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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, January 27, 2020

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

• (1105)

[*English*]

WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I wish to table a notice of a ways and means motion respecting an act to implement the agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States.

Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of this motion.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

[*English*]

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from December 13, 2019, consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session.

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to split my time with the member for Kenora today.

It would have been difficult to predict, over 150 years ago, that the shared vision of Canada's founding fathers who gathered to create a dominion from sea to sea would have led to a 29-year-old woman delivering the first speech of the new year and the new decade in our House of Commons.

As a first-time elected representative, it was a special moment for me to hear Canada's Governor General deliver the Speech from the Throne. Amid all the pomp and circumstance, I could not help but think back to my humble roots and how far I have come. I was born to four generations of Canadian farmers in a small town in eastern Manitoba. My family were prairie pioneers, and their lives were built on sacrifice, on struggle and on principles of personal responsibility and resilience.

At the time, Canada was a young country without the robust social safety net we see today. Faith, family and community were all they could rely on to get them through the tough times of financial hardship. They had no choice but to persevere and do the best they could to provide for the next generation.

My call to public service came when I was about nine years old. It was a hot summer day at my grandparents' farm. The adults in my family were sitting around the kitchen table passionately expressing their views of yet another damaging policy the Liberals in Ottawa had put on farmers. Even at that young age, I could feel the injustice of the harmful government intrusion in our lives. There was a disconnect between my humble hard-working family and the decision-makers here in Ottawa.

I decided in that moment that when I grew up, I would go to Ottawa to fight for my family. It has been a long journey from small-town country roots to being the first in my family to attend university and the first to enter federal politics. As a woman in her 20s, I stand before you today, Mr. Speaker, as part of a demographic that has rarely been represented in this House.

I attribute much of my success to the resilience I inherited from my pioneer ancestors and that burning motivation to fight for everyday Canadians against government agendas that are so often out of touch with the struggles facing everyday people. That is why I am truly honoured to represent my constituents of Kildonan—St. Paul.

My riding has a rich heritage and holds a place of significance in our national history. That history is tied to the mighty Red River, which cuts straight through the middle of Kildonan—St. Paul. The river has been the lifeblood of the community for thousands of years, beginning with Treaty 1 first nations and later the Red River Métis and the Selkirk Settlers, and later the Polish, Ukrainian, German and Mennonite homesteaders of the early 20th century.

More recently our community has welcomed many newcomers from India and the Philippines. Today Kildonan—St. Paul is a diverse constituency made strong by the contributions of young families, new Canadians, seniors, small business owners, tradesmen and women, and dozens of cultural and faith groups.

The Address

However, what troubles me is how the throne speech and the priorities of the Liberal government therein are not reflective of the priorities of the Winnipeggers and the Manitobans I represent. What I heard at the doorstep over the better part of the last two years was a desire for a representative who would fight for everyday hard-working Canadians in my community, an MP who would make clear to the Liberal government that higher taxes, mountains of debt and endless deficits do not create economic prosperity but in fact put our country's social programs and the future financial security of Canadians at risk.

Residents also expressed concerns for their environment, and top of mind is the North End Water Pollution Control Centre, which is at the very centre of my riding and processes 70% of Winnipeg sewage. It needs over \$1 billion in infrastructure upgrades and is currently incapable of removing phosphorus to an acceptable degree from the treated sewage before it flows back into the Red River. As a result, there are impacts on the health of Lake Winnipeg, which, as all Manitobans know, has been choked with large algae blooms in the most recent years. Lake Winnipeg, the Red River and the Assiniboine River have shaped the history of Manitoba for thousands of years, and all three levels of government must come together to support this critical project.

Also top of mind was the extension of Chief Peguis Trail from Main Street to Route 90, which would substantially increase the livability of northwest Winnipeg by reducing traffic on residential streets to accommodate walking, cycling and public transit, and increase traffic mobility by supporting the completion of the strategic inner ring road of Winnipeg. Unfortunately, despite running billions in deficits and collecting millions more in additional tax revenue, the Prime Minister and the government have largely ignored critical infrastructure projects in Manitoba.

Winnipeggers are also looking at the federal government to take meaningful action to combat the meth crisis, which has wreaked havoc on Winnipeg in recent years, contributed to the dramatic increase in violent crime and contributed to its 44 murders in 2019, more than doubling from the year prior.

• (1110)

Our first responders and front-line community organizations are under tremendous stress as they deal with the heartbreaking and traumatic consequences of this crisis. I saw the dire need for action in our community first-hand when I went to an evening patrol with the Bear Clan, an indigenous-led grassroots community group that supports vulnerable people across our inner-city neighbourhoods in Winnipeg. That evening, a large bag of needles was found buried in a snowbank. Volunteers carefully collected them for safe disposal in bone-chilling -30°C weather, but the most shocking of all was when I looked up from our collection activities to see three young children peering down from a nearby second-storey window. I could not help but think how inviting this fluffy snowbank may have looked to these children as they walked to school or played outside.

Last year, the Bear Clan picked up more than 145,000 used needles in Winnipeg's North End. The Liberal government committed to long-term, predictable funding to support the Bear Clan's efforts,

and I very much hope the Minister of Indigenous Services will deliver on this commitment made by his predecessor.

In addition to serving my constituents, I have also been given by my leader the responsibility of serving Canadians as the shadow minister for the new Department of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth. I am honoured to have earned this opportunity and I am committed to using this platform to advocate the inclusion of ethnically and racially diverse Canadians, freedom and equality of LGBTQ Canadians and a free, prosperous and healthy future for Canada's youth.

The youth in Canada are facing challenges. Affordability was the number one concern I heard on the doorstep, and it is impacting young people in many alarming ways. My generation has the largest student loan debt in the history of Canada. We are well into our thirties when buying our first homes, if we do so at all, and we are working without reliable retirement plans in the gig economy. Our wages are largely frozen while the cost of living has increased dramatically, so it is no surprise that we are drowning in household debt and having fewer children, if any.

Meanwhile, the baby boomers are aging into their retirement pensions and beginning to rely heavily on our health care and social services, which are already under tremendous strain. However, we have heard very little acknowledgement of these critical financial issues in the Liberal government's throne speech. Its multi-year, multi-billion-dollar deficit investments completely lack a strategic plan to secure my generation's financial future in the event of soaring interest rates or an economic downturn. The government is leaving us ill-equipped to deal with an uncertain and changing world, and every person in my generation will live with the consequences if we do not get it right.

I will embrace my critic role by holding the government to account on behalf of my generation and young Conservatives across this country, and as my party and our country navigate the issues of the 2020s, I will fight for everyday Canadians. I will fight for freedom; for safety; for security; for health, peace and prosperity; and for a government that respects the rich fabric of beliefs of our country. I will as well fight for the priorities of my constituents in Kildonan—St. Paul. I will ensure their voices and priorities are heard loud and clear in this chamber.

To conclude, I would like to acknowledge the people who helped get me here: my team. I thank all of the first-time and long-time volunteers who put in hundreds of hours on the campaign trail; my family, my parents and my two sisters, who have supported me in my dreams for decades; and most sincerely, I thank my fiancé Scott, who is in the gallery today. He was by my side back when being a member of Parliament was only a pipe dream.

The Address

Family really is the most important thing, and in that regard I have been very blessed. I am working tirelessly to make them proud as I come to Ottawa to do what I came here to do, which is to fight for everyday Canadians.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member referred to fighting for Canadians. I am sure she would join with me and the Liberal caucus as we continue to deliver for Canadians from every region of this country.

For example, this government has delivered tax breaks to Canada's middle class. This is a government that has lifted literally hundreds of thousands of both seniors and children out of poverty by enhancing the Canada child benefit and increasing the guaranteed income supplement. Many progressive measures have been incorporated in the past few years to advance Canada's middle class, making it healthier and stronger. Are these the types of policies that we can anticipate she will support?

Further to that, today a motion was tabled to introduce the trade agreement for Canada, Mexico and the U.S. Would she not agree that this is a positive step and something we should get behind?

• (1115)

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Madam Speaker, I ask the member to consider the state of the Canadian economy under his government. About 71,000 Canadians lost their jobs in November, which I am sure he will remember. October 2019 had the highest number of personal bankruptcies in a decade, the most since the global financial crisis. Businesses like Encana are leaving Canada because of the government's tax hikes and harmful regulations. Investment in plants and equipment by Canadian businesses has fallen by 20% over the past five years, the worst performance in more than five decades. Foreign direct investment in Canada has fallen by 56% since this government came to power.

In my speech I spoke a lot about the future of this country and the stakes that young people are facing. I encourage the member opposite to reconsider his remarks and think about the consequences of his government's reckless financial actions.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I welcome the member for Kildonan—St. Paul to the House. I am very impressed with her first speech in this place.

Last week, the NDP leader, the member for Burnaby South, put forward a proposal for a bill that would establish a national pharmacare plan, laying out a framework that operates much in the same way that the Canada Health Act does.

In ridings right across this country, a lot of people are struggling with the day-to-day costs of medication, and indeed many families are making the hard choice between paying the rent and utilities and paying for prescriptions.

A letter was sent to the Conservative Party, inviting its members to join with us to establish this national framework. I would like to hear the member's thoughts on that proposal, as well as on how pharmacare costs impact her constituents.

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Madam Speaker, there are many seniors in my riding, and I have spoken to thousands of them over the last two years. I can say quite confidently that I agree seniors are facing serious financial consequences right now that are not being helped by the Liberal government's carbon tax, which, as we know, puts an increase on everything. Everything is transported into Winnipeg by fuelled trucks, which means the cost of groceries, gas, heating and any kind of transportation increases for seniors. Seniors are on incredibly fixed incomes. The CPP is not keeping up with inflation, and they are facing serious consequences. The Liberal government has done nothing for seniors but make life more expensive with things like the carbon tax.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Boudrias (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on her speech. She made a lot of sense about a lot of things, including her local- and provincial-level concerns about infrastructure, social issues and youth. Those values are shared by most Canadians and most of the MPs here. However, most of these issues are not just regional but, about 90% of the time, local, and they fall under provincial jurisdiction, especially when it comes to infrastructure and health.

With the federal government allocating some two-thirds of its budget to transfers, would my colleague agree that more money should be transferred to the provinces to fund those programs?

[English]

Ms. Raquel Dancho: Madam Speaker, I would support any measure that further supports Manitobans and the citizens in my riding. As I outlined in my speech, they are facing troubling economic times, particularly the youth. We are looking for a government that makes investments in the future of Canada that actually make reasonable impacts, lower taxes and keep the size of government small while we invest in critical infrastructure.

All of the priorities I mentioned are for trilateral infrastructure funding from all three levels of government. It is important that all members in the House come together with the other two levels of government to fund critical infrastructure to build our nation for the next generation.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in the chamber and address a number of concerns that I have.

The Address

Here we are at the beginning of a new decade and I am feeling very optimistic, because over the last number of years we have seen a government in Canada that has had a very progressive attitude and has been able to deliver for Canadians in all regions of our country. Let there be no doubt that the priority of this government has been Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it. That has been the case since day one, and even prior.

I can recall that when the Prime Minister was elected leader of the Liberal Party, when we were the third party in the far corner of the House of Commons, he made it very clear in his leadership bid that his personal priority was the well-being of Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it, believing that by building Canada's middle class and giving it strength, we would have a healthier economy. We have seen that.

