a former high school teacher, my colleague opposite must have seen thousands of students. I am sure that he saw hundreds and hundreds of students who were caught in the same pattern.

I would like to tell a quick story about my friend Gilles, whom I knew when I was 13 years old and in grade 8. Gilles never finished grade 9. In grade 10 he was part of a biker gang, and by grade 11 he was no longer coming to school. We did not know what happened to him, but he had a lot of money. I saw him again 18 years later and he told me that he had to commit suicide for some obscure reason.

Three weeks later, he was dead. He intentionally crashed his motorcycle. He had told me he was going to do it.

Government Orders

It is the same pattern. Pot, hard drugs, street gangs, and money problems. He committed suicide.

That pattern is going to repeat itself hundreds of thousands of times because of the Liberals' big plan for Canadian society. The answer is no. That will never happen.

[*English*]

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to be here today to take part in the discussion surrounding Bill C-45, an act respecting cannabis and to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code, and other acts. It is also known informally as the cannabis act.

On this side of the House it has always been a top priority to stand up for the health and safety of Canadians, and I would like to thank all of my Conservative colleagues for their hard work in that regard. We are committed to making sure that the voices of everyday Canadians are heard, no matter what the issue might be.

To that end, I feel I am privileged to stand here today and speak to the effects this legislation may have on the Canadian public, and to ensure that the Liberals understand the implications of this policy.

I must mention that I find it rather rich that the Liberals are willing to take years to consult Canadians about basic economic projects, but they have no issue ramming through legislation like Bill C-45 in a matter of months.

The bill represents a seismic shift in our society. With prohibition repealed in the 1920s, alcohol and tobacco have been legal, on and off, for nearly 150 years, and yet we are still working out the kinks of the policy framework for these substances. To think it is a good idea to rush legislation that would have such a wide-ranging and drastic effect across the entire country is short-sighted and ill-advised.

Bill C-45 is a very complex piece of legislation that touches on many aspects of people's lives. One of the things I am most concerned about with respect to the legal age of cannabis is the potential effects it could have on the health of Canadians. This means that we do not have very much science and evidence-based research on the effects of this drug. This was acknowledged in the final report of the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation, which states:

We are aware of the shortcomings in our current knowledge base around cannabis and the effects of cannabis on human health and development.

That is concerning. I do not think it is unreasonable to want to have a full understanding of the health effects of cannabis use before it is legalized. That way, we can ensure that the proper framework, policies, and guidelines are put in place before making the substance readily available across the country. Instead, the Liberals are rushing this legislation through the House in hopes of keeping their promised timeline of having the bill reach royal assent before July 2018. Keeping campaign promises is all well and good, but doing it without the full knowledge of the implications of the bill is really irresponsible.

As mentioned, the main areas of concern I have with the bill are the impacts it would have on the Canadian health care system. Before I became an MP, I was a chiropractor and a primary care

provider. I have seen first-hand how the abuse of intoxicating substances affects the health of individuals like us.

When it comes to cannabis, studies show that the earlier cannabis use begins and the more frequently and longer it is used, the greater the risk of potential developmental harm, some of which may be long-lasting or permanent. This becomes problematic given that Bill C-45 would make cannabis more accessible to everyone, including youth.

This goes back to my point that we do not fully understand the health effects of cannabis use. What we do know is that the brain continues to develop up to the age of 25, meaning that people who use it before that age are putting themselves at risk. There are associations between frequent cannabis use and mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and psychoses.

At this point, current science is not definitive on a safe age for cannabis use. Why is it that the Liberals, who love to study and consult everything under the sun, have no issue with rapidly ramming through legislation that does not have a solid basis in science, has the potential to burden our health care system, and may cause irreversible harm to our youth? These same Liberals continually tell us that they are the true scientists, that they understand science, and that they listen to scientists—well, perhaps junk science, but I digress.

The burden to the health care system seems to be one of the aspects of the bill that has not been thought out. Cannabis is typically smoked, and similar to tobacco, it has negative effects on the health of the lungs.

Each day in Canada, 100 Canadians die of a smoking-related illness. Each year, there are more than 230,000 deaths for that same reason. With the legalization and wide availability of cannabis, it is assumed that this number would only increase.

●(2145)

Smoke is smoke. We do not send firefighters into a smoke-filled room without respirators, so why would we encourage another means to harm our lungs? As a health care provider, I cannot support an increased burden to our country's health care system, and I certainly cannot get behind this idea when the demographic it will affect most negatively is our youth. The federal government needs to protect the young people of Canada. I do not feel that the bill goes far enough to ensure that is the case.

Another major issue that I see with this piece of legislation is that of occupational health and safety. In my riding, there are a lot of industries that rely heavily on manual labour from their employees, an example of which is the construction industry. The Construction Labour Relations Association of Saskatchewan wrote a letter to my office, outlining some of its concerns with Bill C-45. I have an excerpt from that letter. It says that the construction and maintenance industry is widely recognized as being a safety-sensitive industry, where substance use and abuse pose significant risks to workers' health and safety, and that their contractors are deeply concerned about the forthcoming legalization of marijuana.

Government Orders

Another industry that this has the potential to affect is the transportation industry. My riding serves as one of the major trucking corridors through the United States and up into Canada. Hundreds of transport trucks traverse my riding daily, going through small communities and often on single-lane highways. These single-lane highways are dangerous, to the degree that a “time to twin” committee has been established with the specific goal of working to get infrastructure funding to have Highways 39 and 6 twinned.

There are already a number of accidents involving 18-wheelers every year in southeast Saskatchewan, which sadly results in an average of three deaths annually. I can only assume that there will be more, unless there are specific provisions in place regarding the use of cannabis while at work.

There needs to be a framework for employers to lawfully continue to manage the workplace risks associated with cannabis use. They need to be able to have an option to test their employees whenever they feel the need, especially if the employer feels as though safety standards have been violated. Who will protect these employers from legal challenges, and who will protect fellow workers from the safety risks caused by intoxicated individuals?

I hope that the Liberals can understand why this is so important in labour-centric industries like construction, agriculture, oil and gas, and more. Both employees and employers deserve to have a clear and standardized set of rules regarding the acceptable use of intoxicants, including cannabis, to ensure that occupational health and safety is the major priority, no matter what.

This also applies to the matter of public safety in general. This is a story I do not tell a lot, but when I was 16 years old, while riding a bicycle, I was the victim of a hit and run collision where a driver who was impaired due to drug and alcohol use hit me and left me for dead on the side of the road. I had brain matter draining out of my ear and was in a coma for two weeks. I nearly died as a result of that. It affected my life dramatically, and still does to this day.

That personal experience is part of the reason why I feel so strongly about the need for policies to be in place regarding drug testing with respect to impaired driving before cannabis is legalized. It is a matter of ensuring public safety, and on this side of the House, we think that public safety should be put above keeping campaign promises. These tests need to be concise, accurate, and defensible. They need to be usable and in place prior to any legislation. Otherwise, we are closing the barn door after the horses have left.

In closing, I believe that Bill C-45 is flawed in many regards and that there needs to be a better understanding of the overarching effects of cannabis before it is made available to the Canadian public. I call on the Liberals to do the right thing, and to stand up for the health and safety of Canadians when it comes to the legalization of cannabis.

• (2150)

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette (Winnipeg Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was reading a book by a gentleman named Dr. Gabor Maté, from east-side Vancouver, *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction*. It is about addiction. He was talking about how addiction affects many people, from high-functioning workaholics, all the way down to people who use drugs in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

If the member takes the chance to read the book and understand what he is saying, it effectively says there is addiction everywhere in society, probably even in the House.

Mr. Jim Eglinski: No.

Mr. Robert-Falcon Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, there probably is. Many of us are workaholics and we are away from our families. It is not a normal lifestyle.

How do we then combat, for instance, alcoholism or drug addiction? What do we actually do then to make a difference, to ensure that people have positive addictions that people see as contributing to society and not those that are taking from or destroying society?

Mr. Robert Kitchen: Mr. Speaker, the member talked about addictions. He is right that there are a lot of people in the world dealing with these issues and lot of times the question is why. What was it that started them on that path? There are many theories as to what that may be, but there is no 100% answer. To say that legalizing the product to allow somebody to use it is the answer to addressing it, I do not see that as appropriate.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was listening with interest when my Conservative colleague was echoing his concerns about the age limit that has been set of age 18. I know the legislation allows for provinces to harmonize that with their alcohol laws. Some provinces, like my home province of British Columbia, set it at 19, while the neighbouring province of Alberta set it as 18. Age 18 is the age that we trust people to join the Canadian Armed Forces and go into combat. It is the age when we trust people to have the maturity to cast ballots to elect every member of Parliament in the House.

I realize that the member has very legitimate concerns about the habitual and chronic use of marijuana on the developing brain, especially under the age of 25, but we also have to give the benefit of the doubt to the people who use marijuana. If we can trust them with the responsibility of joining the Canadian Armed Forces and casting votes, should we not try to use a public education campaign to show them the dangers, instead of setting the bar too high when they have all of these other responsibilities that they seem to carry out in a fine and upstanding manner.

• (2155)

Mr. Robert Kitchen: Mr. Speaker, we often look at age limits and often in my life I have wondered why it is that certain states in the U.S. send their soldiers to war at 18 years of age when the drinking age is 25. These are issues that need to be looked at and we need to make sure, when we deal with the provinces, they are able to balance whatever the legislation is.

Government Orders

Do we say 18 or do we say 19? Do we say 12? The legislation would allow for somebody who is 12 years old to have four grams of marijuana. Why does a 12-year-old need to possess four grams of marijuana? I cannot fathom that. If it is 12, why should it not be 11? Who makes that decision? If we are the ones making that decision, we need to make certain we have the facts right and all of the policies and procedures in place before we take any of those steps.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government talked about spending \$5.9 million over five years across Canada to educate people. I broke that down earlier and it is less than \$200,000 per province. How far does the member think that is going to go to educate people?

Mr. Robert Kitchen: Mr. Speaker, that is true. When we ask how far it is going to go, the reality is that it is not going to go far at all. The bottom line is that it is not even in place yet. If the legislation goes through a year from now and the government has not yet taken the steps to start educating young people, we will be behind the eight ball and way behind the curve. These people will be left out to dry.

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have an opportunity to speak to Bill C-45, which would bring in a wide-ranging set of changes to our lives.

First let me say that the NDP has a proud 45-year history of championing marijuana decriminalization. We have been asking the Liberals to immediately decriminalize simple possession of marijuana as an interim measure, as many young and racialized Canadians continue to receive charges and criminal records that will affect them for the rest of their lives, not to mention the thousands of Canadians who have criminal records for simple possession of a substance that will soon cease to be illegal.

The changes to the law that Bill C-45 would bring are long overdue, but while we wait for the bill to become law, why will the government not bring in an interim measure of decriminalization, or at the very least, why will it not invoke prosecutorial and police discretion to cease enforcing an unjust law?

In their election platform, the Liberals claimed that arresting for and prosecuting these offences is expensive for our criminal justice system. It traps too many Canadians in the criminal justice system for minor, non-violent offences. Given the current situation of an overloaded justice system where cases are being thrown out and charges stayed because of long delays in courts, it just does not make any sense to keep charging Canadians for simple possession of marijuana.

I am particularly concerned about the continued criminalization of cannabis because Saskatchewan is the place people are most likely to get busted for simple possession of marijuana and Saskatoon tops the list of major Canadian cities.

According to 2014 data from Statistics Canada, 77% of the time Saskatoon police stop someone suspected of having pot, they lay a charge. That compares with 48% in Regina, and the Canadian average is 39%. Meanwhile, if we look at the per capita rates of charges, Saskatoon ranks fourth behind Kelowna, Gatineau, and Sherbrooke. Overall, in 2014, police reported more than 104,000 drug offences, of which two-thirds, 66%, were related to cannabis and mainly possession of cannabis.

The Liberals have yet to explain their reasoning for refusing to decriminalize marijuana and their intransigence is adding to the confusion. Indeed, even law enforcement agencies and experts agree that inconsistencies abound:

Neil Boyd, the director of the school of criminology at Simon Fraser University, has concerns about who is facing criminal consequences for pot possession.

“I don't think that we can really be confident that the law is being applied equally,” Boyd said. “We know that young people with fewer resources and less access to private space are going to be much more likely to be processed for this offense than people who are older and have access to private space.”

Boyd said some people may see outdoor use of marijuana as a nuisance.

“It could be a civil fine for public use of cannabis, that would be entirely legitimate. But to treat a person who's using cannabis as a criminal. It's like using a sledgehammer for a flea.”

Two years ago, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police called for the option to write a ticket for simple possession, noting that right now their only choice is to lay charges or turn a blind eye.

In fact, even the Prime Minister has admitted that the rich and well connected have an easier time avoiding a criminal record while citing the example of his late brother, Michel. Their father, Pierre Trudeau, reached out to his friends in the legal community, got the best possible lawyer, and was very confident that he was going to be able to make those charges go away. People from minority communities, marginalized communities, without economic resources, are not going to have that kind of option to go through to clear their name in the justice system.

Not all of us have the connections of course that the Trudeaus have, and tens of thousands of Canadians will end up having criminal records for life because, despite the Prime Minister's remarks to the contrary during the election campaign, the Minister of Public Safety has stated that the government has no interest in granting a blanket pardon for people with criminal records for possessing small amounts of cannabis.