The member opposite made reference to the fact that in the month of November, 70,000 people became unemployed. We need to look at what we have accomplished in the last four years. There are well over one million net new jobs in Canada's economy. That is far more than Stephen Harper ever achieved in his eight or nine years. We have accomplished a great deal.

I will be splitting my time with the member for Hull—Aylmer.

I was very proud to be sitting beside the Deputy Prime Minister just 20 minutes ago when she tabled a ways and means notice of motion dealing with the Canada-U.S.-Mexico trade agreement.

Having said that, trade is important to Canada. This is one thing that adds value to our economy. In the last four years, the government has accomplished the signing of a significant number of trade agreements. We are talking about well over 25 or 30, with numerous countries. We have had a very aggressive and progressive movement toward trade agreements around the world because we know that Canada is very much dependent on world trade. That is one of the ways we can assist our middle class and grow our economy. We have seen that first-hand.

I often make reference to the pork industry in the province of Manitoba and how that industry as a whole continues to grow and provide thousands of jobs there, whether in Brandon, Neepawa, the city of Winnipeg or throughout rural communities. This is the type of thing that has a real impact, and that is just one industry. These jobs, in good part, are there because of trade. Trade is critically important. That is why it was so encouraging to see the government put trade as a high priority.

We look to the opposition members and particularly the Conservative Party, which has been a very strong advocate in past years for trade. We anticipate that the Conservatives will have the opportunity to go through the agreement and will continue to support trade with the United States. It is the same with the Bloc and the New Democrats. We understand and appreciate just how important this agreement is to Canada.

We have talked about the issues brought forward in the last few years, and I made reference to a number of them in the question I put to the member for Kildonan—St. Paul. We dealt with them through positive, progressive social policies, and we have seen a continuation.

• (1120)

I could talk about the first bill that we brought in back in 2015, the tax break for Canada's middle class. At the same time, we increased taxes for Canada's wealthiest 1%. Four years later, we are seeing a decrease in taxes for Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it. We are talking about hundreds of millions of dollars being put into the pockets of Canadians, adding to the disposable income of people across this country.

In terms of the other benefits we have enhanced, the Canada child benefit is something members of the Liberal caucus will quite often talk about. As I have made reference to in the past, over \$9 million a month goes into the riding of Winnipeg North alone to support children.

We can talk about the increases to the guaranteed income supplement. We made a commitment to support some of our poorest seniors, those aged 75 and over, who are having a more difficult time, by looking into how we could further enhance their pensionable incomes. Over the next period of time, I look forward to seeing that realized. We understand how important it is to support young people and seniors in our communities.

These sorts of investments and putting the money back in through tax breaks allow the disposable income in our communities to go up. When we do these things, disposable income is being spent in our communities. That helps to fuel the demand for jobs.

That is why I believe, as I know my colleagues also believe, that having a healthy, strong middle class and building that middle class will add value to our economy and will make it stronger and healthier.

Over the years, we have seen an ongoing commitment to capital investments such as our housing strategy, with billions of dollars being invested in the first-ever national housing strategy, a very tangible action that will have a profoundly positive impact on thousands of Canadians in every region of our country by recognizing the importance of housing.

We can talk about infrastructure, whether it is roads or other types of community public facilities. Hundreds of millions and even billions of dollars have thus far been invested in our communities from coast to coast to coast.

For the first time, we have a government that is prepared to negotiate with the provinces to achieve tangible results. We have seen that in the Canada pension program. Individuals who are working today will have more money when it comes time to retire because of an initiative we took a couple of years back.

The Address

As a government, I truly believe we have recognized how important it is to invest in our social programs. If we were to canvass Canadians and ask them what makes them feel good about being a Canadian, more often than not I believe they would say, at least in Winnipeg North, that it is our health care system. People love our health care system. They believe in our health care system. The Canada Health Act provides the type of framework that Canadians are behind. The government is sending record amounts of health care dollars throughout our federation. Not only are we doing that, but we are now talking about how to come up with a pharmacare program.

• (1125)

I have been a parliamentarian for 30 years. For a vast majority of those years, we never heard about a national pharmacare program. It is only in the last four years it has been on the public agenda on virtually a weekly basis. If it were up to me, we would be having debate and discussion on a national pharmacare program every day, because it is something in which I genuinely believe. I suspect we will continue to receive the type of support we have seen from the New Democrats on pharmacare.

Discussing how we might be able to expand it is something I am open to. I remember a few years ago, my daughter, who happens to be the MLA in an area I represent in Winnipeg North, and I made a commitment to continue to push the pharmacare issue. She has tabled petitions in the Manitoba legislature and I have tabled numerous petitions in the House of Commons on this issue. The reason is that I know how important it is for all Canadians that we continue to push this issue forward. I believe we have a united caucus within the government caucus to ensure we see a realization of a pharmacare program.

I see my time has expired, so I will leave it at that.

• (1130)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague said that the middle class was a priority for the government. Back in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, the middle class depends on the aluminum industry, supply management and forestry, three sectors that have taken a hit in every single trade agreement signed by previous governments.

I have a simple question for my colleague: Will he support our party's initiative to revise the status of aluminum in the agreement between the United States, Canada and Mexico?

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, what is encouraging to see is that within the free trade agreement, from what I understand and on which we are going to get a lot more information over the next couple of days, there are significant achievements that were not in the previous trade agreement. One of the biggest beneficiaries of those changes will be the aluminum industry as a whole.

I often make reference to my historical roots going back to the province of Quebec. I am passionate about the province of Quebec, the jobs that are there and wanting to be able to protect them. I look forward to my colleague across the way participating and getting engaged in the debate on the free trade agreement between Canada,

Mexico and the U.S.A. I suspect he will find this agreement is actually better for the industry than the previous agreement. That is really what we should, at least in good part, be measuring it against. The constituents he represents will be better off as a direct result of this agreement.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member for some of the details of that agreement because, on this side of the House, we are struggling to find out what those details are. Maybe he can speak of the benefits to the aluminum, forestry and automotive sectors and at least give us some information on it.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am encouraged to hear the question. I know in the next couple of days we will see a lot more information coming out. Hopefully, this will provide the type of details that will give the member opposite and me a much better understanding of it. I do not know many of the details at this point in time.

What I do know is that there are certain areas the opposition has raised with respect to the trade agreement. I had the opportunity to look into those areas and I found, from the research I did, that the agreement today is a better deal than what we had previously. That is something we consistently argued for. We wanted to get a good deal for Canadians.

I am very optimistic and hopeful that, once we have all the details on the table, the Conservatives will work diligently to get a good comprehensive understanding of the agreement. I do believe, given their past, they will be inclined to support the agreement, as both the Liberals and Conservatives have worked relatively well together on trade agreements.

• (1135)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, the idea of national pharmacare goes back to the origins of our medicare system in the 1960s. For the member to suggest this has only been four years in the making in the House of Commons also proves a point. I would like to ask the member whether he felt that the members of the Liberal Party who have been proposing this since 1997 were actually making it up and not doing the proper thing in bringing in pharmacare. Were they just making it up? Was it a lie back then? Did the members not have good intentions? Did they finally wake up today and realize that this has been going on in our country for decades?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, as I indicated, I have been a parliamentarian for 30 years combined at the provincial and national levels. It is only in the last four or five years that the issue has come front and centre and has been extensively debated. I used to be the health care critic in the province of Manitoba and rarely during that period of time did it ever come up. Only in the last four years has it come up to the degree which it has and it is because of a lot of fine work by members on all sides of the House, not just one side. One side should not take credit.

This is all about providing a good service to Canadians. It is all about Canada and serving Canadians on an issue that is important to them.

The Address

[*Translation*]

Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and to the Minister of Digital Government, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by acknowledging all my colleagues in the House of Commons and wishing them a happy new year.

This is my first chance to speak in this 43rd Parliament of Canada. I am very pleased to rise and speak to everyone, including all Canadians who are watching at home today.

Before I begin my comments on the Speech from the Throne, I want to say that I think it is a remarkable document. It encourages parliamentarians to work together, just as Canadians called for in the last election. They want us to work together for the well-being of all Canadians.

I want to thank my constituents in Hull—Aylmer. The riding of Hull—Aylmer is located just across the river from the House of Commons, in the Outaouais region of Quebec, where the Ottawa and the Gatineau Rivers meet. It is a special place. My constituents are proud of their historic city. They are well aware that, without Hull—Aylmer, there would be no Ottawa.

In the early 19th century, Philemon Wright arrived from the United States and settled in this region to develop the lumber industry. This contributed to the creation of what has become the national capital region and the location of our Parliament.

In fact, our region has been home to indigenous peoples for 8,000 years, well before the arrival of people from Europe or Africa. This is where indigenous peoples came to conduct trade, share stories and build a future together. This is why I think this is the right place for the Canadian Parliament. In our own way, we can work together to help Canadians.

I am very proud to speak in support of the throne speech, which addresses some very important topics and political perspectives vital to Canada's well-being, now and in the future. Front and centre is climate action. There is nothing more important. We must focus on climate action to ensure that we leave our children, grandchildren and future generations a better world. I am very proud that we have committed Canada to net-zero emissions by 2050. Major national initiatives are required.

As member of Parliament for Hull—Aylmer, I will be hosting a new public forum, similar to the 24 I hosted during the previous Parliament. This time around, climate action will be the overarching theme of these public forums.

We are working with provincial and municipal representatives, key stakeholders like the Conseil régional sur l'environnement et le développement durable de l'Outaouais, and other individuals who work in this area. How can we better coordinate the efforts of individuals, businesses, key stakeholders and all levels of government? I hope that our region and my riding will achieve net-zero emissions well before 2050. This is very important and I will act accordingly.

• (1140)

I know that our government wants to work with all members and all parties to seriously tackle this issue. No action is too small, and

we clearly have a duty to think of some big actions we can take to deal with this issue effectively. We are willing to collaborate with all members of the House to achieve this goal.

The throne speech covers not only broad existential issues like climate change, but also the issue of Canada itself. How do we strengthen the middle class and help those working so hard to join it? My colleague from Winnipeg North stressed the importance of the Canada child benefit. He has been involved in federal and provincial politics for 30 years, and I know his memory on this is excellent.

Back in 1988, I was a parliamentary page. I remember that, shortly after my year as a page, Parliament made a solemn pledge to end child poverty in Canada. That was in 1990, and the pledge was to do this within 10 years, by the year 2000. That was an initiative. It has been 30 years. For 25 of those 30 years, the poverty rate in Canada did not change. In 2015, however, our government launched an initiative for Canadians, the Canada child benefit. It was extraordinary. In just four short years, we reduced child poverty in Canada by a third and the overall poverty rate by a third as well. Now, over 300,000 young Canadians have been lifted out of poverty. If that is not one of an MP's most fundamental duties, I do not know what is. This is extraordinary.

I was a little disappointed that some people voted against this, but I hope all members of the House will continue to support this program. If we were able to accomplish that much in four years, I hope we will be able to keep up this work. That is the commitment we made.

Ensuring that we have a strong and durable economy is another thing that is very important in strengthening the middle class and those working hard to join it. We did that with the new NAFTA that we just signed and that the minister just tabled this morning. Once again, that is very important. Canada is not a huge country with a huge population, but we work hard. We are well aware that our prosperity depends fundamentally on building ties and international trade. That is what we just did with the new NAFTA, which will strengthen the jobs of millions of Canadians.

We did not stop there. In the last Parliament, with the help of many members of the House, we also signed a free trade agreement with Europe, a market of 500 million people. Once again, that is extraordinary. I could talk about reconciliation with indigenous peoples, which is very important to my riding. A large percentage of people in my riding are members of the Algonquin nation. I could also talk about the health and safety of Canadians.

The Address

In closing, I would simply like to tell all my colleagues that I think that this document is something that everyone can get behind. I hope I can count on the support of all my parliamentary colleagues to improve the lives of Canadians.

• (1145)

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his speech.

I have a great deal of respect for my colleague. However, we have a lot of problems to address.

[*English*]

The government tabled a ways and means motion this morning on the USMCA deal, but it has very few details that parliamentarians can understand. I agree with my colleague that the Conservatives have always been supportive of free trade deals, but at a minimum we need to know what impact the USMCA is going to have on certain sectors of our economy like aluminum, the forestry sector or the automotive sector. Those details are scarce to this point.

On behalf of Canadians and those that the parliamentary secretary says are going to benefit from this deal, I think we need to understand this a little better. I would like some more details from him on how it is going to benefit Canadians and the sectors that I spoke about.

Mr. Greg Fergus: Madam Speaker, I certainly think the question the hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil raises regarding CUSMA is an important one. The aluminum sector, for example, is a great example of how Canadians have come together.

With this new deal, according to the reports that I have read in the papers, and we will see the details as they come out as we all examine the enabling legislation, we saw that the aluminum and steel sectors now have a rules of origin component, which guarantees that 70% of steel and aluminum will now be sourced in North America. We are not just slapping a sticker on an import from somewhere else in the world. I am speaking about products produced in Canada. This has never happened before. The aluminum sector has never had this kind of guarantee. This is a clear win. This is why we see aluminum producers very strongly supporting this deal.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to reassure our colleagues in the government that members of the Bloc Québécois are basically in favour of any free trade agreement that benefits Quebec's economy.

However, the Bloc Québécois also takes a good look at the details of any agreement being negotiated to see what impact it might have. When we talk about steel and aluminum, which were again mentioned just now, steel is protected from the moment it is melted and poured, but not aluminum. Those are the kind of details I am talking about. It is important to look at the long-term consequences. Let's not forget that supply management was sacrificed.

I am having more and more meetings with stakeholders from the dairy industry. I was dismayed to realize that Canada even agreed to limit what we export to countries other than the United States. It is unheard of. They want to try to pass a bill, an agreement, without

discussing it. As a function of democracy, is it essential to go over each clause in committee to consider the consequences to the economy.

• (1150)

Mr. Greg Fergus: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Berthier—Maskinongé for his question, and I would also like to welcome him to the House of Commons.

First, I would like to set the record straight. People in the steel and aluminum sector have clearly stated that they support the bill. Unlike the former agreement, this one guarantees for the first time that steel and aluminum will be produced here in North America. They have never had that guarantee. In fact, 70% of steel and aluminum to be used must originate in Canada, the United States or Mexico. The U.S. and Mexico do not really have an aluminum sector, but Canada does. Quebec's Liberal MPs worked very hard to ensure the protection and promotion of our aluminum industry.

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

It is a great honour to be back in the House, having been re-elected to this 43rd Parliament by the great people of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford. Since this is my first speech in this Parliament, I want to take this opportunity to thank them for the trust that they have again placed on my shoulders and the huge responsibility that comes with it.

I am very lucky to be representing such a beautiful riding, which is a 4,700 square kilometre part of Vancouver Island filled with such amazing communities, such as Chemainus, down through Duncan, extending south to the city of Langford, extending out west through Lake Cowichan and including the community of Port Renfrew. It is home to the only Mediterranean-style climate in all of Canada. We are blessed to be able to grow a variety of crops and, indeed, we have a very storied and rich agricultural history in my region. It is also home to many first nations, including Cowichan tribes, Penelakut, Lyackson, Halalt, Malahat in the south and the western communities. These are communities that, of course, existed in this place for thousands of years with the first peoples. I have learned much over the last four years serving as their member of Parliament. I will continue to lean on them for guidance and their teachings as we chart a path forward with true reconciliation.

I would also like to take this time to welcome the class of 2019 to this place. I remember my own experience as a new member of Parliament four years ago, and it can seem quite overwhelming. However, new members should never forget that the people of their ridings sent them here. They placed their trust on their shoulders and every single seat in this place represents a distinct and unique geographic part of Canada. I think all members of Parliament, even though we may have our disagreements, have to respect that first and foremost. The electors are never wrong.

The Address

When I look at the election results in my riding and take the aggregate of the vote for all of the parties, I see that there was a clear desire for the people of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford to see action on climate change, housing and health care, because the three parties that came out with a huge margin all spoke in their platforms about commitments to those three things. Some platforms had placed varying degrees of importance but, nonetheless, people saw those three items in the parties' platforms, and that is what they responded to.

I would like to start with the issue of climate change. There is absolutely no doubt that this is the top issue of the 21st century. I do not need to repeat everything that has been said in the House in the previous Parliament and the one before that. We are now at a point where, last year, we had a letter from over 11,000 scientists from around the world, in over 150 countries, warning policy-makers that this has to be the top issue and that we have to measure our success with scientifically verifiable targets. Unfortunately, the debates in this place have so often centred simply on the carbon tax, which all experts in this area will acknowledge is just a very tiny part of what our overall response to climate change has to be.

When we start talking about the cost of climate change, what is conveniently left out of the conversation is the economic cost of unmitigated climate change. We have heard experts peg the figure at around 10% of the world's GDP. When we start talking about that figure, we are not talking about billions of dollars but trillions of dollars. Therefore, I would ask people who are fighting against the carbon tax: How much of our nation's tax revenues are they prepared to spend when we are fighting wildfires in British Columbia and Alberta? How much future tax revenues are we prepared to spend to save Vancouver International Airport from rising tides, sea levels and floods coming down the Fraser River?

Canada is a coastal nation. We have the longest coastline in the world, and many of our people live and work in coastal communities. Therefore, we have to find ways as a nation to start meeting those targets and acknowledge our responsibility for the way we have lived for the last several decades, but to also be a leader and show that there is a way. Simply talking about climate change is not enough, because the other big threat facing Canada is growing inequality.

• (1155)

The other thing I clearly learned over my last four years as a member of Parliament, but also on the doorsteps of my riding, is that environmental justice will never happen unless we also have economic justice and social justice.

We can go to the doorsteps of people who are struggling to pay the bills, who are wondering whether they are going to have a job next month and whether they are going to be able to make that hard choice between rent and utilities and putting good quality food on the table. Unless we have a comprehensive climate change plan that includes a place for the most disadvantaged members of our society, it will not work.

We have to have a just transition plan. We have to have this all wrapped up. We need to have, in a sense, what people are referring to as a green new deal, one that tackles all these in a comprehensive plan. Simply leaving it to private citizens and the goodwill of cor-

porations, while important, is not going to be enough. We know we are now at a stage where we have to start treating this seriously.

I would like to move on to health care because that was the other big thing. The NDP, through the last election, committed to a national pharmacare plan. We want to stand by our promise, unlike the Liberals who first made the promise back in 1997. I would like to just correct the record there.

However, another big thing is a dental care plan. I think a national dental care plan will make a huge difference for people. I listened to members of my caucus speaking to their constituents. We have all met people who are embarrassed by the state of their teeth. They even have to hold their hands over their mouths because they are embarrassed by the state of their teeth.

We know that good oral health is very important to good overall health. It is actually a class thing, because people who are well off have healthy teeth but people who are living in poverty have really bad teeth. The best way we can make an impact on people's lives is to make sure that we are covering things like dental care and pharmacare, while not putting people in the unfortunate position of having to make tough choices.

It is all well and good to talk about tax breaks but if those tax breaks are only benefiting people who need them the least, while not identifying the true costs to people who are living in the margins and on the bottom rungs of our society, we are not going to make it forward as a nation.

I have to talk about the opioid crisis. The opioid crisis continues to ravage my community. Every day in the city of Duncan people can go to one part of the city and see it there in front of them. It is a constant reminder to residents of the failure so far of federal policy.

Unless we, as a nation, are prepared to have these difficult conversations about whether we engage in policies that establish a safe drug supply and commit ourselves to decriminalization for small amounts, we are not going to move forward. The agencies that are trying to provide help are still operating under the shackles of current federal policy.

We are at a breaking point, from the business owners who have to deal with it every day, to the RCMP that have made over 300 calls in a calendar year, to the people who are trying to revive people suffering from an overdose. They are suffering from compassion fatigue. They are suffering from burnout. Unless we have the federal resources necessary to properly deal with this problem, we are still going to be talking about it.

We are dealing with an epidemic and it requires us to call a national health emergency. It requires Ottawa to step up to the plate to provide the funding necessary for the provinces and communities like mine to effectively deal with this problem.

The Address

I will end by acknowledging that I am very proud to once again serve as my party's agriculture critic. I look forward to working with all parties in the House to advance policies that will benefit our farmers.

I also would like to acknowledge that we are in a minority Parliament and how different and wonderful it is from the previous Parliament. Unlike having the government dictate to us in the opposition which way we are going to proceed, it is now going to require a lot of goodwill and good-faith negotiations to sometimes put aside our differences to make sure that we are serving the interests of this nation.

• (1200)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his characteristically impassioned speech.

He said two or three times that the environment is a priority. The throne speech also sets out that the environment is an absolute priority and includes several measures, which my colleague mentioned.

My question is simple: Does he agree with our government that not only must we work together to come up with good environmental measures, but we must also consider the economy in order to intelligently advance the environmental file and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050?

[*English*]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, I very much agree with the words that are being uttered in this place with regard to the environment, but I also have to stand here and judge the government on its actions.

I appreciate the commitments that were made in the throne speech toward addressing climate change, but it has to be noted in this place that in the previous Parliament the government authorized the purchase of the Trans Mountain pipeline. That project is directly affecting coastal British Columbia and is going to triple our exports of diluted bitumen.

Here we are in the year 2020, and we are continuously investing in fossil fuel infrastructure and expansion when all around us climate scientists are telling us we have to put the brakes on these kinds of investments. We have to find a way, more importantly, for the oil and gas workers to engage and adjust transition strategy.

I would encourage that member's government to listen to organizations like Iron and Earth, which is made up of oil workers who understand that their industry will not be around forever. They want the government to engage in a transition plan here and now, so we can take this problem by the horns and start dealing with it with the urgency it deserves.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Madam Speaker, I certainly sympathize. In December 2018, we had an emergency debate in this place on the opioid crisis. Since that time, one of my communities, Princeton, has had Canada's highest number of deaths per capita from opioid overdoses. The member of Parliament for Kelowna—Lake Country stated

that this is an urgent issue in her community, and my community as well because I do represent part of Kelowna.

I want to ask the hon. member whether he has seen the so-called funding flow through in a way that tangibly affects his riding, and whether he thinks the government has done a good job on this front.

• (1205)

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, the short answer is no. I believe in budget 2017 there was a funding commitment made of about \$100 million over five years. That is just a drop in the bucket compared with the status of the crisis that we are facing.

As I said in my speech, we are at a state now where RCMP, first responders to the situation, are suffering compassion fatigue and total burnout. The problem is there in my community as a constant daily reminder of the failure of federal policy.

I implore the Liberal government to start treating this like the crisis it is. Declare a national health emergency, free up the federal resources and allow us to properly tackle this crisis. Give the people the help they so deserve.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to respond to the Liberal government's Speech from the Throne.