• (2200)

There is also no indication that the Liberals are interested in making pardons easier to obtain, or if they will address the high \$631 fee for an application. Not being able to access a pardon remains a serious obstacle for people who are trying to escape their criminal past and move on with their lives. Why will the Liberals not commit to pardoning those who have previous convictions for simple possession of marijuana?

Aside from the confusion surrounding the pardons and the continued criminalization of simple possession, many questions remain unanswered. There are questions regarding the proposed cannabis tracking system. What does it mean for the privacy of Canadians? How will the data be managed? How much will it cost to implement? For the moment, Health Canada cannot say anything other than that it intends to offset such costs through licensing and other fees. Clearly, we need more details and an extended discussion around these important questions.

Government Orders

We also need answers on crossing the border for those who admit to smoking marijuana. For instance, the Prime Minister himself could be sanctioned at the border and banned for life if he did not have a diplomatic passport. We already have a host of problems at the border with Canadians being stopped, interrogated, and turned away without good cause. How is the government proposing to deal with any or all of these irritants for Canadians at the border?

One of the negative health consequences of the criminalization of cannabis has been a widely acknowledged lack of scientific research into the health impacts of cannabis use, especially chronic long-term use, particularly among young people. One especially grave concern is the fact that there is at present very little research available on the impact of cannabis on the development of the young brain. We in the NDP will continue to press the government to begin establishing research plans and funding into these important areas.

I have also heard from many seniors in my constituency who would like to be better informed and supported as they try to navigate the confusing medical marijuana maze. In fact, an estimated 90% of prescription holders are accessing cannabis illegally rather than through licensed producers. Many Canadians with ailments and chronic pain issues may prefer medical marijuana over opiates as a treatment option.

However, the task force highlighted the need for access to accurate information on the risks and negative effects of cannabis. With a lack of enough peer-reviewed, credible research on the impact of cannabis use, there is a tendency for cannabis activists to overstate the capacity of cannabis to heal or cure certain chronic conditions. All Canadians will benefit from robust, well-researched, and prominent public information and education programs, but the government has not been clear about how it will be funding public education and research and how that will be rolled out. Will the Liberals commit to using revenues from cannabis legalization for public awareness, prevention, and treatment?

Bill C-45 also leaves many key issues to the provinces that will need time to set up their own regulatory systems. This is yet another reason that this process should have been started earlier.

The task force report calls upon all levels of government to quickly build capacities to create compliant cannabis policies and regulations. It will be a complicated policy task. Western Canadian economic opportunities to seize the economic potential of a new thriving cannabis sector are unprecedented. The determining factor between profit and loss, both for businesses and governments, is how effectively the regulatory framework is created, implemented, and monitored.

What remains unclear is what the tax structure and revenue structure will look like for cannabis and how this will be shared between the federal government and the provinces. The provinces and Canadians will have to wait to hear from the Minister of Finance on that matter.

Because the existing cannabis market is so substantial, it is critical to shift the dialogue toward tangible collaborative discussions on co-creating a taxable provincial cannabis distribution model. First nations, municipalities, provinces, and the federal government all have the opportunity to realize sustainable taxation revenues,

provided inclusive and enforceable regulations are co-created with the cannabis industry as part of a collaborative public policy.

It is my hope that the government does not sweep these questions under the carpet and instead tackles them, because Canadians deserve to have clear and honest answers from their government.

● (2205)

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Saskatoon West for her remarks.

The objective of this act is to prevent young people from accessing and using cannabis. I think everyone in this House understands the consequences for young Canadians who would chronically use cannabis, and the long-term effects on the brain and development. I think we all agree with that.

As I mentioned earlier, when I am in high schools in Oakville talking to the students, I talk about the health effects of marijuana, but I also remind them it is illegal to possess it and that there are consequences to breaking the law.

The member has spoken very passionately about decriminalizing marijuana in the current environment. Decriminalizing marijuana, I believe, would lead to an explosion of use. It would do the exact opposite of what we are trying to do, which is not have young people using marijuana. The solution is to regulate and legalize marijuana so we get it out of the black market, we protect students from having access to it, we make it punitive for people who are trying to sell marijuana to young people, and we fix the problem. Decriminalizing it does the exact opposite.

Would the member explain how, in her view, decriminalizing marijuana would stop the usage of marijuana by young Canadians?

Ms. Sheri Benson: Mr. Speaker, I was not implying in my remarks that decriminalization was the answer or the be-all and end-all. What I was saying is that in the next 15 months, while the government proceeds with legalizing it, there will be young Canadians who will be caught by police with very small amounts of marijuana. They will be charged and they will get a criminal record. For many in my riding, that will be a criminal record for life, because they will never be able to afford the amount of money it costs to get a pardon.

What I am saying is that in the interim, does it make sense that the government continues to give young Canadians criminal records or even puts them behind bars, when in the next 15 months it will be legalizing something that even a day earlier might have been criminal? I do not think that is fair, and I think the government should address that. It could easily move forward and ensure that those criminal records do not happen for young people.

● (2210)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it appears, through the discussion tonight, that the NDP is going to be generally supporting the bill. However, I want to ask a question specifically on the issue of allowing the limit of four plants per home.

Government Orders

The police association is asking officials to hold off on homegrowns. It says that if Canadians have their own pot plants, it would run counter to the government's objective of what my colleague earlier referred to as a highly regulated and controlled system of legalization. The association argues that permitting homegrown cannabis would create too much work for law enforcement. The police chiefs said it would be a struggle to ensure Canadians do not grow too much or try to sell their crop on the black market. The chiefs also said it would be difficult to keep children and youth away from cannabis, and that home grow-ops in general come with the risk of causing electrical problems and fire hazards that put first responders at risk.

My question is, what is my colleague's position on the issue of allowing four plants per home in a time when we are saying we are going to have a highly regulated environment? It seems to run counter to that argument.

Ms. Sheri Benson: Mr. Speaker, I think that in my remarks I listed some of the top reasons that I felt there needed to be more work done on the bill. The NDP is supporting this bill. We hope that those things will be worked out in committee and that the committee will be allowed to do its work and make any recommendations based on testimony of witnesses. One thing that could be included is the comments my hon. colleague has shared about some law enforcement agencies and their concerns about the regulation within the act on the number of plants that individuals can have.

I do not have a professional opinion on the number, but I would like to see the committee thoroughly review that and perhaps call forward some of the folks who have commented to you in the examples you cited.

The Speaker: I remind the hon. member for Saskatoon West to direct her comments to the Chair.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to say what a great honour it is to see you in the chair at 10:15 this Thursday evening. Yours is a very prestigious position, Mr. Speaker. Your predecessor is over here now, and in two and a half years, he will be on the other side. The future is yours, Mr. Speaker. We need a good dose of humour tonight because what is going on here is no laughing matter, and it is the government's fault.

The government is delivering on a regrettable, dangerous, and perhaps even deadly election promise. It is unacceptable for the Liberal government to make ours one of the few countries in the world to legalize marijuana consumption. Before I dig into the issues, I just want to go over the broad strokes.

Why is it dangerous to legalize cannabis? Because it is a gateway drug. Cannabis can directly kill brain cells. It cannot be compared to cigarettes. Earlier, we heard the argument that cigarettes should be banned because they cause cancer. However, cigarettes have been legal for centuries. That is the problem. If tobacco were invented today, it would be banned immediately. However, tobacco has existed for hundreds of years and our efforts to eradicate it are working.

People of my parents' generation were inveterate smokers, although my parents did not smoke. People of my generation did not smoke much. As for my children, they have never smoked. Thus, we have managed to get rid of the cigarette and now the government wants to legalize marijuana use.

Do I have to remind members that marijuana kills brain cells and they do not regenerate? Woe to those who make comparisons with alcohol. Alcohol does affect the brain, but it does not kill brain cells, although it can result in disasters and unfortunate incidents. Nevertheless, the Liberals want to legalize marijuana and that is unacceptable.

Also, the Liberals want to make it legal to use marijuana beginning at age 18. They keep saying that everything must be science-based. They are also saying that our government ignored science, which is completely false. Can the Liberals name a single specialist, doctor, or scientific authority who has said that using marijuana poses no problem for an 18-year-old? On the contrary, every scientific study in the world says that using the drug before the age of 25 is dangerous, because the brain is still developing at that time. This is also what the College of Family Physicians of Canada said. It has been proven that marijuana attacks brain cells directly, and yet the Liberals want to legalize it. It makes no sense. Setting the legal age at 18 is a huge mistake.

Another dumb thing about this bill is that it lets people grow marijuana at home. During the election campaign, the Liberals said they would control marijuana production, that it would happen in specific places, and that everything would be just fine. They said they would be able to rein in what was being done illegally. Are they going to check all 20 million houses in this country? Give me a break.

Then they say the plants cannot be taller than three feet. Am I supposed to believe that the RCMP is going to get out its tape measure and let people keep growing plants that are two feet, three and three-quarter inches tall? That is ridiculous.

The Liberal government is going to put our children in ridiculous, preposterous, unacceptable situations. That is the problem. The Liberals are constantly spouting their lofty ideals. They say this is a better way to restrict children's access to marijuana. Yeah, right. Kids are going to be able to go into all these houses where pot is growing. That is not protection; that is an open bar. My kids are grown up, but I remember back when they were 10 and they went to play with their friends. Now parents are going to have to find out if their kids' friends' parents are growing marijuana at home.

● (2215)

I can tell you that my son or daughter definitely would not be going there. Imagine the family arguments. Well done. Another stupid move from this government.

Government Orders

This is going to cause a thousand problems. For whom? Not for the federal government. It will be up to the provinces and municipalities to clean up this mess. What is legalizing marijuana really going to achieve? It is simply going to cause problems in the areas of public safety, health, and education, which are all provincial jurisdictions. What is going to happen with all of that? The government will say that it is doing this for the well-being of Canadians and our kids, and the provinces will have to figure out the costs. Well done. This is typical of the Liberal government.

This is not to mention how our cities and towns will be affected; it will be significant. Proper legislation is needed regarding growing this stuff at home. Will apartment owners be allowed to prohibit growing it? No, because the federal legislation allows it. Municipalities will be left to deal with this, so in one city it might be allowed, while in another city it might not. Well done.

The Liberals like to manufacture problems. They want to fix them, but they also like to create them. That is why this bill is unacceptable.

It does not stop there. What is one of the stupidest things about this bill? When will it be implemented? When will Canada become one of the only countries in the world to legalize marijuana? It will be on Canada's birthday, July 1, 2018. That is the legacy the Liberals are going to leave. This year, we are going to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday—hooray for Canada—and a year later it will be hooray for marijuana. That does not make any sense. That is how the Liberal government is managing our country.

The Liberals are saying that this is being done elsewhere and that it is working so they are going to continue to move forward with their plan, but that is not true. The experiences of Colorado and Washington state have shown that this is a bad idea, that it increases the use and production of cannabis, and that it leads to an increase in organized crime, motor vehicle accidents, and other problems. What is more, cannabis addiction has a negative impact on health. That is unacceptable.

Like any good MP, I like to consult my constituents. Over the past week, I sent a parliamentary mail-out to ask people in the riding of Louis—Saint-Laurent to tell me what they think of the situation. I received nearly 500 responses, and 93% of people said that the Liberal government should not pass this legislation and should not legalize marijuana.

I will read some of their comments. Ms. Tremblay said that legalizing marijuana would be one less obstacle on the path to harder drugs. Other people said that growing marijuana at home would make it easier for younger children to have access to it. One man mentioned that he had lost five friends to suicide because of this crap. Another said that it puts young people at a higher risk of developing mental illnesses, and another said he had four grandchildren and that he found this shameful. A father of a three-year-old girl with another child on the way said that he was worried and found the situation extremely troubling.

I received a lot of comments. Here are some more. People also said that they disagreed with this measure because it would encourage young people to start using cannabis, and that Colorado's experience has shown that this is not a good idea. One woman did

not want this for her granddaughter, her children, or her five great-grandchildren. Someone wanted to know who would benefit from the illegal sales, while someone else said that the only reason this was happening was so that the Prime Minister could win the votes of young people. Another person said that the decision goes against the efforts that the provinces are making, while another said that cannabis is four times stronger now than it was in the 1970s and that it is destroying people's minds.

I want to end with this last comment. "It is inhumane to toy with the health of our children." That one was signed by a woman who lives on Ormière Boulevard, Ms. Paule Deltell, my mother.

What I want to say is that it is a very bad bill.

● (2220)

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary for Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague opposite for waking us up at this hour of the night with his enthusiastic speech.

He gave many examples of certain cases and read emails that he received.

At this very moment, the law prohibits the consumption, purchase, and sale of marijuana.

My question for the member opposite is simple: is it safer to tell our youth to obtain marijuana from organized crime or to legalize it and make it safer?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, you cannot imagine how pleased I am to answer this question.

First, the only thing we want to tell people is do not go near it, period. It is bad, bad, bad.

According to the member's logic, it would be terrible to do nothing because we would continue supporting organized crime, which makes no sense. Is the member going down the same road as his colleague from Beaches—East York who said in an interview on January 27 that marijuana was the first step and that the next step was cocaine? Apparently he subscribes to the principle that legalizing something makes everything just fine.

Is the member a party to these irresponsible ideas or, on the contrary, does he agree with his Prime Minister, who this afternoon told the House that this is not what he wants to do? That is unacceptable.

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw on my colleague's experience in the National Assembly and ask him if there were debates about marijuana while he was there.

What are his thoughts on the burden this will place on the provinces, including Quebec?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, no, we did not debate it. Plus, anyone trying to debate it with me would have been in for a rough ride.