I would like to begin by quoting Edmond Rostand, who would have this to say about it: That's too brief, young man! The throne speech is silent on quite a few subjects, especially subjects of interest to Quebecers. In fact, the word "Quebec" does not appear even once. That is a singular omission on the part of a minority government that would have done well to pay more attention to Quebec's needs and interests in the throne speech. Unfortunately, it did not. The speech is long on rhetoric, hot air, good intentions and lip service but short on details, clarity and firm commitments in several areas, except where it suits the Liberals.

For years, the Liberals have been promising money for the national housing strategy and the fight against homelessness. Unfortunately, people on the ground know that the federal government provides precious few resources and refuses to make the kind of concrete commitments that allow projects to move forward and housing co-ops and affordable and low-income housing to get built. The housing issue is of vital importance to many Canadians and Quebecers because it is many families' biggest expense. Right now, people are struggling to find adequate housing. The Liberals have said a lot of nice things about housing over the past few years but, sadly, have done very little.

In Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, one-third of households spend more than 30% of their income on housing. In my riding, one in three families is literally at or below the poverty line. We all know that, as a rule, people should expect to spend 30% of their income on housing.

The Address

There is currently just one social housing project, unfortunately, and this project will soon come to an end. There is no plan for what comes next. How is that possible? The government has been going on for four years about how housing is a priority and how we need to build affordable and social housing. Nothing ever happens, because the federal government bickers with the Quebec government over which government should put its flag and logo on the project.

The NDP thinks that real action is needed to ensure access to affordable housing. The Liberals need to stop bickering with the Quebec government and transfer the funds. The Quebec government would then be able to implement the AccèsLogis program, through which projects could actually help people. I am sick of the bickering between Ottawa and Quebec at the expense of the poorest families, individuals and workers in my riding and across Quebec. The budget will soon be tabled, so now is the time to free up the money. This is urgent. We need this.

Also, I am not sure where the member for Winnipeg North has been for the past 25 years. He said we have been talking about pharmacare for the past four years, but I would remind him that it was in the Liberal platform of 1997. It was also part of the discussion when medicare was first introduced in this country in the 1960s. That was just a little refresher for my colleague from Winnipeg North. The Liberals are still talking about pharmacare, but we need to see whether there will ever be more than just consultations and reports. Are they ever going to actually implement anything?

Canada is the only country in the world that has a universal public health care system without a universal public pharmacare system to go with it. This is an anomaly. This means that Canadians and Quebecers pay some of the highest prices for prescription drugs. This is slightly less problematic in Quebec, since we have a hybrid regime that is administered by the Quebec government. However, it also poses significant problems for many people who sometimes have to make really tough choices, like paying for their medication or paying for their groceries. When people do not take all their medication as prescribed, it can cause illnesses to progress more rapidly and force people back to work too soon. It can lead to other health problems and additional costs for the health care system.

The NDP believes it is high time that the Canada Health Act included a principle emphasizing the importance of a complete, free and universal pharmacare program and indicating that this is one of our society's values because we want to take care of people. That is not the case right now and people are suffering because of it. This issue is a priority for the NDP.

• (1210)

Many large groups in Quebec are calling for such a program because they understand the difference it could make in people's lives. Quebec's three major unions, the FTQ, the CSN and the CSQ, are calling for this program, as are many civil society groups, such as the Union des consommateurs du Québec. They are saying that it would make a difference in people's lives if we had a universal public pharmacare program managed by the provinces and the Government of Quebec, obviously.

Last year, I met with people who are directly affected by the lack of such a principle or federal program, for example, retail workers

and unionized workers at Métro, Provigo and Loblaws. They work part time for a modest wage and have to contribute to their employer's drug plan. In Quebec, this supplemental health care coverage is not optional; it is mandatory. People cannot choose to opt for the public plan. They are required to contribute to the private plan. Those contributions cost many workers up to 25% of their income.

I met a young worker, about 25, who told me that for every month he works, his first week's salary goes entirely toward the drug plan offered by his employer. Public universal pharmacare would considerably change the life of someone like that. It would simplify collective bargaining for many groups. For that individual, it would mean a 25% increase in pay. That is not nothing. Not only would that worker's drug costs be covered, but his take-home pay would also get him much further ahead.

For all these reasons, we are telling the Liberal government that it is time to take action. According to the Hoskins report released a few months ago, this is a good thing that has been studied at length, and our society needs it. We at the NDP are saying that it is time to move forward and take this seriously, and we will be here to support the government if it comes up with something public and universal.

The other thing we wanted to see in the Speech from the Throne is dental care coverage. That would be another tangible way to help people in their lives.

We have a medicare system—thanks to the NDP, by the way—that is highly appreciated but that is not comprehensive because some parts of the body are not covered. That is rather bizarre. It is as though we collectively decided that our heart and arms would be insured, but that our eyes and teeth would not. There is no logic to it. Having to pay a dentist to provide care and ensure good dental hygiene also represents a considerable cost for many people.

Dental coverage would make a big difference in people's lives at a cost almost equivalent to the amount of the tax cut that the Liberal government has announced—a tax cut that will again benefit the wealthiest in our society.

They could have used that money, which amounts to a little less than one billion, or about \$800 or \$850 million, to provide dental care to all Quebecers and Canadians. We, the New Democrats, would not make the same choices the Liberal government did.

We hope the government will be able to implement public pharmacare and dental care. We also hope the government will increase the federal contribution for early childhood care. Quebec needs 42,000 more ECE spots, in publicly funded day cares. We hope the federal government will be willing to give Quebec's ECE system a boost, so that families can get their children into affordable day care.

The Address

I only have a minute left, which is not enough time to talk about the climate emergency and the fact that this government is once again saying one thing and doing the opposite. We in the NDP condemn the decision to approve the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. This decision completely flies in the face of the federal government's pledges to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

We are eager to see how the government reacts to the new Frontier oil sands project. If the government is serious about setting more ambitious targets for 2030, I hope that it will take measures that are consistent and logical with that goal, which is something the entire population is calling for, especially our youth.

• (1215)

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the passion the member has with respect to the pharmacare program. This program has been hotly discussed and has come to the forefront in the last four to five years. The New Democrats are very much in support of the program. The government caucus in the last number of years has been very supportive of the program. As a government, we have taken initiatives. We have allocated significant amounts of money, hundreds of millions, to further advance the idea. A standing committee dealt with the issue and came up with recommendations. An advisory council looked at this. We are moving forward.

I am often told that at times some New Democrats are like Liberals in a hurry. At the end of the day, it is possible. Would the member not agree that a majority of the members in the House in fact support a national pharmacare program of some form? Would he not agree with that statement?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I would like to see some action. I would like folks to get some concrete help. I urge the Liberal government to tax web giants, raise taxes on banks and go after tax havens. That will give it the money to take care of Canadians.

[*English*]

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member raised a lot of questions about pharmacare with respect to the Liberal plan. My question is simple. Does he have any confidence at all that the Liberals will be able to implement a pharmacare plan?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, the question is simple, but the answer may be complex.

We are in a minority government situation. In the past, we have been disappointed by the Liberals, who broke their promises over and over. We know this story well. We have already seen it play out many times, as everyone knows. This time, with everyone acting in good faith, I hope we will actually be able to move forward.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I have a question for my colleague from Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

I am wondering about the consistency of the NDP position on climate change, specifically regarding the situation facing the Wet'suwet'en people, hydraulic fracturing activities in British Columbia and its liquefied natural gas program. As I see it, the NDP government in British Columbia is really supporting a project that is bad for the environment and goes against the interests of indigenous peoples.

I am wondering what the federal NDP's position is.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her very pertinent question.

In the previous Parliament, the NDP introduced Bill C-262, which was passed by this House, to ensure that all federal laws are aligned with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This federal NDP initiative is therefore completely consistent with that objective.

The leader of the NDP has often said that the future of economic development does not lie in hydraulic fracturing. We believe that each project should be assessed individually to see whether it fits in with a real plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In this specific case, the B.C. government found that it was feasible.

All the reports from Environment and Climate Change Canada have confirmed that the federal government is going to miss the 2030 targets set by the Conservative government. In this context, it would be impossible to consider new projects at the federal level, since we cannot even meet the Conservatives' targets.

• (1220)

[*English*]

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, one of the aspects of universal pharmacare is that it can also be a good addition to our economy. With the time the member has, I would like him to touch on how supporting workers and employment in the pharmacare program could increase investments in Canada. Instead of employers getting large subsidies that go to their shareholders, would it not be better for them to go to the employees, because the employees are Canadians and Quebecers?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Windsor for his very good question.

That would indeed help workers. They would have more income and would spend more, which would help the local economy. It could also attract investments. As we saw in the past with medicare, the cost of local drug coverage can be a very heavy burden for businesses to bear. This type of program could also attract investors to the country.

*The Address**[English]*

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to acknowledge that we are meeting today on the traditional territory of the Algonquin nation. I will use my time in maiden speech to speak, on behalf of our government, to the Speech from the Throne.

It is an honour to stand in the House today as the member of Parliament for the great riding of Orléans.

[Translation]

I would like to wish a happy new year to all my colleagues, the people of Orléans and Ontario and all Canadians.

[English]

Orléans represents the best of Canada and what it means to be a Canadian. It is a community where people stand by one another, where francophones, anglophones, francophiles and allophones work toward a common goal: to make their community, their province and their country the best place to live, to work, to raise a family and to build a better tomorrow.

It has been my home for 20 years, and I am honoured to represent Orléans in the House.

[Translation]

It is truly a great honour to be a member of this House.

[English]

Canada has made incredible progress since 2015, and the Speech from the Throne detailed a pact to build on that progress. I look forward to working with all members in a co-operative and collaborative fashion to make it happen.

Before I speak to that, I want to take a moment to thank my family.

[Translation]

I would not be here if not for the unconditional support of my family.

[English]

My husband Alvaro and I met when we were both 18 years old, more than 30 years ago. He is still the love of my life. He has supported my ideas, my aspirations and the dreams we have along the way. His support and his love are only matched by his tireless work, and he deserves more recognition and thanks than I can put into words.

We are blessed with a daughter, Monica. I am thankful for her love, her patience and her understanding. My daughter is a fierce competitor. I realized this when I managed her hockey team. She was the best goalie in the league and she gave everything she had in every single game. She has approached almost everything with the same dedication and that has been an inspiration to me.

[Translation]

I want to thank Monica for her understanding and support. I could not be more proud of her than I am today, especially when I see the woman she has become.

[English]

I also want to mention my parents, Monique and Royal.

[Translation]

I would be remiss if I failed to mention the love and support they have given me from the beginning of this extraordinary adventure.

[English]

I thank them for their unwavering support.

[Translation]

I thank them from the bottom of my heart. I also want to thank my brother, Jean-François, and his family, and my many aunts, uncles and cousins, who have helped me over the past few years.

● (1225)

[English]

Election campaigns are a team sport and my loyal, dedicated volunteers are the best team anyone could ask for, if I say so myself. They gave me their time, their hard work and their confidence, and I want to thank them for believing in me.

I know the sacrifices the members of my core team, and they know who they are, made and I am eternally grateful.

[Translation]

I once again want to thank the people of Orléans from the bottom of my heart for the trust they placed in me by allowing me to become their voice here in the House of Commons.

[English]

Last, but certainly not least, I want to recognize the people of Orléans who voted for me and those who did not. I am grateful for the trust they have placed in me. I will be a voice for everyone in our community and I will do my very best to earn their trust every day.

[Translation]

I would therefore like to take this opportunity that has been given to me today in the House to talk a little bit about myself and my community, which I have the honour of representing here—and before this at Queen's Park, since June 2014.

[English]

I would like to take this opportunity to tell the House a bit about myself and especially my community.

As a businesswoman with a background in social work, I know the importance of investing in the public services upon which Canadians rely. I began my career as a social worker with the Children's Aid Society before moving on to work at CHEO, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, because I was looking for an opportunity to help people. I love my work with young people, but when I moved to the Ottawa Hospital, I started helping seniors transition into long-term care and retirement residences, and I discovered my true passion.

The Address

I saw that there was a huge gap in services for seniors. There was no long-term care in the area and I had to send seniors away from their families and communities to receive the services they needed. At that time it became very clear to me that government can be a force for good, actually must be a force for good, and help people when and where they need it most.

Having found my true calling in the retirement sector, I took a big leap and built and ran a retirement residence in Orléans called Portobello Manor, le Manoir Portobello. It was hard work but it was worth it. It operates to this day serving the seniors in Orléans.

Most of my career has been about those among us who are most vulnerable: the young and the aging. I know the impact government can have on their lives. I decided to get involved in politics to help ensure the impact of government is a positive one. I am ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work. I am here to represent our community, most importantly to listen.

[*Translation*]

I am here today to humbly say that I am ready to listen and to act in the best interests of the people of Orléans.

[*English*]

Orléans has seen enormous change in recent years. It used to be mostly rural. It is now a vibrant urban area as more families join me in choosing Orléans as their place to call home.

My community has a strong, vibrant and growing francophone community, the largest in Ottawa. The riding has one of the highest populations of francophones in Ontario, with more than 36% speaking French as their first language.

[*Translation*]

I am extremely proud of my Franco-Ontarian roots. I was born at the Montfort Hospital, and I am deeply humbled to once again represent this community as a federal MP.

• (1230)

[*English*]

In addition to being bilingual, we are lucky to have a rich multicultural community in Orleans. Canadians know the value of diversity. To quote our Prime Minister, “Our country strong not in spite of our differences, but because of them.”

Orléans has so much to offer and it is such a great place to live, in many ways thanks to the record of the past Liberal government. Over the last four years alone, the government has stood up for Franco-Ontarians in supporting francophone communities with the historic investment of \$2.7 billion in education, infrastructure, kindergarten and other key sectors.

Just last Wednesday I was thrilled to stand beside my friend the hon. Minister of Official Languages as she announced funding for Ontario's first French-language university that will give thousands of students the chance to pursue their education in the official language of their choice, *en français*.

[*Translation*]

Together with its partners, the government has also begun crucial work to improve the Phoenix pay system so public servants receive

the proper pay for their important work. The backlog has been reduced to about 200,000 transactions since the beginning of 2018. We have also distributed \$1.5 billion in retroactive pay to employees.

Orleans has a lot of public servants. The pay pod model has very successfully reduced the backlog. All 46 organizations served by the pay centre now operate under this model.

[*English*]

Our government has also worked to ensure that parks, pathways, buildings and bridges are maintained here in Ottawa by investing over \$55 million in the National Capital Commission, all the while contributing \$1.15 billion toward the second stage of the Ottawa light rail transit project, which will soon provide service all the way to Trim Road in our community. This investment stands to better connect the people in our city, taking cars off the road and keeping the air we breathe cleaner.

[*Translation*]

I am proud of that record, but I also know there is still a lot of work to do.

[*English*]

This is a record of which I am proud, but I know there is much more work to be done. The people in my community expect us to work together and find solutions to our common challenges.

I spoke to thousands of my constituents on their doorsteps during the election. I am sure many of my colleagues did the same. I heard from young, hard-working families who are still finding it difficult to make ends meet. I told them that our government has a plan to make it a little easier to raise their kids by boosting the Canada child benefit by 15%.

I also heard from many business owners that finding skilled workers has been a challenge. I was proud to tell them of our plan to get more young women and men into the skilled trades and apprenticeships.

The Address

As the member of Parliament for Orléans, I will fight for my community, its goals and aspirations. For example, the Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans, MIFO, is seeking funding for a new facility. MIFO is more than just a community centre. It is a music school, a day camp, a preschool and an art gallery. It offers children and youth services and is an active living centre for people 50-plus, all the while employing more than 350 people. It has grown by 182% in the last 10 years and has outgrown its current building and facilities. Therefore, securing federal funding to expand this vital institution is among my top priorities.

My previous work has given me a unique understanding of the need for a strengthened pension plan. I have seen the reality of the financial hardships our seniors face. We have an aging population and those people who have built this society for us deserve to retire and live with dignity. Residents in my community told me at the door that they are worried about their retirement. I was happy to tell them that our government plans to introduce legislation to increase old age benefits by 10% and raise CPP survivor benefits by 25%.

Another big aspect of the campaign was climate change and our environment. Our community has one of the largest memberships of Ecology Ottawa.

● (1235)

[Translation]

My being here to acknowledge the impact of climate change is vitally important. Orleans has been through tornadoes and floods, which have affected our community's economy, Ottawa's economy and our country's economy.

[English]

I was happy to talk about our plan for the environment and climate change. Whether it is building 5,000 new charging stations or planting two billion new trees in the next 10 years, these are some of the things Orléans residents expect me to bring forward in this House.

In the short time that I have been here, I have been inspired by the commitment, compassion and talent of my colleagues on both sides of this House. We must hold each other to a higher standard, act with dignity and work to improve the lives of all Canadians everywhere.

Let us put evidence before ideology and partnership before partisanship. There is a common ground to be found. We can help create new jobs and a better climate for business. We can protect the environment, and we can help build a better future for all Canadians.

[Translation]

As I reflect on my last five years, and most recently with my election at the federal level, I know that people in my community expect me to be a vocal representative and address their local and international concerns.

[English]

I am proud to support this Speech from the Throne, and I believe the vote on it will happen some time today. I am proud to support a government and a Prime Minister with a plan to keep building Canada up.

[Translation]

I want to conclude my speech today by saying that I am very proud to have the good sense to support not only this throne speech, but also a government and a Prime Minister who are proposing a positive plan to keep building a strong and prosperous Canada.

I will focus on improving infrastructure in Orleans through targeted projects. I would also like to explore possible solutions and continue developing a meaningful climate action plan that focuses on the environment. We know that businesses and employers face some challenges. As a former businesswoman, I can relate to the employers in my community.

We owe it to our children, grandchildren and grandparents to work together and keep building a prosperous Canada.

[English]

I thank everyone for listening to me for 20 minutes on my first time standing in this House. It has been an honour.

[Translation]

It appears that I still have some time remaining. I will continue, since I do not think a politician has ever turned down an extra two minutes to speak.

I would like to talk about specific challenges. We sometimes forget what we all have in common here.

[English]

Each and every one of us has been elected to represent our community, and we are proud to come here and share our thoughts. When I reflect on the Speech from the Throne, I would like to believe that most of us in this House can say there is one thing that we feel confident our communities are looking for. In this Parliament, we collectively, although in a minority, the people of Canada have given us a strong mandate to move forward on issues that matter to them.

● (1240)

[Translation]

There will be debates, of course, but I hope that we will always remain respectful of each other.

I think it is important to focus on what brings us together.

[English]

I like to believe that with the Conservative Party, the Bloc Québécois, the NDP, the Green Party and the independent member, with the great family of our Liberal friends, we can show Canadians that we can advance things that matter to them.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Madam Speaker, oftentimes in the last Parliament, Liberals spoke about evidence-based decision-making. However, evidence-based decision-making is what they agree with only when it agrees with their ideology.

The people of Barrie—Innisfil sent me to Parliament because they were quite concerned. I know that the hon. member for Orléans came from the provincial government in Ontario. She spent five years under Kathleen Wynne, where we saw wasteful spending, reckless debt and endless deficits. In fact, in Ontario, we are facing \$350 billion in debt. That is \$40 million a day more than we were spending and billions of dollars in deficits.

Can the member honestly say, coming from that scenario in Ontario, that she is proud of the \$800 billion in debt that we are at now, and the \$27 billion in deficits that are ongoing and that are going to continue to grow under the Liberal government? How is that sustainable?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I like to look at the evidence. I know the member for Barrie—Innisfil mentioned this, but I always say the one thing that cannot lie is numbers. In the past four years, the Liberal government has created more than a million jobs.

Let us now focus on our economy. We had the lowest unemployment rate in the past 40 years. When I went to the doors of my constituents, at every door I was told we need to continue to invest. For me, it is about investing. I come from a business background, and sometimes money needs to be spent to better the lives of people. That is what we are doing.

I look at the record of the Ontario Liberals on cap and trade. I am sorry to say that this measure was cancelled by the Ford government, and \$1.9 billion of revenue was forgone. If we want to talk about good business, I am proud to stand in this House as a federal Liberal member to continue our good progress.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague from across the way for her fine speech.

She asks us who we were elected for. Every morning when I get up, I see a little note on my nightstand that says, “Who do you work for?” True story. I work for the people of Lac-Saint-Jean, an area where the aluminum industry is very important. Every time the aluminum file has come up in the House since the 43rd Parliament began, it has been plain to me that the Liberals do not understand the agreement they signed. It does not protect aluminum from North America, but rather parts made from aluminum. That means Mexico will get to import the world’s dirtiest aluminum from China and manufacture parts that will flood the U.S. market.

Now that I have explained it, does my colleague understand the aluminum file any better?

The Address

• (1245)

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean.

I visited his riding years ago. I am always very grateful to the people of Lac-Saint-Jean. I am proud to see that you are representing them here.

Yes, without a doubt, aluminum—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I must remind the hon. member to address her remarks to the Chair, not to the member directly.

The hon. member for Orléans.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I apologize, Madam Speaker.

I would like to point out to my hon. colleague that in the negotiations of these past few years, the government took a strong stand in that we wanted to include something that we did not have before in the new NAFTA. With respect to aluminum, there was previously no minimum percentage, but now this agreement sets out a minimum of 70%. That is a good thing for the aluminum industry.

I know that this is still a concern, but I believe that if my colleague were to speak to those responsible in the sector, he would see that this is a major decision for the people of Quebec and of Lac-Saint-Jean.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Orléans for her speech, the tone of her remarks and her openness.

However, the NDP wants to see firm commitments and concrete action. There is a climate emergency and young people are asking us to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. We are not going to meet our targets for 2030. The Liberal government has agreed to the Trans Mountain expansion and is considering new projects like the Frontier project proposed by Teck Resources Ltd.

Will she undertake to eliminate subsidies for oil companies and not consider any new oil and gas projects until we are on track to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. I am very proud that we put a price on carbon. It was an important measure for the net zero emissions target we committed to reach by 2050. Our action plan is designed to achieve that target. What is more—I hope my colleague will mention this—in our election campaign we promised to plant two billion trees. That will help us meet our ambitious targets.

As I said in my speech, I understand full well the importance of climate change, because that is something that came up at the doors. My role here is to continue what we started and to improve on it.

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Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her very interesting speech. I learned a lot about her region, which I was not very familiar with. She impressed me a great deal with her knowledge about some of the topics we discussed here today.

I would like the hon. member to say a few words about our government's investments. We have made major investments in infrastructure across the country, from east to west. These numerous investments have helped create jobs. The hon. member pointed out that more than one million jobs have been created. She also noted that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 40 years. These are very interesting, very important things that the Conservatives often forget to mention.