Government Orders

One of Quebec's ministers, Lucie Charlebois, recently issued a statement in which she said that the Government of Quebec would have to equip parents and children in schools, support employers and unions with major workplace prevention programs, pass legislation to do with housing, set up a specialized distribution system, and train police officers. She said this would put pressure on Quebec's judicial system and that the municipalities would have to be involved on the regulation end of things.

That is the Liberal government's marijuana legalization gift to the provinces. Fantastic.

• (2225)

[*English*]

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent is on the finance committee and expresses a lot of common sense there, but he has absolutely lost his common sense here tonight. He talked about a measuring stick to measure how high the plants are, but a measuring stick going to the ceiling would not measure all of his exaggerations here tonight.

I will ask the member the simple question that the parliamentary secretary asked earlier: what are you going to do instead? The Government of Canada is recognizing it, is legalizing it, is controlling it, is educating with respect to it, and is starting to deal with this problem. What would the member opposite do? What are you going to do instead to actually control the problem—

The Speaker: I do not know if the hon. member for Malpeque wants to know what I would do. I do not think that is what he means, so I would encourage him to address himself to the Chair and to speak in the third person when referring to other members in the House.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to answer the question of my hon. colleague from Malpeque. It is a great pleasure to work with him at the finance committee, even if we disagree on so many issues. I respect him a lot.

We have to have more severe controls against the people who benefit from illegal marijuana. If the government wants to convince people to be very careful with respect to marijuana, I would ask the MP to convince his counterparts in the cabinet to be sure to give the necessary money, because the government wants to spend \$1.9 million a year for the 36 million people in Canada. The states of Colorado and Washington spend \$13 million a year, while the Liberal government wants to spend less than \$2 million a year. If it wants to protect people and inform them that it is wrong, it needs to spend the money necessary, not the pennies it will be giving toward enforcing it.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's oratory. He has obviously woken up the House. I am afraid I am going to put everyone back to sleep.

As I stand here with my colleagues, Canadians are paying close attention to the discussion we are having on the legalization of the distribution, sale, and possession of recreational marijuana in Canada. This subject no doubt evokes many emotions on all sides, and I know there can be some strongly held views on this issue.

I feel that the government has rushed into the bill without really stopping to consider all the consequences. The Liberals are doing it to meet a campaign commitment without considering all the repercussions and effects that this legislation scheme may have.

In April, shortly after the legislation was introduced by the Liberals, I had the opportunity to host a series of community round table meetings with municipal officials throughout my constituency. I met with mayors, reeves, councillors, MLAs, and media. One of the very major concerns that these officials had was with respect to the timeline of the bill. The Liberals have introduced this very broad legislation, setting the minimum age, the number of plants, and the potency of marijuana that can be sold. They then basically told the provinces and the territories to develop their own implementation plan for the rest. That means there could be 13 different regimes across Canada.

In the lead-up to what they knew was impending legislation from the feds, the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association asked the Province of Alberta to act. As a result, in Alberta, the provincial NDP formed a secretariat to deal with this issue. That is great. The problem is that the secretariat in Alberta is excluding the municipalities from being part of it.

The Liberals keep talking about consultations with municipalities and municipal involvement, but how can this work? When the provinces are tasked with doing most of the heavy lifting for the feds, the municipalities are in fact left out of the decision-making process at the grassroots level.

As a former mayor for many years, I have a particular concern about the impact on communities and on municipalities. Municipalities are really concerned about this rush to legalize marijuana completely. They are concerned about the fact that they are going to have to pick up the tab for a variety of new responsibilities that are essentially being dumped on them overnight.

Municipalities will likely be responsible for enforcement and zoning, as well as for creating an entire new set of by-laws surrounding this new regime. With respect to zoning and by-laws, there will be a very long process. Staff will have to develop a plan. There will be public meetings and hearings. Advertising will have to be done. City staff will devote countless hours and resources over several months. There is a time factor here, and it cannot be rushed, which calls into question the government's timeline.

Licensing is not a cash cow, despite what some on the government side would have us believe. It will not be anywhere near what is required to cover the new costs this regime will impose on municipalities.

In a previous sitting of the House, I asked the Liberals what concrete actions they would be taking to support municipalities, seeing that they had dumped such a huge burden on them with very little time for them to adapt. The answer from the government side was quite generic, and it is not something I am particularly enthusiastic about. For example, the parliamentary secretary mentioned providing equipment and training, but did not mention who would pay for it. This does not help municipal planning.

Government Orders

Another area that will impact municipalities is they will have to rewrite their HR policies, because now they will have the threat of people coming to work under the influence of marijuana. The last thing any municipality wants is an employee operating heavy equipment while under the influence.

Enforcement as well means a whole new set of rules and regulations, planning, and money spent by municipalities.

The Liberals have essentially washed their hands of having to do any of the local work on this file. They have told municipalities, "Here is a big new change; you have about a year to implement it. Have a nice day."

This is unfortunate, because I am sure that municipalities in my riding would have been willing to work collaboratively with the province, but they have been exempted from that. It is unfortunate that the province would not allow this to take place.

Another area of concern that I heard in the private sector while crisscrossing my riding hosting community roundtables was the concern surrounding workplace regulations regarding health and safety. Whether these organizations are small to medium-sized enterprises like ECS Safety Services in Brooks in my riding of Bow River or large outfits like oil and gas sector companies, there are some major concerns about work-related marijuana use.

● (2230)

As we know very well, my home province of Alberta has a large oil and gas sector, and it requires a significant amount of labour. These sectors now struggle at times to have enough clean employees. Coming under the influence of marijuana now is another significant challenge they are going to be facing.

I understand that the federal government must respect constitutional division of powers, and it says it is consulting with municipalities. It talks about some of the 22 major cities, like Toronto. In my riding, there are none of those 22 major cities. They are not talking about where the vast majority of our rural people live, so when they are talking about consulting, they are talking about some of the 22 major cities. That is not where I am from.

However, the Liberals can absolutely consult with the provinces to make sure they are going to support the municipalities. There is a process, if they wish to do it strongly enough. The federal government could, by funding, support these new powers for enforcement. It could come through the form of equal sharing of the tax revenue generated by legalized recreational marijuana. Let us consider the federal gas tax model, for example, where we cut out the middleman, which is the province, and the money goes directly to the municipalities, mostly. If it does not, it is property taxes that would end up covering the cost of this, because municipalities will be doing the heavy lifting at the grassroots level.

There are other ways the government may be able to support this as it rushes the terms of this brand new piece of legislation. However, if it does not take the time, if it pushes it too quickly, it will be the property tax payers as the major source of revenue for municipalities. As a result, taxes will go up in the local municipalities to pay for this scheme.

Lisa Holmes, president of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, has said that many Alberta municipalities could theoretically be ready by 2019, one year or so later than the government's deadline. If there is any way the government could work with the provinces to provide them with some flexibility in timelines and implementation, this might work. Ms. Holmes understands that, otherwise, the only way this new regime would be paid for is by property taxes in municipalities.

Another group of those concerned are many of the provincial premiers, including Liberal premiers. The NDP Premier of Alberta, Rachel Notley, has expressed concerns about the short timeline.

There are many other issues that are arising from this legalization. For example, I found it somewhat distressing that we are going to be encouraging people, including young people, to smoke marijuana now, when for years we have been trying to get people to stop smoking. For years, I was involved in a regional health care board, and I was also an educator. We worked very hard with the resources we had to deliver public education on anti-smoking issues. We worked hard to educate youth as young as 10 years old on the hazards of tobacco smoke. The goal of these campaigns was to ensure that these youth never started smoking, period. In one case, we had more money to do this than the Liberals are spending across the country in five years. The \$9 million spread out so meagrely over five years is tragic. It is simply not enough.

There is an opportunity here to mandate that federal taxes go to municipalities for health promotion and prevention. A specific percentage should be mandated by the federal government to ensure that prevention is being adequately funded, because \$9 million is just blatantly wrong.

In tobacco prevention, one of the biggest at-risk groups, where prevention was least successful, was with pregnant teenagers. We already have a situation where these young pregnant girls, the mother and unborn child, are at risk. With Bill C-45, the Liberals are adding a new toxic substance that is going to put these girls and unborn children at even more risk. Here is a disturbing fact. One in seven teenagers will get addicted to smoking marijuana once they begin smoking it. In single, pregnant teens, that number is even going to be higher.

The government is facilitating this more by its outright legalization. It is facilitating it by making it easier for teenagers to get their hands on marijuana. This is the reason we need significant funding for prevention, and it is up to the federal government to take the lead. It is not enough to simply download it.

With all this in mind, I look forward to continuing debate on Bill C-45, with the hope that the government will reconsider the timeline. We really need that reconsidered.

Government Orders

• (2235)

Mr. Bill Blair (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the member for what was a thoughtful and quite relevant speech. I particularly commend him for his observations and comments on the challenges that a change in the way in which we strictly regulate and manage this problem could present to local municipalities. I am a municipal guy myself and have spent a great deal of time over the past several months travelling across the country meeting with mayors, police chiefs, fire chiefs, people involved in public health, and bylaw enforcement. I recognize and very much value and appreciate the comments made by the member opposite in that respect.

I want to provide a comment, if I may. I promise you, Mr. Speaker, that I will get to my question in a moment.

Our focus has been on reducing harm, but we recognize that there is a revenue implication, that money will be generated from this. We made a commitment that the money, from a federal standpoint, will be reinvested in prevention, research, treatment, and rehabilitation. The conversations we are having with our provincial partners are to recognize that there needs to be an investment in the administration, oversight, accountability, and enforcement of these regulations, and that means a partnership with our municipalities. I want to assure the member opposite that we recognize the importance of municipalities.

If we all unite in this together, does he believe that will do a better job of ensuring that our municipal partners have the resources they need to fulfill their role in keeping their communities safe?

The Speaker: I want to remind members that it is question or comments. They are allowed to make a comment or ask a question, but they do not have to do both.

The hon. member for Bow River.

Mr. Martin Shields: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his kind words.

Part of the challenge of going ahead with this is the short timeline we have. I understand how consultation works, and it takes a long time. I understand the relationship between the federal government and the provinces. The disconnect is with ensuring the funding gets to the municipalities. The government really has to get that done. Whether it can get that done and provide a clear commitment that the municipalities can understand in black and white, and it flows to them, is the challenge. If the government can do that, it will make a difference. They need to know it and plan for it.

• (2240)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a major employer in the riding that I represent in Nanaimo is a company called Tilray. It is one of 27 licensed under the MMPR federal framework that the Conservatives put in place. It hires 120 professionals: horticulturalists, Ph.D.s, and people who left the silviculture industry and now cultivate marijuana. It is among the top five private-sector employers in my region. Its \$26-million capital investment, in year one, turned into a \$48-million economic output in Nanaimo. It has created 215 direct jobs. This was zoned by the municipality.

I am curious as to whether the member has had any experience with similar municipally zoned operations that seem to work within the legal framework and benefit the local economy.

Mr. Martin Shields: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague bringing up the zoning issue. Companies may have initially been looking to locate in larger municipalities, but we are now hearing that they may want to locate in more rural settings, which affects more of us outside the 22 major cities. That is a challenge that we need to be prepared for, but we need to know and understand what the implications are and how it would work. This is not a simple process of planning and zoning. It will take time. If companies locate outside major urban centres, it is going to take time, and we need more lead time than the timeline we have.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I have the honour of speaking to Bill C-45, which our government introduced to legalize and strictly regulate cannabis consumption in Canada.

[*English*]

The cannabis bill represents a new approach to cannabis, one that puts public health and safety at the forefront, and will better protect young Canadians. The current approach to cannabis does not work. It has allowed criminals and organized crime to profit while also failing to keep cannabis out of the hands of Canadian youth. In many cases, it is easier for our kids to buy cannabis than cigarettes. Canadians continue to use cannabis at some of the highest rates in the world. It is the most commonly used illicit drug among young Canadians.

In 2015, 21% of youth aged 15 to 19 reported using cannabis in the past year. That is one in every five young people in this country. Too many of our youth see cannabis as a benign substance. They are often ill-informed on the harm that it can do, and are unaware that early use increases susceptibility to long-term effects on cannabis.

Youth are especially vulnerable to the effects of cannabis on brain development and function. This is because the THC in cannabis affects the same biological system in the brain that directs brain development. At the same time, too many people today are entering the criminal justice system for possessing small amounts of cannabis, potentially impacting their long-term opportunities. Clearly, there has to be a better way of educating and protecting our youth.

Given these facts, I would like to focus my comments today on the benefits of this legislation for youth. This is one of our government's primary objectives of Bill C-45, to protect youth by restricting their access to cannabis. I would begin by noting that this legislation is just one piece of the overall approach to addressing cannabis use by youth. Our government's commitment to keep cannabis out of the hands of children is made up of a number of complementary measures aimed at safeguarding their health, safety, and well-being.

Government Orders

Specifically, our government is trying to reduce cannabis use by youth, to restrict their ability to obtain the product, to provide them with better information on its health harms and risks, and to keep them out of the hands of the criminal justice system for possessing even small amounts of cannabis.

This approach requires legislative and regulatory measures and support for public education and awareness. To this end, our government has begun a public education campaign with a focus on youth and their parents, to better inform them about cannabis and its health harms and risks. I am confident that our government's overall approach will be effective in better protecting our youth from potential harm of this substance.