Can the hon. member explain how investments in infrastructure helped Ontario, and her riding in particular?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Dear colleague, I thank you very much for that question. It gives me the opportunity to talk—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Members must address their remarks to the Chair and not directly to other members.

The hon. member for Orléans.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to speak on this subject, which is very important.

When we talk about what Canadians need, every community mentions the infrastructure deficit. Looking at our platform and what has been done in recent years, I was proud to see \$182 billion invested in infrastructure over 12 years. My community and the Ottawa area have benefited from that. I can talk about Orléans. For instance, there is phase 2 of the light rail system, which now goes to Trim Road. It was the Liberal government that provided 50% of the funding for the light rail extension from Place d'Orléans to Trim Road.

We can talk about roads too. I am proud to say that we have doubled the tax funding for municipalities. Unfortunately, that is something that Ontario has not supported. I do not know about all the provinces yet. I can talk specifically about Ontario, and perhaps Quebec, and I am proud. I am really proud that our government is supporting the provinces, if they want to be at the table, the municipalities and the people of Canada with this much-needed investment. We are talking about schools and help for young children. We are making a lot of investments and I am certainly proud of that.

• (1250)

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

I am pleased to be taking part in the debate on the Speech from the Throne at the start of the 43rd Parliament.

I would first like to thank the people of Lévis—Lotbinière for putting their trust in me. I am representing them in the House of Commons for the fifth time. It is a great privilege to serve a community that is as dynamic and visionary as the one we are all proudly part of in Lévis—Lotbinière.

My team and I are passionately committed to working tirelessly in our riding throughout the 43rd Parliament to provide personal and attentive service to every constituent who needs our assistance and to take concrete action that meets their needs. I would like to thank my wife, Chantal, my family and all the volunteers who proudly participated, directly or indirectly, in the democratic exercise of the federal election.

Today, I am debating the Speech from the Throne. It is no surprise that this is a speech reflecting the Liberal values of a minority government that is walking on eggshells and needs to be very carefully watched at all times. You will have guessed that I am referring to the SNC-Lavalin scandal. As I was telling the House on Friday, December 6, the Liberal government, true to form, is standing in the way of the RCMP investigators.

We all know this government is sort of reaching out to the right but that it tends to lean much more to the left, though without any firm conviction. The worst part is this Liberal government's deplorable lack of vision for sustaining and stimulating the Canadian economy.

Judging from the throne speech, Canada's energy sector may as well not even exist. There was just one tiny mention of it, a poor reflection of how important this key sector is to the Canadian economy. We need to acknowledge that it underpins our wealth as a nation.

In late November, the CN strike highlighted how precarious the supply of energy sources such as propane is, especially in Quebec. Farmers in my region came to the sudden realization that their propane supply would be interrupted during the CN strike because of rationing for essential services. The entire agricultural sector was left with no way to keep animals warm and to dry grain during the harvest.

Delays in harvesting and drying grain can lead to irreparable losses for farmers, with very little compensation. In light of these events, the question Canadians are asking themselves is this: Are we adequately protected against disruptions in the shipping of our energy resources and the impact this has on the lives of Canadians and on the entire energy sector? The recent event involving propane deliveries shows us just how vulnerable we are considering the quasi-monopoly that exists in shipping. We are not immune to the disastrous consequences of any future potential shortages.

As parliamentarians, we have a duty to pay close attention to Canada's energy security. It is imperative that we work with industry experts in order to avoid energy shortages and reassure Canadians with respect to a steady supply of the energy resources used in this country. Canada is a country rich in natural resources, including crude oil and natural gas in western Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador, hydroelectricity in Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia, and nuclear energy in Ontario and New Brunswick, not to mention the shale oil and gas, coal, solar energy, wind energy and biomass used in various provinces and territories.

We are so lucky to live in a country that has such an abundance of resources. Dozens of countries around the world would love to have Canada's resources, as it would help lift them out of poverty. This prompts us to ask other important questions. How are all these energy resources transported within Canada, to serve all the provinces and territories, and how are they exported out of Canada, to the U.S. and other countries?

• (1255)

Do we have adequate infrastructure? Are these methods of transportation safe and reliable enough to ensure an uninterrupted supply or, as was the case in the recent propane crisis in Quebec, are we relying on a single transporter? Would an energy corridor like the one proposed by the Conservative Party be the solution to the problem we have transporting all these forms of energy?

In the Speech from the Throne there is no mention of the word "oil", as though we as Canadians are ashamed that Canada is an oil-producing country.

Another word that was missing from the throne speech is the word "pipeline". The speech did, however, talk about shipping our Canadian natural resources to new markets. Everyone knows that a pipeline is the safest way to transport oil, gas or other chemical products. Have the Liberal MPs from Quebec forgotten about the tragedy in Lac-Mégantic? On July 6, 2013, 47 people were killed when a train made up of 72 tank cars carrying 7.7 million litres of crude oil derailed. If there had been a pipeline in that part of Quebec, we all know that those people would still be alive today.

I simply cannot understand what seems to be an obsession against pipelines as a secure and safe method of transportation. According to a Nanos poll published the first week of December 2019, most Canadians, or 60%, support the construction of a new pipeline. Only 30% of the population is opposed, despite all of the false information that is being spread about pipelines, particularly in my own province of Quebec.

The following week, a Léger poll indicated that 65% of Quebecers prefer western Canadian oil. The same poll indicated that most Canadians believe that pipelines are the safest method of transportation.

Let us now talk about the Liberals' infamous carbon tax, which has already begun to wreak havoc. In early December, *The Globe and Mail* gave a good example of how this tax is affecting farmers in Saskatchewan, and the Currah family in particular, who are struggling under the Liberal government's tax.

Heavy autumn rains had a major impact on the Currahs and many other canola, oat, barley and wheat farmers across Canada. They had to harvest their grain crops while they were wet, meaning the grain had to be dried using natural gas dryers before it could be sold. As a result, for the past few months, farmers in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and New Brunswick have had to pay the Liberal carbon tax on the natural gas they need to run their grain dryers.

Since January 1, 2020, Alberta has joined the list of victims of the carbon tax. The Currah family in Saskatchewan has had to spend \$1,200 on the carbon tax and expects the final tally to

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reach \$10,000 once all the grain is dry. That \$10,000 bill for drying grain comes on top of all the other production costs.

This tax is hurting our SMEs and our farms, but the worst is yet to come. In 2022, in order to comply with the greenhouse gas reduction targets for 2030, the tax will be increased to \$102 per tonne, which means that \$10,000 bill will rise to \$50,000 a year for the Currah family of farmers in Saskatchewan.

In closing, I believe all energy sector stakeholders should work together as part of a large-scale national consultation sponsored by the federal government. We need to have the courage to talk about the energy sector, instead of glossing over it the way this Liberal government did by not mentioning it in the throne speech. Sadly, this subject is a divisive issue in Canada right now, when it should be a unifying force that brings all of us together, from coast to coast to coast.

I urge all parliamentarians, from all parties, to start this conversation with all energy sector stakeholders in order to develop a serious strategy for Canada's energy future, which will have an impact on the economic prospects of future generations.

• (1300)

[*English*]

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member talked about the energy sector becoming a topic of discord. I listened closely to his remarks. I have a lot of friends in Alberta as I worked there for years and I still talk to them. The story I get from them is not what the Conservative opposition is saying, but that they are concerned about vacant office buildings in Calgary. Yes, there is a very strong concern in Alberta that I think is creating disunity and division in Canada. I hate to see that because, as I said, I have a lot of friends there.

One of the reasons for the discord is the misinformation the Conservative Party is propagandizing and that the member who just spoke is still doing by saying Liberals are opposed to pipelines. Why does the member not be honest in this place and with Canadians across the country? The Liberal government purchased a pipeline to get oil to market and Liberals are going to see it through. Let us have some honesty over there.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

A discussion about energy should never create discord in Canada. We should all be proud to live in a country that has many energy sources.

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As parliamentarians, we have a duty to promote all energies for the sake of our country's economic future. We all have a duty to implement a national strategy on energy security, because the economic prosperity of future generations clearly hinges on the decisions that will be made in the 43rd Parliament. We have a duty to talk about energy, to promote energy and to find the fairest way for all of Canada's energy sources to coexist.

We are very proud that our country is an exporter and producer. This is an excellent opportunity to allow all of these energy sources to coexist in our country.

Mr. Denis Trudel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Lévis—Lotbinière for his speech.

I would simply like to point out to the hon. member that the Bloc Québécois campaigned heavily on environmental issues. We got 32 members elected in Quebec by talking about significantly reducing greenhouse gases and stopping pipelines from being built in Quebec.

Quebec is facing a housing shortage. There are 250,000 households that spend more than 50% of their income on housing. What does my colleague think about the housing shortage? Will he support our requests that the Liberal government finally sign the agreement with Quebec to build 15,000 social housing units as quickly as possible?

• (1305)

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I would like to remind him that 65% of Quebecers agree with transporting oil by pipeline and that 65% of Quebecers are happy to use oil from Alberta. We want 100% of Quebec's oil to come from Alberta.

I would also like to remind my colleague that year after year, in Quebec, we are consuming more and more oil because there are more and more vehicles. Quebec has one of the highest rates of vehicles per household in North America.

Quebeckers are also proud of their hydroelectric power. Quebeckers would like to be able to sell hydroelectric power in Ontario, Manitoba and western Canada. If we bought oil from western Canada, it would make sense for us to sell them our hydroelectric power. It would be so easy for Quebec to cross the Ottawa River to serve a third of Ontario with affordable power.

[*English*]

Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to stand here and give my first speech in the House today as the member of Parliament for Cypress Hills—Grasslands.

I first need to thank the voters in my constituency for sending me here with a very clear mandate. They know what they want, and it is humbling to have received their overwhelming support.

I also need to thank my wife of 12 years, Kyla, for her unwavering support and for being willing to take this big step with me into parliamentary life. We have three of the most amazing kids, Jacoby,

Jada and Kenzie, and if I did not have their full support as well, I would not have dragged them along on this journey.

To my campaign team and volunteers, I am thankful for their hard work and dedication in making sure that my first campaign was a successful one. I live in a riding that is 77,000 square kilometres, and it was a joy to meet and campaign with people from so many communities and backgrounds.

Today, I will be speaking in reply to the throne speech delivered by the Governor General, which set out the government's priorities and agenda.

After the election on October 21, when western Canadians overwhelmingly voted out every Liberal between Winnipeg and Vancouver, the Prime Minister went on national TV and told western Canadians, "I've heard your frustration and I want to be there to support you." Naturally, the throne speech would have been a golden opportunity to show western Canadians that he had in fact heard our frustrations. However, this throne speech is just further evidence that the Prime Minister is not listening to western Canadians. In fact, the Liberals are continuing to ignore what western Canada is trying to communicate to them.

I come from a rural riding. Part of what makes it so great to live in a small town in a rural area is that one has to have a certain level of entrepreneurship and resolve to make one's farm, ranch or business succeed. Agriculture, energy, tourism and the natural resource sectors have always provided opportunities for people to start up a new business, to innovate, and then to develop their product and their business model. However, when there has been a multi-year downturn in the resource sector coupled with the lows that the agriculture sector has encountered, it puts the very businesses and people who keep small towns and small businesses viable in danger of losing everything.

With all that in mind, I will focus on a line that was used in both this year's throne speech and the 2015 throne speech, which is that every Canadian should have a "real and fair chance" to succeed. However, the government needs to understand it is the government's policies that are getting in the way and making it harder for Canadians to succeed.

The first policy we heard in the speech was that the government is doubling down on its carbon tax. So far, this has been the main method it is using to try to eliminate Canada's carbon emissions. However, it has not only proven to be a harmful policy for farmers, energy workers, seniors and everybody else, but it is also an ineffective policy. We are only seeing the cost of living go up, which is hurting the most vulnerable people, such as our seniors and low-income families. It has been nothing but an added burden for a lot of people.

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In April, the cost of the carbon tax will increase from \$20 to \$30 per tonne, which means that life is about to get even harder. If that was not bad enough, we found out a few weeks ago that in a few provinces the government is lowering the carbon tax rebate that families could receive. Those provinces happen to be the ones that have not gone along with putting their own carbon tax in place. My home province of Saskatchewan is getting the largest cutback. When it was first introduced, the Liberals said that the tax would be revenue neutral and that Canadians could expect support for their extra expenses through a tax rebate. This is a perfect demonstration of what we can expect from the carbon tax in actual practice. As the cost and tax rate increase, the support for taxpayers and struggling families will decrease.

The carbon tax is also adding another layer of stress in agriculture. In western Canada, farmers had a year unlike any other in recent memory, from starting out the year with drought-like conditions to having way too much moisture in the fall when it came time to get the crops off. In fact, we have millions of acres of crops still out in the fields buried in snow. For the crops that are now in the bins, the next problem is to dry the grain, and natural gas is the main source of heat generation to accomplish this. It is a necessary part of grain farming, but the price for that fuel has gone up by hundreds of dollars because of the carbon tax, and then the GST is applied on top of that and so we now have a tax on top of a tax. After a difficult year in 2019, this is the last thing those farmers need. They have been calling attention to their desperate situation. I was happy to read in the *National Post* that the Green Party's agriculture critic agrees that we need to exempt farmers from the carbon tax, but nobody in the government seems to be listening.

Beyond the carbon tax, the Liberals' anti-energy, anti-business policies are killing jobs in resource development all over Canada. We heard a lot about how the anti-pipeline Bill C-69 would shut down energy projects, but there have also been concerns raised in mining and other industries.

• (1310)

In 2016, the Prime Minister said:

I have said many times that there isn't a country in the world that would find billions of barrels of oil and leave it in the ground while there is a market for it.

But it isn't enough to just use that resource for our short-term interest.

Our challenge is to use today's wealth to create tomorrow's opportunity. Ultimately, this is about leaving a better country for our kids than the one we inherited from our parents.

He was right to say that we should be making the most of Canadian energy while there is a market for it. However, after four years, the Liberals have left a lot of oil in the ground and that has left a lot of people out of work. Over the last four years, the government's regulatory changes have chased over \$100 billion in investment, or four and a half per cent of GDP, out of Canada. I fail to see how we can create tomorrow's opportunities with results like that.

I could say a lot more about how the government's current policies do not make sense for either the environment or the economy, but I would much rather talk about what does make sense and what could work.

Just before Christmas, SaskPower, the power utility in Saskatchewan, held the grand opening of the Chinook power sta-

tion northwest of Swift Current in my riding. It is a good example of how we have made clean, efficient use of natural gas in combined cycle power generation. This facility has the capacity to provide more power for around 300,000 homes. It runs 50% more efficiently than a coal-fired plant. The reason this power station is so important, along with others like it in the province, is that we now have strong enough baseload power generation so that we can invest further into renewables like wind and solar.

The Province of Saskatchewan, while under the guidance of former premier Brad Wall, created an ambitious plan to reduce our emissions. This plan is set to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030, as well as to have 50% renewable energy by then. This is a far more achievable plan than the one the Liberals have used. By creating a strong enough baseload power capacity that is reliable while utilizing technologies like combined-cycle power generation, the province can now focus its efforts further on growth in renewables. We already have a strong presence in the wind and solar industries, and further investment into these areas will continue to be encouraged.

Therefore, I find it crazy that the government has chosen to ignore the province's plan, which actually reduces emissions and shifts to renewable energy, while the Liberals' carbon tax only drives valuable investment dollars out of Canada that are needed for funding new technology.

I also need to highlight the innovative farming practices, such as zero-till farming, that have taken off in Saskatchewan. These methods remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by keeping more of it in the soil. Our province continues to be a world leader in this regard. When it comes to the promise of this approach, I saw an article in *National Geographic* that noted the following:

...about a quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions come from land use and agriculture combined—but farmers are uniquely situated to be part of the solution.

We are seeing something like this in Saskatchewan. Due to the zero-till farming efforts, just as an example, we sequester 9.46 million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. According to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, that is the equivalent of removing two million cars from the highway each and every year. That is a real result. This is the type of success that comes from properly respecting farmers and their livelihood. It is a way of life that already deeply understands the close relationship between the economy and being a good steward of the land and the environment. Canadians working in the agriculture and energy sectors do not need to be lectured about it. They need to be supported in the balanced approach that they are already pursuing.

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I am so proud to live in a riding that is part of a comprehensive, serious and practical plan for the environment like the one being implemented in Saskatchewan. However, the sad fact is that my province and my riding are not getting the credit they deserve from the current government. Instead, they have been blamed, neglected and ignored.

The Prime Minister said to western Canadians, “I hear you.” If this is true, then he should scrap the carbon tax and stop punishing the energy sector. If all Canadians are supposed to have a real and fair chance to succeed, then the government needs to listen to the provinces and the industry leaders who are suffering as a result of failed Liberal policies. It just sounds like more of the same from the Liberals, but I want Canadians to know that we hear them on this side of the House and we are ready to help them succeed.

• (1315)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as a western Canadian member of Parliament, I can tell the member that there are many initiatives within the throne speech, and within the budget in the last number of years, that western Canadians would be very proud of and would recognize as progressive measures that have had a real impact on their lives. We need to be sensitive to the fact that some regions of the country, in particular the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, have gone through some very difficult times as governments at all levels have tried to assist where they can.

We respect that. We have a government that understands the importance of the environment, and the price of pollution has a role to play in that. I believe most western Canadians recognize that. I believe that we need to recognize that a balancing needs to take place between the economy and the environment, and this is a government that has recognized that.

I wonder if the member would not concur and recognize that the environment and the economy go hand in hand. Would he not agree that this is an important principle to adhere to?

Mr. Jeremy Patzer: Madam Speaker, the one thing that I want to highlight while talking about the environment and the economy is that we cannot use the environment as a means to tax people into submission. That is what the carbon tax does. As we have seen, it is driving investment dollars out of Canada.

That is not how to build an economy or how to support an economy. It is how to cripple the economy.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am glad to see so much reference to western Canada in the House today. From my perspective on Vancouver Island, most of the people in this House are eastern Canadians, but I will leave that aside.

I would caution the member against speaking so forcefully on behalf of western Canadians. Fully one-third of the people in Alberta and Saskatchewan did not vote Conservative, and they were not rewarded with the seats proportional to those results because we have an unfair first-past-the-post system. In fact, most people in

British Columbia and in Manitoba did not vote Conservative, so I would express some caution on that.

My question for the member is on the subject of agriculture. I would like to hear his comments on our developing some policies in this Parliament that recognize the hard work that farmers do, especially with regenerative agricultural practices that sequester more carbon in the soil, and whether we have an opportunity to give farmers a place to become one of the greatest weapons we have against climate change with their use of good soil practices.

Mr. Jeremy Patzer: Madam Speaker, part of what we need to do with any policy that we can develop going forward is to respect the hard work that has already been accomplished by our farmers, our ranchers and the people who are actively working in the agricultural sector. They have already been innovative in their approach.

In fact, the province of Saskatchewan, going back to the early 1900s, has been responsible for hundreds and thousands of different patents with regard to agricultural development. We are very innovative in the province. Farmers are very good and have a great sense of entrepreneurship and resolve. The more we can work to get policies to support that would be great.

Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Madam Speaker, would the hon. member be able to highlight some of the challenges that regular middle-class, rural Canadians have with regard to the carbon tax?

Mr. Jeremy Patzer: Madam Speaker, the biggest challenge that we have now, as I highlighted in my speech, is the great distance to travel. My riding is 77,000 square kilometres, but the population base within that is only 67,000, with around a third of the population located in the city of Swift Current. It can be a long way for people in our small towns to travel, as some towns do not have a grocery store. For people to be able to go and get their groceries, their necessities for life, they sometimes have to travel great distances. The carbon tax continues to put them at a disadvantage.

When we are talking about supporting small towns, small businesses and regular hard-working, middle-class Canadians, this is why the carbon tax is a very ineffective policy.

• (1320)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise today for the first time this year and at the start of a new decade.

I would like to share my time with my colleague, the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith. I am very happy that all the members of the Green Party will have an opportunity to speak to the 2019 throne speech, as this is the last day of debate. I would like to thank the people who manage time within the Liberal Party, since my colleague, the member for Fredericton, will share her time with a Liberal member.

I want to start by saying, and this is not a formality, that we are on the unceded territory of the Algonquin people.

[English]

I want to acknowledge that we are here on traditional unceded Algonquin territory, and to them we say, *meegwetch*.

It is an honour to speak to the Speech from the Throne today. There is much in it that can carry one away with inspirational promises, with rhetoric with which we can only agree. For instance, I turn to this bit, which I particularly like: “From forest fires and floods, to ocean pollution and coastal erosion, Canadians are living the impact of climate change every day.”

The science is clear and it has been for decades. A clear majority of Canadians voted for ambitious climate action now. That stirs me to think I will vote for this, but I will not. I will not because the gap between the inspirational rhetoric coming from the Liberal administration and the reality of Liberal actions is so wide it induces vertigo. It is so deep that it is dizzying.

As an example of why I now feel this way, I turn to the 2015 Speech from the Throne, which I did vote for. I loved this promise and will remind people of it. Some of us who also served in the 42nd Parliament will remember the government's promise to “not resort to devices like...omnibus bills to avoid scrutiny.”

I think we all recall that it was an omnibus budget bill in which the deferred prosecution agreement designed specifically for SNC-Lavalin was hidden. Now I read everything, as my colleagues know, so I actually saw the deferred prosecution agreement hidden in an omnibus budget bill. I wondered why it was not stand-alone criminal legislation to go through the Department of Justice, but I was persuaded by the notes and looking into it that nothing nefarious lay there. However, it was in an omnibus bill and I do regret that the deferred prosecution agreement amendment to the Criminal Code never went to the Department of Justice and to the committee studying justice bills, as it should have.

Another fun promise to remember from the 2015 Speech from the Throne was “the government will undertake to renew, nation-to-nation, the relationship between Canada and indigenous peoples, one based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.”

It was with some shock that I saw within months the Liberal government's approval of Site C, ignoring the court cases and concerns of indigenous peoples, as well as the environmental impacts.

Approval of the Kinder Morgan pipeline ignored the fact that, even during the 2015 election campaign, the then leader of the Liberal Party, now Prime Minister, said that no project could be approved based on the inadequate and flawed process that had taken place while there were court cases, and strong and clear objection, from the Tsleil-Waututh, Musqueam, Squamish and WSANEC First Nations, whose territory I am honoured to live on. Muskrat Falls ignored the concerns of the Innu.