I would now like to explain the specific measures in the cannabis bill that would help safeguard our youth. As a society, we have learned from the health and safety controls that have been put in place for potentially harmful substances, such as tobacco, alcohol, and prescription medications. Bill C-45 uses these best practices as its starting point and contains a number of measures that are designed to protect youth.

At the outset, Bill C-45 prohibits the sale of cannabis to anyone under the age of 18 and prohibits adults from giving cannabis to anyone under 18. It also creates an offence and penalty for anyone caught using a young person to commit a cannabis-related offence. Any adult caught engaged in these activities would face a jail term of up to 14 years.

To avoid the kind of enticements to use cannabis that we have seen in the past with tobacco, Bill C-45 would prohibit any form of cannabis designed to appeal to youth. This means that things like cannabis-infused gummy bears or lollipops would be illegal.

• (2245)

To further protect youth from the encouragement to use cannabis, cannabis producers and retailers would be prohibited from using any kind of packaging or labelling that might be appealing to youth, or using any kind of endorsement, lifestyle promotion, or cartoon animals to promote their products. The promotion or advertising of cannabis products would not be permitted in any place or any media that could be accessed by youth, such as grocery stores, movie theatres, or on public transportation, just to name a few examples.

To further reduce the chance that youth might be able to access the product illegally, cannabis would not be sold in any kind of vending machine. Bill C-45 also includes authority to make regulations that could require cannabis to be sold in child-resistant packaging to protect our youngest ones from accidentally consuming the product.

Taken together, these measures constitute a comprehensive approach to protecting the health and safety of our youth.

In addition to protecting public health and safety, one of our government's goals is to avoid criminalizing Canadians for relatively minor offences. Having a criminal record for simple possession of small amounts of cannabis can have significant consequences. Opportunities for employment, housing, volunteerism, and travel can all be impacted by the existence of a record. Do we want to continue to saddle Canadians with these burdens for the possession of small amounts of cannabis? Our government's answer is no.

The proposed legislation sets out a 30-gram possession limit for dried cannabis in public for adults aged 18 and older, and as I stated earlier, it also establishes offences and strict penalties for adults who give or try to sell cannabis to youth or who use a young person to commit a cannabis-related offence.

Bill C-45 takes a different approach to cannabis possession by youth, one that recognizes that in some circumstances, entering the criminal justice system can do more harm than good. Under Bill C-45, youth would not face criminal prosecution for possessing or sharing very small amounts of cannabis. Any activities by youth involving more than a small amount of cannabis, defined as over 5 grams, would be addressed under the provisions of the Youth Criminal Justice Act.

Our government will be working with the provinces and territories to support the development of legislation in each jurisdiction that would allow law enforcement to confiscate any amount of cannabis found in the possession of a young person. This would allow authorities to take away any amount of cannabis they may have in their possession.

Let me be clear. The proposed approach addressing youth possession of cannabis does not mean that such behaviour is encouraged or acceptable. It is not. Rather, it recognizes that a more balanced approach that uses a range of tools and does not rely only on the criminal justice system will provide a better way to reduce cannabis consumption among youth.

This approach is consistent with the findings of the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation, led by the Honourable Anne McLellan. The task force's final report noted that cannabis use among youth could be better addressed through non-criminal approaches that discourage youth from possessing or consuming cannabis. I believe that this strikes the right balance between avoiding criminalizing youth for the possession of small amounts and ensuring that cannabis remains tightly regulated and controlled.

In conclusion, our government has put the health, safety, and well-being of youth at the core of this proposed legislation. I am confident that through this balanced approach, we will see less high-risk cannabis use by youth, and we will begin to bring down the rate at which our youth use cannabis.

• (2250)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of things I would like my colleague and neighbour to clarify. First, the Liberals continue to claim that all of their recommendations are based on solid science and scientific evidence. The CMA clearly has recommended 21 as the minimum age, and the government is going ahead with 18.

They also talk about a highly regulated and controlled system, yet they are allowing four plants to be grown per household. How we highly regulate and control something where there are four plants available to teenagers and children is beyond me.

Government Orders

Finally, the Liberals are pretty convinced that this will drive all the traffic out of criminal hands. I am just wondering if my colleague really believes that illegal drug dealers will line up for the privilege of buying licences and paying HST. Does he really think it will drive these illegal drug dealers out of business?

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Mr. Speaker, we proposed an age of 18, but it is up to the provinces to decide if they want to increase that age. We are presenting the framework. We mentioned that one in five youth is using cannabis.

In terms of taking it out of the hands of criminals, the illegal use of marijuana is fuelling a lot of criminal activity. If we legalize, restrict, and regulate it, we are making it safer for youth, and we are taking away this criminal activity of trafficking cannabis.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my Liberal colleague stated quite clearly in his speech that the Liberal government is very much against the continuing criminalization of marijuana, and that is the reason it is bringing the bill in. The only problem is that Canadians have to wait at least another year for the bill to come into force. The government has now been in power for about 20 months, and Canadians have to wait another year. During that time, thousands of Canadians have been subjected to criminal sanctions through the criminal justice system, all in the context of the Jordan decision. I am just trying to match these two opposing positions.

Which is it? Is the Liberal government in favour of reducing criminal sanctions, or is it not? Why do the Liberals' actions in the interim not back up their words?

• (2255)

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Mr. Speaker, we have struck the right balance. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice has gone around the country and has talked to individuals and to police forces. He came to Waterloo region and spoke to our region about the legalization and regulation of marijuana. He said that if we were just going to legalize marijuana, we would not have the right balance. Regulating and restricting is the right balance.

The NDP just wants us to get this legalized, but we are taking the right approach. We are consulting with everyone around Canada. This is the right balance.

Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the comments made by my colleague and correct a comment that was just made. We are not just talking about legalizing marijuana. My colleague brought up the point that while we are waiting for the framework and the regulations, people are getting criminal records, many of them young people. Saskatoon has one of the highest rates in Canada of arresting people for possessing small amounts of marijuana, and more often than not, it is young people.

I just want to make sure that my hon. colleague realizes that we are not just legalizing cannabis. We are asking the government to decriminalize it so that young people do not have a lifetime with a criminal record.

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Mr. Speaker, the law remains the law as of right now. Until cannabis is legalized, by the summer of next year, the law remains the law.

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, marijuana legalization would certainly have a big impact on society as

we know it, and of course, I am speaking with regard to Canadian society. In particular, I am talking about Canada's overall health and the well-being of Canadians in this country. What the Liberals are attempting to do in this one piece of legislation, which they are rushing through this House, actually required decades of work when it came to doing something similar with alcohol and tobacco. With a significant change to our legal code, and the responsibilities that would be imposed on provinces and municipalities, I believe that we need to ensure that the Liberal policy is backed by scientific evidence, which, to be fair, I have reason to be skeptical of, based on committee work and other pieces of legislation the Liberals have actually put through this House. It certainly has lacked these components in the past.

We also need to make sure that the provinces and the municipalities have time to properly develop rules and regulations in their areas of jurisdiction. This is to say nothing about consideration for employers, who would then have to implement policies within their workplaces as well.

I have concerns about Bill C-45. I believe that it has flaws, both with its rushed time frame and its lack of scientific backing. I wish to explore those to a further extent today.

The legalization of marijuana is a policy area that must be informed by science. When I say this, I am particularly concerned about the health and well-being of our country's young people. We know from the Canadian Medical Association, as well as the Canadian Paediatric Society and the College of Family Physicians of Canada, that marijuana has negative health impacts on a person's brain before the age of 25, in terms of development. I have talked to young people from coast to coast, and I am impressed by the fact that many of them actually are also concerned about this. This is one of the things they raise when I hold round table discussions or a town hall and I talk to them about this piece of legislation and the decisions going forward. They tell me that 18 is simply too young. They recognize that using cannabis actually slows and harms brain development in those under the age of 25, and many of them are fearful that the use of marijuana will in fact cause schizophrenia, which of course has also been scientifically and medically proven. Furthermore, I know from peer-reviewed research, as well as from speaking to youth directly, that the legalization of marijuana would also reduce the perception of risk among young people. In other words, it would normalize the use of marijuana.

The last thing I would like to mention with regard to young people is that for youth under the age of 18, under this piece of legislation, if they were found in possession of less than five grams of marijuana, they would not be prosecuted. I have to ask, then, how this would in fact reduce access by youth. This is one of the primary arguments the Liberals use to defend this piece of legislation, and unfortunately it just does not hold up.

Government Orders

If the government insists on moving forward with this poorly drafted legislation, then at the very least I believe we need to ensure that there is strong and comprehensive education put in place with regard to our young people. That needs to be put in place before marijuana is legalized in our country. While cannabis education is accounted for in the 2017 budget, the plan is to put forward only \$9.6 million, not over one year but actually over five years, which means less than \$2 million per year for education. That is how important the Liberal government thinks our young people are. They are worth not quite \$2 million of public education per year, not to mention that there is no way the education program is going to be sufficiently in place before the deadline of July 1, 2018.

While Bill C-45 clarifies the need for health and safety warnings on product packaging, by the time a young person has the product in his or her hands to read that label, it is too late for that individual to really learn about the risks. We cannot afford to overlook the necessity of education for the sake of simply rushing this legislation through. I believe that it is our responsibility as parliamentarians to defend and champion the future of Canada's young people. For that to be the case in the matter before this House today, both medical and scientific evidence must be given supreme weight when we put in place this legislation.

● (2300)

I also have serious concerns with regard to the ability to test for impairment, particularly, while driving. Scientific research shows the struggle to detect marijuana when it comes to impaired driving. Unlike alcohol, the amount in the bloodstream does not indicate the level of a person's impairment. THC is not easily detected by a breathalyzer because of the drug's nature as a fat-soluble substance.

Cannabis also affects chronic users to a lesser extent than first-time users, so this would have to be accounted for as well, because the same amount in a person's system is not going to have the same impact.

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse has found that marijuana significantly impairs a person's ability to focus when there is more than one source of incoming information. This describes driving very well. When a person is driving and they are using marijuana, it actually causes them to swerve on the roadway, it causes them to maintain dangerous following distances behind other vehicles, it sometimes causes them not to miss a pedestrian as they are crossing the street, and it causes the inability to monitor one's speed. Of course, all of these factors lead to a high probability of crashing. Worse than that, they lead to the loss of life all too often.

With cannabis being the second most common substance detected in drivers after an accident, second only to alcohol, the danger of impaired drivers on our roadways must be considered and the risk must be mitigated.

Furthermore, many concerns have been shared with me by provincial and municipal officials in my riding. They have said that while the federal government is responsible for overseeing the production of marijuana and the Criminal Code exemptions for recreational cannabis, it really is up to them. They are required to design the rest of the regulations related to public health and zoning, along with managing the system for the sale and the distribution of marijuana. They feel that this is quite a burden to be placed on them.

Of course, it is being placed on them and it has to be in place by an arbitrary deadline of July 1, 2018.

Why July 1, 2018? This is much too soon for provinces and municipalities to be able to adequately put the needed regulations and bylaws in place. By the time the bill passes, they will have only six months to do that, because it is likely that the legislation is going to be in the House until about Christmas.

If that were not enough, the provinces and municipalities also have to create non-criminal offences for youth under the age of 18 if they wish to further deter the use of marijuana among young people. This is needed because the legislation before us allows youth between the ages of 12 and 17 to legally possess five grams of marijuana.

In conclusion, I do have significant concerns with regard to Bill C-45, the cannabis act. However, before I wrap up, I believe it is time for a fun fact.

The legislation allows for four plants per dwelling. I am from an agricultural background, so naturally I was curious as to just how much this would yield. A quick Google search and some of the most reliable do-it-yourself bloggers tell me that one plant will yield 1,200 grams. They also tell me I have to be careful. I have to use the right bulbs in order to produce that much. I did some further research and I found out this equates to 800 joints. Then I multiplied that by four, in order to figure out that actually we can produce 3,168 joints within that household. Then I found out that, on average, a user smokes about three joints a day. That means four plants will provide each household with just under three years' worth of joints.

I do not know about members, but this seems a little excessive to what a person might need for their individual use. I wonder if perhaps at some time the Liberals could clarify their thinking there.

We should be looking at the information presented in order to find facts on how the drugs affect the development of youth, and not accepting a politically motivated age in order to hurry up the process. We must look at potential education plans to inform our citizens about the risks. Furthermore, we must work with law enforcement to come up with better ways to test for THC levels, along with better ways to test an individual's level of impairment.

In addition, we should be talking to provincial and municipal governments to understand the timelines needed for creating distribution systems and new regulations.

● (2305)

Here is the thing. We need to admit that this legislation is only half-baked, and the last thing the Liberals should be doing right now is pursuing a political buzz by letting Canada go to pot.

Government Orders

Let us end on a high note. Let us roll up this legislation and let us get out of this joint today.

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the member's premise that if we legalize and regulate cannabis, somehow everybody will have four plants per household. I will point her to the fact that green peppers, onions, carrots, and cucumbers are legal in Canada, but does every household in Canada have a garden? The answer is no, not every household has a garden.

My question for the member is this. Does she want Al Capone or the Hells Angels to control the market? Does she agree with that approach? Does she want Al Capone and the Hells Angels to continue to control the market?

Some hon members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. Order. I am sure hon. members on this side have confidence in the hon. member for Lethbridge and know that she will be able to answer without their help. Let us listen to each other and show respect.

The hon. member for Lethbridge.

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, I think what the hon. member across the way is asking me is if I can take the skin of an onion and roll it up and smoke it. The answer is no, I cannot do that, which is maybe the reason not everyone in the Canadian population is growing onions, peppers, or lettuce just because they are legal and they can have a garden.

Here is the deal. If we want to talk about getting marijuana off the black market, which in essence is the member's question, we need look no further than the great case study of Uruguay, which was the first country to actually go legal. What it found was that the black market increased drastically after marijuana was legalized. I encourage the hon. member to look that study up.

• (2310)

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Toronto—Danforth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I really appreciate the horticultural knowledge that is being shared at this moment in the House.

There have been a lot of folks talking about youth. I think one thing we can all agree on is that all members here have the best interests of youth in mind and we all want to make sure we are making the right decisions for youth in our country. However, having listened to the debate today, my question for the member opposite is this. Does she truly feel that the status quo is working?

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, the question from the hon. member is if I really think that the status quo is working. Essentially, Liberal logic would say that a lot of young people use marijuana, which right now is illegal. Therefore, if it makes it legal, they will stop using marijuana.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member brought up one international example. As we know, Canada is party to three international treaties governing how narcotics are dealt with, including the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 1961, the United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances in 1971, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic

Substances in 1988. I have not heard the government mention this, but has it given any indication of pulling out of these treaties?

I would like to hear the member's thoughts on the impact it would have on Canada's reputation if and when the government proceeds with removing itself from these three treaties under which Canada has obligations to our partners.

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, I will not speculate totally with respect to what the reaction would be when Canada decides to pull out of these agreements, because it will in fact need to pull out of these agreements.

A treaty is a treaty. We have signed a deal and we must uphold our end of the bargain. If we are no longer going to do so, then we have to withdraw, which could wreak international havoc. Exactly what would that look like with respect to our relationship with these countries going forward I would not entirely be able to say. However, I can imagine that it would not be exactly positive for us.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one would think that at this late date in the session and at this late hour in the evening, the Liberals would be focusing on the real issues that are facing Canadians like slow economic growth, joblessness, and a growing inability of young Canadians to purchase a new home. No, instead the Liberals are spending their time working hard to legalize the recreational use of marijuana. Considering the long list of campaign promises they have broken so far, it is surprising that this is the one they decided to push through at all costs.

In regard to this legislation, our top priority on this side of the House is to stand up for the health and safety of Canadians. The Liberals have repeatedly claimed that the purpose of this legislation is the protection of our young people and to increase public safety, but the more research is done into legalization and the more information we gather about the negative effects in jurisdictions that have gone down this road, the more the claim they are making goes up in smoke.

How did we get here? On April 13, 2017, the Liberal government introduced legislation that would allow for the recreational use of marijuana for Canadians over the age of 18 and eliminate penalties for possession of up to five grams of marijuana for those between the ages of 12 and 18. This bill is now referred to as Bill C-45. As I said earlier, the Prime Minister and his Liberal government have repeated time and again that the aim of this legislation is to protect our young children and increase public safety. However, neither of these goals is accomplished with this legislation.

This is not just my view. The Angus Reid Institute conducted a poll and found that approximately two in three Canadians believe that this legislation fails to prevent young people from using marijuana more than they already do. While the government claims that it makes decisions based on facts and science, this legislation proves otherwise.

Groups such as the Canadian Medical Association, Canadian Psychiatric Association, and Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police all oppose certain aspects of the bill. Both the CMA and CPA have stated that Canadians who consume marijuana recreationally under the age of 25 have a higher risk of developing mental illness such as depression, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder.

Government Orders

The Canadian Psychiatric Association has stated:

Regular cannabis use in youth and young adults can affect aspects of cognition, including attention, memory, processing speed, visuospatial functioning and overall intelligence. Worse performance is related to earlier adolescent onset of use.

The Canadian Psychiatric Association went on to say that:

Early age of use of cannabis increases the potential for adult dependence on cannabis.

Cannabis may be associated with increased progression to other illicit drug use in the context of particular factors (e.g., high frequency and early age of use).

Later in the same report, the Canadian Psychiatric Association states:

The CPA acknowledges and agrees with the CMA recommendations to the Task Force. With respect to protection of mental wellness for youth and young adults the CPA highlights the following:

Since regular cannabis use is associated with increased risk of schizophrenia, and may also negatively interact with depression, bipolar and anxiety disorders due to its biological effects on brain maturation, and since mental disorders frequently start before the age of 25, age of access to cannabis should not be prior to age 21, with restrictions on quantity and THC potency for those between 21 and 25 years of age.

None of these are found in Bill C-45.

A recent *Canadian Medical Association Journal* edition of May 29 states:

The purported purpose of the act is to protect public health and safety, yet some of the act's provisions appear starkly at odds with this objective, particularly for Canada's youth.

Simply put, cannabis should not be used by young people. It is toxic to their cortical neuronal networks, with both functional and structural changes seen in the brains of youth who use cannabis regularly.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health has stated unequivocally that "cannabis is not a benign substance and its health harms increase with intensity of use". Although adults are also susceptible to the harmful effects of cannabis, the developing brain is especially sensitive.

The Canadian Paediatric Society cautions that marijuana use in youth is strongly linked to "cannabis dependence and other substance use disorders; the initiation and maintenance of tobacco smoking; an increased presence of mental illness, including depression, anxiety and psychosis; impaired neurological development and cognitive decline; and diminished school performance and lifetime achievement." The lifetime risk of dependence on marijuana is about 9%; however, this increases to almost 17% in those who start using as teenagers.

• (2315)

The CMA article continues:

Most of us know a young person whose life was derailed because of marijuana use. Bill C-45 is unlikely to prevent such tragedies from occurring—and, conversely, may make them more frequent. Although an accompanying bill lays out stronger penalties for impaired driving and proposed limits for blood levels of tetrahydrocannabinol in drivers, there is grave concern that legalization of marijuana will result in a substantial increase in impaired driving, particularly among young people and in conjunction with alcohol use.

Negative health effects related to the recreational use of marijuana is not exclusive to children. As the Canadian Medical Association notes, "Marijuana use is linked to several adverse health outcomes, including addiction, cardiovascular and pulmonary effects (e.g., chronic bronchitis), mental illness, and other problems, including cognitive impairment and reduced educational attainment."

Specifically regarding addiction, the Society for the Study of Addiction has found that regular use of marijuana for one in 10 users results in a dependence problem. If usage started in adolescence, that number rises to one in six. It is clear the negative health effects of marijuana are not being taken seriously by the government and the

steps it is taking now will have a long-lasting negative impact on Canadians.

As for public safety, Washington state says legalizing the recreational use of marijuana has seen drastic increases in vehicular deaths related to driving under the influence of marijuana. *The Washington Times*, reporting on findings from the American Automobile Association, stated:

Authorities in Washington recorded 436 fatal crashes in 2013, and determined that drivers involved in 40 crashes tested positive for THC, the active chemical in marijuana, according to the study. In 2014 [one year later] they found that of 462 fatal crashes, 85 drivers tested positive for THC.

The number of fatal crashes linked to the presence of THC doubled in one year.

MADD Canada stated:

Population surveys show the number of Canadians driving after using drugs is on the rise. In fact, driving after smoking cannabis is now more prevalent among some younger drivers than driving after drinking. Survey data from a 2013 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health report showed that, among young Ontario drivers in grades 10—12, 4% drove after drinking while 9.7% drove after smoking cannabis.

Equally concerning as the numbers is the misperception that many young people, and some parents, have that driving under the influence of cannabis is safer than driving under the influence of alcohol. A national study by the Partnership for a Drug-Free Canada revealed:

Nearly one third (32%) of teens did not consider driving under the influence of cannabis to be as bad as alcohol.

Nearly 25% of parents of teenagers did not consider driving while high on cannabis to be as bad as drinking and driving.

Many young people think driving under the influence of cannabis is risk-free. Yet studies have shown that smoking cannabis can produce unwelcome effects behind the wheel, including a shorter attention span, an altered perception of time and distances, and slower reaction times that impair the driver's ability to respond to sudden events in traffic. A 2012 study by researchers at Dalhousie University in Halifax found that smoking cannabis three hours before driving nearly doubled a driver's risk of having a motor vehicle crash.

Combining cannabis with even small amounts of alcohol greatly increases the negative impact on driving skills.

Many young people also think that they will never be caught or charged for driving high. While detecting cannabis is more challenging than detecting alcohol because we do not yet have a simple roadside drug test similar to the alcohol breathalyzer, police do have tools to determine whether a driver is impaired by drugs.

However, as noted by the American Automobile Association, there are no proven blood or urine tests that can determine how high a person is from marijuana. Tests can only determine if marijuana is in their system. I have heard from police officers in the Waterloo region on this issue. Our police forces are not properly funded or equipped to handle these new dangers. We need to heed their warnings and take their concerns into consideration.

Government Orders

• (2320)

It is clear that while the government is going to rush ahead with legalizing recreational marijuana, it is not with the health and safety of Canadians in mind. It is simply to fulfill a campaign promise, with no thought or concern for our youth and their future.

Let me finish with one short quote from an editorial written by Dr. Diane Kelsall in the Canadian Medical Association Journal just three days ago. She said, “If Parliament truly cares about the public health and safety of Canadians, especially our youth, this bill will not pass.”

Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of his speech, the member mentioned that we should be talking about other issues, such as economic growth.

When we first took power from the previous government in 2015, in the fourth quarter we were left with .05% growth. Now, in the first quarter, we have presented news of 3.7% growth in the economy. I would just like to mention that.

I want to get to the real question. The member mentioned that the usage of cannabis will rise among youth. I want to read a quote from an article in *The Washington Post*. According to the Colorado health department, “The survey shows marijuana use has not increased since legalization, with four of five high school students continuing to say they don’t use marijuana”.

The status quo is not working right now. We have a balanced approach of legalizing, regulating, and restricting. Does the hon. member believe that the status quo is working?

• (2325)

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, no one is suggesting that the status quo is good enough. There is always room for improvement. However, in fact, the use of marijuana has decreased since 2008, from 33% to 24%. That is from a study by addiction and mental health research people.

As it relates to age, and we keep coming back to this, CMA was clear in its recommendations that brain maturation occurs around age 28. It recommended an age of 21 as the minimum, and yet the government has chosen to go ahead with a recommendation that is careless and reckless, allowing children as young as 12 to have access, and legalizing it for purchase at 18.

This is irresponsible. I do not think there are many parents in the member's riding who are calling and asking him to make that kind of an adjustment.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what my colleague thinks of how hard it is to predict the effects of cannabis on the human body. Apparently, the same dose of marijuana can affect different people very differently. In the case of someone who uses medical marijuana, it might have very little or no effect, while a young person who takes the same dose might get incredibly high.

This makes it very difficult to set blood concentration levels to establish limits for various situations because it can be very difficult to predict how different doses will affect the human body. Indeed, young people seem to be more affected than people in their 40s or 50s.

Would the member like to comment on how hard it is to predict how it affects people?

[*English*]

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, I think that was the crux of what I have been arguing all night. Because young people are more susceptible, as my colleague pointed out, to the negative impacts of THC on brain development, for example, it is very important, if we are going to legalize this drug—which I am disagreeing with at any age—that we should at least not be legalizing it for this young age and making it permissible for children as young as 12 to have it in their possession.

Mr. Marco Mendicino (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my hon. colleague for his remarks, but I do think he seems to be confusing two very basic concepts. One is on the need to safely and strictly regulate cannabis, which we propose to do with Bill C-45, and the second is the need to safely regulate our roads and keep our roads safe. It is important that we disentangle those two concepts.

I think the member will acknowledge, by taking a close look Bill C-46, that we are increasing sentences for certain offences, we are creating new offences which actually help police officers to charge drivers who are mixing drugs and alcohol, and we are proposing to introduce mandatory road screening. All of those measures are why MADD, an organization that my hon. colleague is very familiar with, is very supportive of Bill C-46. If MADD can get behind Bill C-46, why can my hon. colleague not get behind it?

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, the reason I cannot get behind it is that I have spoken to front-line police officers who tell me, and I am sure they have told him the same, that there is no reliable method of discovering the level of impairment when it comes to marijuana. Right now, they are using what they call drug recognition experts, who go through various tests to determine the level of impairment. However, we have woefully inadequate numbers of these drug recognition experts across Canada.

Again, this comes back to a point we made earlier. Why are we rushing through to implement a bill when we do not have devices in place to adequately measure levels of impairment, like we do for alcohol, for example, where we can specify a certain number of .08 or .05? We can make judgments, but on marijuana the situation is totally different. Front-line police officers are worried that we are going down this track far too quickly.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I once again rise in the House to speak to Bill C-45, an act respecting cannabis and to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code and other acts. Bill C-45 would provide legal access to cannabis for adults and would control and regulate its production, distribution, and sale.

Cannabis is and has been an illegal drug in Canada for 94 years. For those doing the math, that means it has been prohibited since 1923.

I have a number of concerns with the piece of legislation before us tonight. I will list a few, and then go into detail on all of them, and I believe it will take the bulk of my 10 minutes.

Government Orders

From the easy and direct pot access for children and youth to the cost of implementation, the taxation, revenue sharing, and allocation, the compromising of international law and treaty obligations, and the risk of jeopardizing our relationships with our allies, including the U.S., Great Britain, and others, there is quite a lot to digest here. I am extremely concerned that this legislation is going to be passed before any of these questions are answered.

Polls would suggest that as Canadians learn more about the details of the Liberals' plan to legalize marijuana and the potential harmful impacts that may follow, some are having second thoughts. This is especially true when it comes to the legal age for buying marijuana. A whopping 58% of Canadians surveyed feel that the legal age should be higher than the age the federal government has set, which is 18. That is more than two in five Canadians who disagree with the government's current trajectory. The Prime Minister's marijuana bill is a promise to pot smokers, not to parents, and there are so many unanswered questions here.

The bill would enable children to have direct and easy access to pot. The Liberals like to say that somehow their piece of legislation would make it harder for children to get their hands on marijuana, but let us be very clear. This legislation is not in any way going to decrease the amount of usage by our children. Allowing a 12-year-old to carry up to five grams of marijuana is unacceptable.

Canada has the highest rate of youth using cannabis of any country in the world. We are not disputing that. In 2015, use among youth aged 15 to 19 was 21%, while the use among young adults aged 20 to 24 was 30%.

As we get closer to 2018, the self-imposed legislation date put forward by the Liberal government, we need to recognize the many unknowns with this legislation. That will be the bulk of my speech.

There are 41% of Canadians who feel that Ottawa is rushing this legislative process, while 53% said they feel that the federal government is underestimating the overall impact on Canadian society. I know I am throwing a lot of statistics at the House, but it is important to underscore how Canadians are feeling on something as important as a drug that will impact the health and safety of all Canadians.

The Prime Minister must also be clear in how we sell this to our international parties. As mentioned earlier, Canada is one of more than 150 parties to three United Nations drug control conventions: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs; the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances; and the 1988 Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. These are not to be taken lightly.

A government memo that came out last year stated that Canada will need to explore how to inform the international community and take the steps needed to adjust its obligations under these investigations. What does this mean? In order to withdraw from any of these treaties, Canada must do so before July 1st of this year. When will the government signal its intent to do so, or has it already?

Canada will be the first G7 country in the world to take steps to legalize this drug, and yet we still cannot answer the most basic of questions. What does it mean for someone crossing the border who

may have consumed cannabis earlier in the day or even a couple of days previously?

● (2330)

If a U.S. customs officer finds that Canadians who are going through the border consumed marijuana at any time or within the last 48 hours or 24 hours, they will be deemed inadmissible. They could be detained. Will this affect border times? Will more resources be dedicated to dealing with this issue?

There is even reason to believe that the legislation around impaired driving may be unconstitutional. The *National Post* has highlighted this point by saying that science is yet to establish a solid link between a given level of THC concentration in the driver's blood or saliva and the level of impairment. I will say again, as I have said before, that impairment with THC or cannabis is completely different from impairment with alcohol, and to this date, despite all of the questions we have asked, all of the questions I have asked, the government has been unable to give us what level of THC needs to be in the bloodstream to determine that an individual is impaired.

Impaired driving is the leading criminal cause of death in Canada, and we can only expect these numbers to increase when marijuana is legalized. There are serious questions also being asked about our transportation industry. I have stood in the House many times explaining that I know from my background, 22 years in the aviation industry as well as working with many organizations, that whether it is road, rail, marine, or aviation, these groups will all have serious concerns over this legislation.

There are tens of thousands of commercial trucks on the highways and roadways of our provinces, our communities. What is the government putting forth to communities that have these trucks going through at all hours of the day? What steps is the government taking to ensure that the conductor or engineer of a train hauling hazardous materials through our communities or that the pilots flying our families have not consumed marijuana? What are we saying to the organizations that employ these people?

Will the government provide additional resources? Will we still mandate that drug testing is required? How do these companies that we trust to operate safely and efficiently police their employees?

Government Orders

On the other side of that, we have also heard serious concerns from our insurance and mortgage industries. When a property is sold, there is a purchase contract in place as well as a property disclosure that is typically required. The exact wording from the statement is, “Are you aware if the premises have been used as a marijuana grow operation or to manufacture illegal drugs?” It does not state quantity or whether it was a legal or illegal operation, but simply whether there was any marijuana grown on that property. Once owners have knowledge of this, they are required to disclose it to any subsequent purchaser, which will drastically affect the marketability of that property. Furthermore, the stigma will remain attached to the property for the life of the home and potentially onward.

Financing options for properties that have had marijuana grown on them have become almost obsolete. As a matter of fact, many of the insurance companies that underwrite the mortgages in Canada are in the United States, and they have said that they do not want to touch the bill and do not want to see it go through. Most of our major banks will no longer allow it, and few smaller credit unions who will still consider, are typically charging higher premiums due to risk management.

A phase one environmental assessment is always required to determine the potential damage to the home, and then all remediation is to be completed prior to obtaining a new occupancy permit. This process can cost tens of thousands of dollars, if not more.

In conclusion, has the Liberal government done a thorough analysis and consulted the mortgage and insurance brokers and the transportation organizations on the impact of this legislation? I think I have been very clear on my points today. The legislation is momentous. I do not have to say it is very dramatic. We are in uncharted territory and, if this legislation is passed, the world will be looking at Canada's model, and what it will find are flaws that put the health and safety of Canadians at risk.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this very important issue, and I look forward to the questions.

● (2335)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my fellow British Columbian laid out some very valid points that the government really does need to address. What I wanted to highlight from his speech are the concerns he raised about Canada's involvement in international treaties. I have now asked the government on two occasions what it intends to do. As the member correctly pointed out, we have until July 1 to announce our intentions, because if we pass this legislation and do nothing, we will be in violation of those treaties, and I do not think we want to besmirch our international reputation and do that. I am just curious. The government has been unable to provide me with an answer. I would have thought that as a part of this legislation, the Liberals would have thought of this. They have been in government now for 20 months. I cannot figure it out. I am just wondering if the hon. member can give me his opinion as to why we still do not have an answer from the government on that important international obligation.

● (2340)

Mr. Todd Doherty: Mr. Speaker, for a government that says it wants to consult and do thorough analysis, and that any of its decisions are based on science and are evidence-based, we see a piece of legislation that is being rammed through that really has not been well thought out. I have mentioned only a few of my concerns and the concerns of my constituents. I did not attack any of the other things that have been brought up today. I wanted to come at this with a very measured approach. My hon. colleague brings up a very good point. We have time and again asked this question, and to this point, the government has yet to answer.

Mr. John Oliver (Oakville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George recite a number of the risks he thinks might emerge with the passing of this legislation. I believe that marijuana is present in our society, and those risks are real and potentially are here today, so I do not think that changes.

What the bill would do, though, is restrict youth access to and use of cannabis. It would protect young people by prohibiting promotion and enticements to use cannabis. It would enhance public awareness of the health risks associated with the use of cannabis. It would deter and reduce criminal activity by imposing very serious criminal penalties for those breaking the law, especially those who provide cannabis to young people. I would far sooner see them being punished than see a 10-year-old caught with five grams of cannabis being punished, which seems to be the view across the way. As well, it would protect public health through strict production, safety, and quality requirements.

These are very laudable goals, and every one of us in this House should be standing up and speaking to make these changes. Which of these goals is the member not happy with? If he thinks these are not valid goals, what is his alternative? Which of these very laudable goals do you not support, and if you do support them all, what is your alternative?

The Speaker: I have to remind the hon. colleague from Oakville that when members say “you” in this place, it is referring to the Speaker, unless they are talking about some kind of an animal, I suppose. Members should address their comments to the Chair.

The hon. member for Cariboo—Prince George.

Mr. Todd Doherty: I appreciate the question, Mr. Speaker, and I want to talk about the government's assertion that this would somehow take dollars away from organized crime.

In doing my preparation for this speech, I looked up information about contraband tobacco. We know that a third of the cigarettes sold in Ontario are contraband, and the Canadian Convenience Stores Association says that number could be as high as 80%. In Ontario alone, about \$1.6 billion to \$3 billion is lost in tax revenue because of the high amount of black market tobacco. Globally, these dollars from contraband tobacco are being seen as a major source for terrorist groups, such as ISIS, al Qaeda, and Hezbollah.

Government Orders

What I am saying today, and what I think is our whole message, to answer my hon. colleague's question, is that while there may be some merit to this bill, it should be further thought out, not rushed. While the Liberals like to trumpet that they consult on almost everything, I do not believe they have done nearly enough work on this to answer the questions I put forth in my speech or that any of my colleagues on this side of the House have put forth, whether today or in the previous days with respect to the impaired-driving law as it pertains to the cannabis law.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is pretty hard to be interesting at this late hour, but I will try.

I had a chance, or the misfortune, depending on your perspective, to read this cannabis bill in its entirety, but I was left wanting more. I had a thousand and one questions I wanted to ask. Why is this bill being rushed through? Why does it not have more teeth? Why is it set up as a framework that absolves the Liberal Party of all responsibility and downloads it all onto the provinces and municipalities? That bothers me.

We are presented with a framework that outlines the use and legalization of cannabis, but the Liberals should have started with decriminalizing marijuana, for now, before legalizing it. They did not really listen to the stakeholders, and that also bothers me. A number of scientists who do research on cannabis use among young people have said in the media just how dangerous smoking cannabis can be for the human brain. Indeed, when people smoke, they inhale smoke; they do not fake it. They want to have fun, and apparently it happens quicker when you inhale.

Before I read this bill, I honestly did not know that the brain continues to develop until age 25. As the grandmother of a six-year-old boy, I have concerns about this bill and its content. Of course, I am concerned about the use of cannabis, but the government never talks about education or putting resources in place. The government is handing that work over to the provinces without establishing a financial framework.

When it comes to a bill that is as massive as this one, the government ought to have an exchange of ideas and have discussions with its peers, whether it be the provinces, the municipalities, doctors, or people who work with addicts. This government had other plans, however. It will leave it up to the provinces to do most of the work associated with this legislation.

The government is saying that the legal age will be 18, but that it will be left up to the provinces. If the government is going to go to the trouble of drafting a bill, why not standardize the legal age across Canada? When drafting a bill, why leave it up to the provinces to take care of legalization, public safety, the education system, and the health care system?

The government also did not think to make investments to deal with psychiatric issues. We have heard many psychiatrists and psychologists say that marijuana, like any other drug, can induce psychosis in people with mental health issues. This bill makes no mention of mental health, even though this issue should have been included and studied. The government is asking the provinces to do

all of this at the same time, in just a year, by 2018, as though it were easy.

● (2345)

When it comes to a bill as massive as this one, and one that makes such an important change, we must build on a much stronger foundation than this.

The government is asking the provinces to think of everything. They are given a framework and directives, but apart from drafting the bill, what is the federal government doing? It did not consult anyone, as we have seen in the case of nearly every other file before the House.

The government says it speaks on behalf of all Canadians, but it does not seem to have spoken to the people of Charlevoix, because back home, everywhere I go, pot is not tolerated. No one supports this bill. I do not even talk about it all that much, but people know me and when they see me, they ask what I think. Personally, this bill bothers me. Even though this might not bother the Liberals, they still have to listen to people.

Ordinary Canadians are also concerned about this bill. Canadians were not consulted. This bill was written as an electoral promise, and since it was a Liberal promise, that party did not get the job done, just as it has not gotten the job done on so many other issues before the House.

In addition to being seriously lacking, this bill is designed to line the pockets of Liberal Party friends according to one newspaper report after another. Quite a few names come to mind. This is another way to make money at taxpayers' expense.

Now let us talk about offences. How is cannabis use supposed to be detected? Has anyone come up with a system like the one we have for alcohol that is sophisticated enough to detect cannabis use beyond a doubt? Has anyone considered people's rights, since this involves taking blood samples? Not all provinces have that kind of legislation and are willing to accept this. The government did not discuss this bill with the provinces before introducing it.

Who did the Liberals consult? I would sure like to know. When they drafted this bill and showed it to us, they said they had done consultations, but we know that nobody in our ridings was consulted. Municipalities were not consulted, nor were public safety people, police officers, or EMTs. Very few people were consulted, not in Quebec at any rate, because not a lot of people in my riding were consulted, and I can say that 90% of my constituents are against this bill for a number of reasons. This bill highlights our weakness.

When I read the bill, what was even worse was learning that the Minister of Justice will make all the decisions. He will even decide how much marijuana will cost. He is going to become the biggest dealer in Canada. He will be our children's dealer because this bill gives him all the power.

Mr. Francis Drouin: What about Al Capone?

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but Al Capone is dead. This is 2017. I think that my friend needs a sleep or a smoke to wake up.

• (2350)

Al Capone died a long time ago. Now, they are going to become Canada's modern-day Al Capones.

For all these reasons—

• (2355)

The Speaker: Order. The member's time has elapsed.

I think all members agree that we need some sleep.

On to questions and comments. The hon. member for Marc-Aurèle-Fortin.

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank the member for her speech. It was a tad demagogic, but we have come to expect that from her.

I would like to end the evening on a good note. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I am asking my colleague to ask her colleagues, the other champions, to be more positive for the remainder of the session.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Mr. Speaker, I do not accept anyone speaking to me like that. I have the right to express my ideas, that does not make me a demagogue. If my colleague does not respect women, that is his problem.

Someone talked about Al Capone and now I am being called a demagogue, even though demagoguery is a traditionally Liberal trait. I expressed my point of view, which is that I will not be supporting the bill because it is full of contradictions. I have never wanted the Minister of Justice to become Canadians' dealer.

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts about something that happened during the election campaign.

I was participating in a debate with young people in grades 9, 10, and 11 at a school in Notre-Dame-du-Nord. When these young people asked the familiar question of what our party would do for them, the Liberal candidate said a few words and then she added that her party planned to legalize marijuana. That is how she answered the question.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about that answer.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Mr. Speaker, I am astounded to hear that the candidate gave that answer at a high school debate. It seems to me that there are many things that the government could do for young people other than getting them high before they are even capable of making decisions.

That being said, the most important thing that we can do for young people is to educate them. They need to get the best education we can give them. The first thing that we need to do is to educate our young people, and we will not accomplish that by smoking pot.

When we talk to our young people, we need to give them hope for a better world. We should not necessarily tell them that they are going to be living in Care-a-Lot, but we should tell them that they are going to be living in a real world where they need to find jobs, be the best they can be, go to school, and have dreams. Being in an altered state is not the same as having dreams.

Mr. Francis Drouin (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, speaking of altering things, will the Conservative

Adjournment Proceedings

Party be altering its stance on free votes? Will Conservatives be able to vote freely? We all know the member for Beauce said the vote on marijuana would be a free vote.

My colleague asked if we consulted Canadians. Absolutely. The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police was consulted. The Barreau du Québec was consulted. The Canadian Association of Police Governance was consulted.

[*English*]

The Criminal Lawyers' Association was consulted. The B.C. Civil Liberties Association was consulted.

[*Translation*]

A whole bunch of Canadians were consulted. I cannot believe the Conservative Party is being so rigid. Will members on that side of the House be able to vote freely?

The Speaker: Now we are all awake.

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Mr. Speaker, I want my colleague across the way to know that members on this side of the House can vote freely when the time comes.

What we saw during yesterday's vote on autism was not a free vote. Many members on that side of the House wanted to vote as we did, but they had to toe the line.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (2400)

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tragically, a woman lost her life attempting the dangerous irregular crossing into Manitoba.

I was deeply disappointed, and frankly shocked, when I raised this last night and the member for Ajax stated:

It occurred in Minnesota. The person in question was not near Canada at the time, so I am not sure how that life would have been saved by anything being different.

I am not aware of any cases of people dying of hypothermia while crossing at authorized ports of entry into Canada. I wonder if the member is.

Suspending the safe third country agreement would have meant that people would not be forced to risk their lives to enter Canada.

The Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, in response to me in question period yesterday, said he was trying to discourage people from crossing at unsanctioned ports of entry. Does the minister know that by not suspending the safe third country agreement, he is forcing them to take those great risks?

Adjournment Proceedings

Bashir Khan, a lawyer in Manitoba, said, “The Canada-U.S. Safe Third Countries Agreement, which took effect December 29, 2004... sealed her fate. I think Canadian law is to be held responsible for that woman's death—for that innocent woman's death.”

The longer the government refuses to acknowledge this issue, the bigger an impact it will have.

In addition, I am shocked to learn that the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness is on the public record in response to this tragedy as saying, “It is important to follow the rules and cross the border in a legal and regular manner.”

He went on to say, “People should not think that some back door or side door is a free ticket to get into the country.”

The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness knows very well that Canada is a signatory to the United Nations refugee convention, which recognize the rights of refugees. Irregular crossings are not illegal. They are not queue-jumping. They will be processed according to our rules as inland asylum seekers.

It is not a free pass. It comes with great risks. This crossing cost this woman her life. I know the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness knows that. To suggest otherwise is unconscionable. It is reprehensible that he is trying to blame the victim.

If the government suspended the safe third country agreement, this tragedy, I believe, would not have occurred.

The Trump administration, along with the rhetoric from the Prime Minister about how Canada welcomes everyone, is fuelling the increase in irregular border crossings. The CBSA and the RCMP have stated that resources are being stretched because of the increase in irregular crossings. Communities are stretched to the limit. What is needed is for the government to stop hiding and sticking its head in the sand and wake up, open its heart and mind, and match its words with action, because frankly, lives depend on it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is very familiar with the rules of the House. The question she had submitted for this evening's adjournment proceedings had to do with the executive order put in place to prohibit people of certain nationalities from travelling to the United States. That is the question I will answer for the member opposite.

As the member knows, the executive order was supposed to come into effect in March, but it seems that certain judicial bodies in the United States have suspended the implementation of certain provisions of the order. Based on what we learned from our discussions with the Americans, the executive order was supposed to be fully in force. Canadian citizens and permanent residents who have permanent resident cards and a valid American visa, and are authorized to travel to the United States, should not be refused entry into that country.

Accordingly, people travelling to the United States should always verify whether they meet all the eligibility criteria to enter the U.S. before their departure and ensure that their travel documents are in order. Some people are asking how Canada's policies would be

affected, in terms of refugee protection and asylum in Canada, if the executive order were to be fully restored.

I can assure the House that Canada has and will continue to have a robust system for granting asylum that provides protection to those who truly need it.

The United States, like Canada and any other country, has the right to decide who can and cannot enter its territory. Our government continues to work with its American counterparts to ensure that Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada can continue to travel to the United States and contribute to the close personal and economic ties of our two countries.

Our government will continue to monitor the status of this executive order and deal with situations pertaining to U.S. entry as they arise. We are also pleased to be working with the United States as it reviews certain aspects of its resettlement program. Canada will continue to welcome emigrants and the government will also continue to keep Canadians apprised of this situation.

● (2405)

[*English*]

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Mr. Speaker, the member knows very well that aside from the executive order, there are huge anti-immigrant sentiments going on in the United States and people are living in fear. That is why they are taking risks and crossing at these unsanctioned border entries. That is why people are risking their lives. We have had individuals who have lost fingers and toes.

They have gone through a system here in Canada. They have applied to the IRB, are qualified to apply to the IRB, and are successful here, but not in the United States. Does that not tell the member something about what is going on in the United States? We now have a death on our hands as well.

The members of the immigration committee are refusing to even acknowledge that we should be studying this issue. They have refused to do this four times now. What is the government so afraid of that it cannot find the courage to stand up and do what is right?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Serge Cormier: Mr. Speaker, as I said at the beginning the question from the member opposite for the adjournment debate concerned the U.S. executive order on immigration and that is the question I answered.

We will continue our efforts and we will work with our American counterparts to ensure that resident Canadians and permanent residents of Canada can continue to travel to the United States as they did before and under the same conditions, which continue to apply today.

The adjournment debate was on the question raised by the member concerning the executive order and that is the question I answered.

*Adjournment Proceedings**[English]*

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week we are thinking of the families of murdered and missing indigenous women as the inquiry finally begins its first week of hearing testimony. I hope it is going as well for them as possible now that they are finally being heard. Getting at the cause of thousands of murdered and missing indigenous women is crucial to our country, but almost a year after the inquiry's launch, families are still feeling left out and now concern and frustration is growing, as articulated by the families.

We have this one week of hearings, but then things will be suspended until the fall. It is time for the government to own up to its mistakes and to remedy them. The commissioners and the government cannot continue on the path they have taken so far. Is appropriate funding fully available to the commissioners and is the government doing everything it can to support the families of murdered and missing indigenous women?

Many times we have heard government members on the other side say, and I quite agree with them, that they are committed to concurrent implementation, that we do not need to wait until the end of the inquiry to take action on the things we already know as a country we need to do to make women safe and bring justice to indigenous families.

Here is one set of directions New Democrats would have hoped the government would have taken already.

Ten years ago, Cindy Blackstock filed a human rights complaint about discrimination against first nations children. Since then, the government has not taken action, despite a court order and three non-compliance orders. The federal government is guilty of racially discriminating against 163,000 first nations children, says the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. An investment of \$155 million is all that the government needed to end this discrimination. It was not found in last month's budget and last week's Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruling said that two teenage suicides in the Wapekeka First Nation reserve might be blamed on the federal failure to implement Jordan's principle and comply with the now four Canadian Human Rights Tribunal orders.

Following the budget tabled for 2017, Cindy Blackstock said:

There's nothing new in the budget for First Nations children and their families, in child welfare, or their implementation of the Jordan's Principle...even though they've been found out of compliance with legal orders to stop that inequality.

It's a moral issue: is Canada so broke that the finance minister and the Prime Minister have made a deliberate choice to discriminate against little kids?

That was said by Cindy Blackstock with the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society.

A second large area of action that I would have thought the government would have moved forward on already is domestic violence shelter funding for indigenous women. Only five additional shelters on reserve have been funded. That has been loudly identified as inadequate and Inuit leaders, the Pauktuutit Inuit women's association in particular, says 70% of Inuit communities have no access to any violence against women shelters and there was nothing in the budget for them at all.

When will the government finally act to make indigenous women safer and rebuild the trust that this country needs so much?

• (2410)

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people and answer the question from the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

Our government is committed to ending the ongoing national tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. The Government of Canada established this independent national inquiry, recognizing that its work represents an essential step toward reconciliation with indigenous peoples. As an independent inquiry, the commission is determining how best to achieve its mandate, including how to contact families and conduct family and survivor hearings. This inquiry is a crucial step toward understanding and addressing the underlying systemic challenges that have contributed to the unacceptable rates of violence against indigenous women and girls.

Our government is concerned about what we are hearing from the families who fought so hard to get this national inquiry in place. We have read the letters from families. They are making heartfelt suggestions and asking important questions.

The commission has responded to the letter and committed to changing, especially when it comes to communicating. We are seeing that on display now in Whitehorse, as families are being heard and commissioners are accessible.

The government remains committed to working with indigenous governments and communities, with the provinces and territories, and with other key partners to end this national tragedy.

This government has taken immediate action on the root causes, with investments in women's shelters, housing, education, and child welfare. Budget 2017 will invest an additional \$3.4 billion in indigenous priorities over the next five years. It builds on budget 2016's historic investment of \$8.4 billion in government-wide spending on indigenous programs, and will result in a combined increase in funding for indigenous programs of 27% by the year 2021-22. These investments are being made in the priorities of indigenous communities, including health care, education, housing, and critical infrastructure.

Adjournment Proceedings

This government has also funded family information liaison units to assist families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in finding the answers they need from government agencies. They are located in provincial and territorial victim services to better provide help and services to address trauma. The services are required to be trauma-informed and culturally responsive. Jurisdictions are expected to work with indigenous organizations to achieve this goal.

Family information liaison units will work directly with families of missing or murdered indigenous women and girls to gather the outstanding information they seek from government agencies and organizations related to the loss of their loved ones, and will coordinate and gather information from various systems and agencies at all levels of government.

Additional funding has been made available for indigenous organizations for complementary services to victims and families. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada will work collaboratively with all parties to ensure that the commission is able to fulfill its mandate.

• (2415)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, the member cites the funding of domestic violence shelters on reserve, but it only funded one building a year for the next five years, with nothing offered for Inuit women in the north.

The Native Women's Association of Canada said, "it's not anywhere close to being enough. This is nothing less than a crisis. There are basic services that are needed immediately. [...] We don't need more pilot projects on this."

How can the federal government continue to go bit by bit? How much longer do women have to wait? Instead of keeping up with the traditions that we had with the Conservatives for 10 years offering too little, why is the government not stepping up to end violence against indigenous women right now?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is committed to real reconciliation with indigenous peoples, and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls is an important step on its path to ending the unacceptable rates of violence against indigenous women and girls.

It is critical that the commission hears from as many people as possible, so that together we can address this national tragedy. The hearings have started this week in Whitehorse. It is very important that the commission continues to inform the families about what they are doing and their work plan, and will always consider what is best for the families.

We are determined to do the right thing for the survivors and families, to honour the spirits and memories of those we have lost, and to protect future generations.

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you, as well as your team and all the pages, for being here so late and joining me for this final late show tonight. I am pleased to be here. I especially want to thank the Parliamentary

Secretary to the Minister of Finance and member for Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe for being here tonight. I am particularly pleased that she is the one who is here to answer my questions about government appointments because we are going to talk about big dollar amounts, and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance is very knowledgeable in that area.

On May 18, I had the opportunity to talk about Ms. Meilleur's appointment to the position of official languages commissioner. At that time, I reminded the House of something that happened in 2015: the Liberal Party was elected and many people started to dream. Liberal supporters, particularly Liberal donors, started to dream of the golden road that leads to an official position within the Government of Canada, which had now become accessible to them because of the money they donated to the party over the course of their lives.

We heard quite a few examples. Ms. Meilleur's case was particularly telling, and we have learned even more in recent days. With every passing day, it seems, we learn more about this appointment. For once thing, we learned that Ms. Meilleur made a generous \$5,000 donation to the Liberal Party of Canada and another \$500 donation to the Prime Minister's campaign. We also learned that two people on the Minister of Canadian Heritage's payroll used to work for Ms. Meilleur.

There were desperate attempts like the one on May 18 to explain about the rigorous, transparent, and open process leading up to Ms. Meilleur's appointment. There was even a suggestion that my colleague, the official languages critic, gave the appointment her blessing, which is way out of line. Acknowledging someone's merits is not the same as approving their appointment. Unfortunately, the Minister of Canadian Heritage used a friendly conversation with our critic to justify her choice. Personally, I think that using such conversations to justify the unjustifiable to everyone here is pretty low.

What the hon. Minister of Canadian Heritage said in her response really stuck with me. She said that she had a chance to speak with the party critic, that she did the interview herself for the final, definitive selection of the candidate for the position of official languages commissioner, and that it was a completely standard process. On May 18, however, the same day I asked that question, the official languages commissioner appointed by this government, Ms. Meilleur, confirmed that she had met with two important people from the Prime Minister's Office, two important people whose names are being repeated a lot in the House these days, Mr. Butts and Ms. Telford. We could find out exactly what their role is, but according to the minister, those individuals—

• (2420)

The Speaker: Unfortunately, the member's time is up.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

*Adjournment Proceedings**[English]*

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Mégantic—L'Érable for his question, which enables me to reiterate the Government of Canada's approach on new appointments.

I would also like to take a moment to thank the pages and staff who are also here this evening supporting us during this late night. I thank them so much for being here.

[Translation]

In February 2016, the Prime Minister announced the introduction of a new approach to Governor in Council appointments, one that is more open, representative of Canadian diversity, and merit-based. The government is proud of this new approach, which makes the process more rigorous.

In this case, 72 people applied for the position of Commissioner of Official Languages. These candidates were evaluated by an independent recruiting firm based on the criteria in the job description.

Next, a selection committee comprised of a majority of public servants, scrutinized the candidates' files and chose 12 candidates for the interview stage. Following this first round, less than 10 candidates were asked to undergo psychometric tests and an assessment of their references. Then a short list of candidates was given to the Minister of Canadian Heritage for the final selection.

[English]

The selection was then made for Madame Madeleine Meilleur to fill this position, as she clearly emerged from the process as the most qualified candidate. This rigorous, merit-based process also included consultation with the critics and the leaders of both opposition parties. As the minister has stated in the House several times, at no point have her qualifications come into question throughout this process.

During her 13 years as the minister responsible for francophone affairs, Madame Meilleur worked to create the position of French Language Services Commissioner and to ensure that this position would be independent of the legislature.

Madame Meilleur was also the driving force in ensuring that Ontario's French language television station, TFO, was able to operate independently from TVO, its English language counterpart.

In addition, Madame Meilleur has fought for increased francophone immigration in Ontario and for a bilingualism policy for the City of Ottawa during her time as a city councillor here.

● (2425)

[Translation]

The government has great confidence in the abilities of Ms. Meilleur, who clearly has much experience in the protection and promotion of Canada's official languages.

[English]

The government is highly confident that Madame Meilleur will fulfill the duties of official languages commissioner with vigour and resolve. The role of the official languages commissioner is of utmost importance, as it ensures compliance with the spirit of the Official Languages Act in our society.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the hon. member from New Brunswick that my colleague, the official languages critic, was not consulted. I do not think that she should repeat things that mislead the House.

Since my colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, is familiar with big dollar amounts and comes from New Brunswick, I am going to talk about the other appointment that was announced yesterday. Francis McGuire will become the president of Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency as of June 12, 2017.

The skills that Mr. McGuire brings to the table are that, according to Elections Canada, he contributed a total of \$31,698 to the Liberal Party of Canada between 2004 and 2015. That includes a \$5,000 contribution in 2006 to the President of the Treasury Board when he was running for leadership of the Liberal Party and a \$500 contribution to the member for Gatineau and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement.

My question for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance is this: does donating big dollar amounts get donors government appointments?

[English]

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: Again, Mr. Speaker, I wish to reiterate that the Government of Canada is proud of the appointment of Madame Meilleur as the new official languages commissioner, and also that of Mr. McGuire.

[Translation]

Protecting and promoting both official languages remains a priority for our government.

[English]

Following a rigorous process, Madame Meilleur's qualifications and her experience made it clear that she is the best candidate to fill this role.

[Translation]

The decision was made following an open, merit-based process during which Madame Meilleur stood out as the best candidate for the job.

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

(The House adjourned at 12:27 a.m.)

CONTENTS

Thursday, June 1, 2017

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Interparliamentary Delegations

Mr. Easter 11805

Committees of the House

Transport, Infrastructure and Communities

Ms. Sgro 11805

Environment and Sustainable Development

Mrs. Schulte 11805

Division on motion deferred 11805

Procedure and House Affairs

Mr. Bagnell 11805

Motion for concurrence 11805

(Motion agreed to) 11805

Petitions

Taxation

Mrs. Gallant 11806

Algoma Passenger Rail Service

Mrs. Hughes 11806

Water Quality

Mr. Paradis 11806

Shark Finning

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 11806

Natural Resources

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 11806

Canada Pension Plan

Mr. Eyking 11806

Falun Gong

Mr. Dusseault 11806

Citizenship

Ms. Kwan 11807

Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lamoureux 11807

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Business of Supply

Opposition Motion—Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project

Mr. Strahl 11807

Motion 11807

Mr. Easter 11808

Mr. Cullen 11809

Mr. Brown 11809

Motion 11809

Motion agreed to 11809

Mrs. Stubbs 11809

Ms. Rudd 11811

Ms. Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona) 11812

Mr. Carr 11812

Mr. Strahl 11815

Mr. MacGregor 11815

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 11815

Mr. Lamoureux 11816

M. Mulcair 11816

Mr. Strahl 11819

Ms. Rudd 11819

Mr. Albas 11819

Mr. Cullen 11820

Mr. Albas 11820

Mr. Dusseault 11822

Mrs. Caesar-Chavannes 11822

Mr. Sorenson 11822

Mr. Gerretsen 11824

Mr. Dusseault 11824

Mr. Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs) 11825

Mr. Sopuck 11826

Mr. Stewart 11827

Mr. Long 11827

Mr. Kmiec 11828

Mr. Stewart 11828

Mr. Zimmer 11829

Mr. Zimmer 11829

Mr. Lamoureux 11830

Mr. MacGregor 11831

Mr. Kelly 11831

Mr. Doherty 11831

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 11832

Mr. Lamoureux 11833

Mr. Harvey 11833

Mr. Stetski 11835

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 11835

Mr. Sarai 11835

Mr. Albas 11837

Mr. Stetski 11837

Mr. Genuis 11837

Royal Assent

The Deputy Speaker 11838

Business of Supply

Opposition Motion—Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project

Motion 11838

Mr. Viersen 11838

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Constitutional Debate

Mr. Beaulieu 11839

Media and Information Literacy

Ms. Young 11839

Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence

Mr. Motz 11839

Italian Heritage Month

Mr. Di Iorio 11839

Jacynthe Ouellette	
Ms. Boutin-Sweet	11840
Immigrants and Refugees	
Mr. Kang	11840
Summer Events in York—Simcoe	
Mr. Van Loan	11840
Members-Pages Soccer Match	
Mr. Whalen	11840
Attack on Amritsar Temple	
Mr. Grewal	11841
Relay for Life	
Mr. Berthold	11841
Poverty	
Mr. Long	11841
Tourism Week	
Mr. Bagnell	11841
Canadian Coast Guard	
Mr. Bezan	11841
Pride Month	
Mr. Boissonnault	11842
Wild Salmon	
Mr. Johns	11842
Intellectual Property	
Ms. Raitt	11842
The Mohawk People	
Mr. Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)	11842

ORAL QUESTIONS

Health	
Mr. Scheer	11842
Mrs. Philpott	11843
Consular Affairs	
Mr. Scheer	11843
Ms. Freeland	11843
Government Appointments	
Mr. Scheer	11843
Ms. Joly	11843
Mr. Scheer	11843
Ms. Joly	11843
Mr. Scheer	11843
Ms. Joly	11843
Mr. Mulcair	11844
Ms. Joly	11844
Mr. Mulcair	11844
Ms. Joly	11844
Mr. Mulcair	11844
Ms. Joly	11844
Mrs. Boucher	11844
Ms. Joly	11845
Mrs. Boucher	11845

Ms. Joly	11845
Mr. Nater	11845
Ms. Joly	11845
Mr. Nater	11845
Ms. Joly	11845
Mr. Brassard	11845
Ms. Joly	11846
Mr. Brassard	11846
Ms. Joly	11846
Softwood Lumber	
Ms. Ramsey	11846
Mr. Carr	11846
Ms. Trudel	11846
Mr. Carr	11846
Government Appointments	
Mr. Sorenson	11846
Ms. Chagger	11847
Mr. Gourde	11847
Ms. Chagger	11847
Ms. Bergen	11847
Mr. Bains	11847
Ms. Bergen	11847
Ms. Chagger	11847
National Defence	
Mr. Garrison	11847
Mr. Rioux	11847
Public Safety	
Mr. Dubé	11848
Mr. Holland	11848
Softwood Lumber	
Mr. Amos	11848
Mr. Carr	11848
National Defence	
Mr. Bezan	11848
Mr. Rioux	11848
Mr. Paul-Hus	11848
Mr. Rioux	11848
Consular Affairs	
Mr. Ritz	11848
Mr. Alghabra	11848
Mr. Ritz	11848
Mr. Alghabra	11849
Official Languages	
Mr. Choquette	11849
Ms. Joly	11849
Labour	
Ms. Benson	11849
Softwood Lumber	
Mr. Godin	11849
Ms. Freeland	11849
Mr. Doherty	11849
Mr. Carr	11850
Mr. Hoback	11850
Ms. Freeland	11850

Democratic Reform	
Mr. Ehsassi	11850
Ms. Gould	11850
Justice	
Mr. Cooper	11850
Ms. Wilson-Raybould	11850
Shipping	
Mr. Aubin	11850
Mr. Garneau	11850
Infrastructure	
Mrs. Mendès	11850
Mr. Sohi	11851
Health	
Mr. Lake	11851
Mr. Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	11851
Intergovernmental Relations	
Mr. Barsalou-Duval	11851
Mr. Garneau	11851
Mr. Ste-Marie	11851
Mr. Garneau	11851
Presence in Gallery	
The Speaker	11851
Points of Order	
Oral Questions	
Mr. Warkentin	11851
Mr. Dubé	11852
Business of the House	
Ms. Bergen	11852
Ms. Chagger	11852

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Business of Supply	
Opposition Motion—Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project	
Motion	11852
Mr. Viersen	11852
Mr. Maloney	11853
Mr. Cullen	11853
Mr. Berthold	11854
Mr. Boissonnault	11855
Ms. Malcolmson	11855
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	11855
Ms. Rudd	11856
Mr. Shields	11857
Ms. Kwan	11857
Mr. Boissonnault	11858
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	11859
Ms. Malcolmson	11859
Mr. Kmiec	11860
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	11860
Mr. Lamoureux	11861
Ms. Kwan	11862
Mr. Kmiec	11862
Mr. Genuis	11862

Mr. Oliver	11864
Ms. Malcolmson	11864
Ms. Kwan	11864
Mr. Sorenson	11866
Mr. Oliver	11866
Ms. Malcolmson	11866
Mr. Sopuck	11868
Mr. Oliver	11868
Ms. Kwan	11868
Ms. Harder	11869
Mr. Fergus	11870
Ms. Malcolmson	11870

Message from the Senate

The Deputy Speaker	11871
--------------------------	-------

Business of Supply

Opposition Motion—Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Expansion Project	
Motion	11871
Mr. Kmiec	11871
Division on motion deferred	11872

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Venezuela	
Mr. Kent	11872
Motion	11873
Mr. DeCourcey	11875
Ms. Laverdière	11875
Mr. Sweet	11875
Mr. DeCourcey	11876
Ms. Laverdière	11877
Mr. Kmiec	11878
Mr. Fragiskatos	11880

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Cannabis Act	
Bill C-45. Second reading	11881
Ms. Quach	11881
Mr. Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	11882
Mr. Drouin	11883
Mrs. Philpott	11883
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	11886
Mr. MacGregor	11887
Ms. Harder	11887
Mr. Blair	11887
Mr. Cooper	11888
Mr. Blair	11889
Mr. MacGregor	11890
Mr. Robillard	11890
Mrs. Caesar-Chavannes	11891
Ms. Moore	11892
Mr. Blair	11892
Mr. Drouin	11893
Mr. Berthold	11895
Ms. Quach	11895
Mrs. Waganall	11895
Mr. Easter	11898

Mr. MacGregor.....	11898
Mr. Albrecht.....	11898
Mr. El-Khoury.....	11899
Ms. Fry.....	11899
Mr. Albrecht.....	11900
Mr. MacGregor.....	11900
Mr. Eglinski.....	11901
Mr. Blair.....	11902
Ms. Moore.....	11903
Ms. Moore.....	11903
Ms. Benson.....	11904
Mr. Kitchen.....	11904
Mr. Robillard.....	11905
Mr. Gourde.....	11905
Mr. Oliver.....	11906
Ms. Moore.....	11906
Mr. Robillard.....	11906
Mr. Kitchen.....	11907
Mr. Ouellette.....	11908
Mr. MacGregor.....	11908
Mr. Eglinski.....	11909
Ms. Benson.....	11909
Mr. Oliver.....	11910
Mr. Albrecht.....	11910
Mr. Deltell.....	11911
Mr. Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation).....	11912
Ms. Moore.....	11912
Mr. Easter.....	11913
Mr. Shields.....	11913
Mr. Blair.....	11915
Ms. Malcolmson.....	11915

Mr. Tabbara.....	11915
Mr. Albrecht.....	11916
Mr. MacGregor.....	11917
Ms. Benson.....	11917
Ms. Harder.....	11917
Mr. Drouin.....	11919
Ms. Dabrusin.....	11919
Mr. Kmiec.....	11919
Mr. Albrecht.....	11919
Mr. Tabbara.....	11921
Ms. Moore.....	11921
Mr. Mendicino.....	11921
Mr. Doherty.....	11921
Mr. MacGregor.....	11923
Mr. Oliver.....	11923
Mrs. Boucher.....	11924
Mr. Robillard.....	11925
Ms. Moore.....	11925
Mr. Drouin.....	11925

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Ms. Kwan.....	11925
Mr. Cormier.....	11926

Indigenous Affairs

Ms. Malcolmson.....	11927
Ms. Petitpas Taylor.....	11927

Government Appointments

Mr. Berthold.....	11928
Ms. Petitpas Taylor.....	11929

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <http://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.noscommunes.ca>