Quoting from the 2015 Speech from the Throne, many people will remember the following without being reminded, the promise “that 2015 will be the last federal election conducted under the first-past-the-post voting system.” One can see where concern arises. How much can we believe in the 2019 Speech from the Throne? I would like to believe it, but then we come to the reality of what is

The Address

being pledged. We are seeing a commitment in this new Speech from the Throne.

● (1325)

[Translation]

In the throne speech the government said, and I quote, “The Government will set a target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.”

In reality, our target is the same as the one chosen by the former Conservative government under Stephen Harper. The target has not changed by a single tonne.

[English]

Here we are with a government that says we can get to net-zero by 2050, and there are some questions. As many will know, we do not whip votes in the Green Party. I am so honoured to be joined by the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith and the member for Fredericton. We cannot vote confidence in a government that does not have a climate target that allies with the science.

We know that the government has said that it is important to face the climate situation as a climate emergency. In fact, it was a Liberal motion passed by this House on June 17, 2019, in which the House agreed that we are in a climate emergency. The motion stated:

...the House declare that Canada is in a national climate emergency which requires...that Canada commit to meeting its national emissions target under the Paris Agreement and to making deeper reductions in line with...pursuing efforts to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

However, here we are with a Speech from the Throne that never once uses the term “climate emergency”.

[Translation]

We are in a climate emergency, but there is not a single mention of “climate emergency” in the throne speech.

[English]

The Speech from the Throne says that we have to address climate change. While the government says that we must achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, only a few paragraphs later we are also told that the government must take strong action to fight climate change and also work just as hard to get Canadian resources to new markets.

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In other words, with the same vigour which the government wants to address the climate emergency, it will also use public funds in the neighbourhood of \$10 billion to \$13 billion to drive forward the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, which is a direct threat to climate action, as it also contemplates approving the Teck Frontier mine project. It also is ignoring its obligations under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the climate emergency by subsidizing and supporting the LNG projects where the gas pipeline is. At this very moment, the RCMP are in Wet'suwet'en Territory prepared to enforce an injunction that should never be enforced because it violates hereditary rights and traditional rights of Wet'suwet'en people.

Here is the reality, and it is a tough one. I have worked on this issue since 1986. I have seen government after government, well-meaning Liberals, well-meaning provincial New Democrats, well-meaning Progressive Conservatives, make climate commitments and then find it is too hard. Something political needs to be fixed before we can do the right thing to ensure our kids have a livable world.

Here is the tough choice, and it is not one that we can find wiggle room or some medium space to do a bit of this and a bit of that, with a pipeline here and an oil sands mine there, and still live up to climate commitments. The stark choice is this. Before the next election, we assembled in this Parliament must have Canada's targets align with the advice of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. That means we must at least double our targets until 2030.

• (1330)

We must now as humanity, as the world assembled through the multilateral process, change our economies in a transformational sense that gets rid of fossil fuels to ensure that our children, that human civilization can survive in a hospitable biosphere or we defend the fossil fuel industry. We cannot do both. We have to choose. I choose climate action and the Speech from the Throne and the government had better deliver.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I recall when the former leader of the Green Party supported the throne speech. I am a little disappointed that she is considering not supporting it this time around. There are many good environmental initiatives. One of the biggest and boldest is the whole idea of the price on pollution as we continue to move forward. I would be interested in her thoughts on the progress on that file.

I am curious with respect to the LNG. The LNG in British Columbia was an agreement, the largest private sector government sponsored agreement with billions of dollars of investment, with the NDP provincially and with us at the national level. To what degree would the Green Party support something of that nature? When the member makes reference to transition, maybe there is some merit for projects of that nature. Would the member not agree?

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, the reality is that in the early 1990s, people talked of natural gas as a potential transition fuel in getting rid of coal and oil. The problem in 2020 is that it is not

a transition fuel. It is not natural gas. It is primarily from fracking. Now the international scientific community is recognizing that a big pulse in greenhouse gases is coming from fracking from fugitive methane emissions. The reality is that fracked natural gas from B.C. has the same carbon footprint as coal. It is one of the great lies of our time, that shipping LNG from B.C. to China will somehow have a net benefit in fighting global warming. It will in fact do the opposite. It is a carbon bomb, and we need to stop fracking.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is good to see my friend from the Green Party back in the House. We obviously disagree on many things.

I had some great round tables in my riding over the break, specifically on the issue of environment and climate change. We always have a vast array of different views represented in those conversations, from those who are skeptical about the science in general to hard-core Green Party supporters and everybody in between.

One of the areas in which there seems to be general agreement is people proposing that there may be some promise to nuclear power. I wonder if the member could share her perspective on the role nuclear power could play. Does she agree with what seemed to be consensus in those round tables, that it could be a key part of the solution, or is she more skeptical?

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, my friend for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan is a dear friend in this place, and I am glad to see him back. I am so glad to see we continue to disagree on just about everything.

The best thing ever said about nuclear power was said some time ago by a critic named Fred Knelman, who said that nuclear was "a future technology whose time has passed".

We in the Green Party have broken down what it will take to get to 60% reductions in carbon dioxide by 2030 in this country. We do not propose shutting down existing reactors, to be clear, but a single new one makes no sense at all. They are very capital intensive. They cost a great deal, produce very few jobs and reduce very little carbon. On the other hand, solar, wind, district energy, geothermal, all of the other options are cheaper and more readily accessible.

I have one last thought for my friends on the Conservative benches. The sweetheart deal of all time, after all the subsidies to AECL, is that the nuclear facilities in the country are now owned and run by SNC-Lavalin. I am very dubious about going that route.

The Address

• (1335)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Madam Speaker, since this is my first time rising in the House, I would like to take this opportunity to greet my colleagues and wish them all a good session.

I really enjoyed the speech given by my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands.

A little earlier, in their speeches, the government members spoke about how they firmly intended to stay the course on the greenhouse gas reduction targets. I would like to ask my colleague opposite whether she supports the idea of enshrining the terms of the Paris agreement in a law that would require the current government and future governments to keep to those commitments and meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets. Otherwise, it is rather difficult to take seriously a government that buys pipelines and gets involved in oil sands development.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate my new colleague. I want to work collaboratively with members who truly understand the climate emergency.

I look forward to the time when the Minister of Environment and Climate Change says that the Government of Canada understands that the current targets are barely 50% of what is needed if we want to avert disaster. It is not possible to—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I must interrupt the hon. member because her time is up. I gave her a little more time so she could finish her answer, but I must now intervene. I am sorry about that.

The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

[*English*]

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Madam Speaker, it is an honour and privilege to rise today to respond to the Speech from the Throne. I would like to thank the voters in Nanaimo—Ladysmith for giving me their support to stand here today. I would also like to thank my family, volunteers and team that supported me as well.

My electoral district of Nanaimo—Ladysmith faces many serious challenges that are not unique to our area, but are very acute and much more challenging than in other parts of the country.

I am very pleased to see a number of key initiatives and promises in the Speech from the Throne and the mandate letters to ministers that will help address some of the challenges my constituents face. I am committed to working across party lines in a positive and collaborative way for legislation that will benefit all Canadians, and where I see a need for improvement, I will speak up about it.

Nanaimo—Ladysmith has one of the largest homeless populations per capita in Canada. I am glad to see the government step up with the creation of a national housing strategy. However, I do not think the targets outlined will be enough to deal with the crisis that communities face. We have vulnerable and marginalized people who are struggling with affordable housing and homelessness. They need safe and affordable places to live.

It is encouraging to see the inclusion of national standards for mental health support. Mental health care should be part of our universal health care system, so the cost of treatment is not a barrier to people seeking support, especially when they are in a crisis. Many of the people who are homeless in Nanaimo—Ladysmith are struggling with serious mental health issues. The mayor of Nanaimo has gone so far as to call for new institutions for people who are clearly suffering and unable to cope with their mental illness.

Like many other regions of the country, Nanaimo—Ladysmith is deeply affected by the opioid crisis. We have young men, with good jobs and families, who have become addicted to opioids after work-related injuries. They are dying because the stigma of drug addiction has made them fearful to seek help. The war on drugs is a failure. Let us study what other countries have done to deal with this health and social issue and create a made-in-Canada solution.

Alleviating homelessness and improving access to mental health care and addiction treatment services will reduce the criminality associated with these social issues and allow our justice system to focus on violent and repeat offenders.

I am also very pleased to see that the government is committed to strengthening medicare and renewing its health agreement with the provinces and that mandate letters call for a universal national pharmacare program. We need to add a national dental care program to that as well.

Nanaimo—Ladysmith has a serious shortage of doctors in a rapidly growing population. Vancouver Island is a retirement destination for many Canadians.

The Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, which was built in the 1960s, serves the oldest per capita population in Canada. This hospital is overdue for an upgrade to create a tertiary hospital that will provide cancer care, cardiac care and expanded psychiatric services.

HealthCareCAN is calling on the government to green our health care infrastructure and ensure that it is energy efficient as part of the efforts to combat climate change. I hope the government will heed that call and provide major funding to help the provinces upgrade aging health care infrastructure.

It is very important for my community to see an increase in the funding for home care and palliative care, but we also need to see major changes in how senior care residences are operated. The Investment Canada Act needs to be changed to exclude seniors homes from foreign ownership. Seniors homes should be viewed as part of our health care system.

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The recent experience with the purchase of Retirement Concepts by Anbang Insurance in China, which is now a state-owned corporation, must not be repeated. The Vancouver Island Health authority recently had to take over administration of three Retirement Concepts facilities due to unsafe conditions. Foreign corporations have no connection to our community and should not be profiting from providing poor-quality seniors care. The non-profit model of community-centred care is a far better way of ensuring that our seniors get the quality care they deserve.

● (1340)

Small and medium-sized businesses are major economic drivers and employ the vast majority of Canadians. I am glad to see in the mandate letters that there will be improved support for start-ups, but what I have heard from the small and medium-sized enterprises in my community is that there is a need for additional support for businesses that want to take the next step in their growth, whether that is innovation for a new product line, creating efficiencies that reduce waste and lower their carbon footprint, or expanding their markets.

Canada has been a great incubator for new businesses, but often these businesses are lured away to other jurisdictions by incentives, tax breaks and programs that help them grow to the next level. We need to ensure that small and medium-sized enterprises stay in Canada and continue to provide well-paying jobs for Canadian workers.

I know the language of tax cuts has been a popular mantra, but tax cuts inevitably lead to austerity and either cuts to services or to the addition of user fees for the services that middle- and lower-income Canadians rely on. I support having services that our taxes provide, such as universal health care, and infrastructure such as public transit, roads, bridges, hospitals, schools and recreation facilities.

What we need is fairness. We need to ensure that wealthy Canadians are paying their fair share. Large corporations benefit from the social services provided to their employees and the infrastructure they use as part of their businesses. The government needs to close tax loopholes, crack down on tax evasions and shut down tax avoidance schemes and the offshoring of wealth by corporations and individuals.

There are four first nations in the Nanaimo—Ladysmith riding, and the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into Canadian legislation is very important to them and to creating economic certainty in our region. Building a new relationship with indigenous people in Canada requires more than just words; it requires a commitment to respect the Constitution and Supreme Court decisions. In too many cases, especially when large extraction projects are at stake, the intent of UNDRIP is not being followed.

In addition to the climate crisis, we are facing a crash in biodiversity. The commitments to protect 25% of the land base and 25% of the marine base in conservation by 2025 is very important. The riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith has very little conservation land put aside because the whole southeast portion of Vancouver Island was privatized as part of the deal for B.C. to enter Confederation. The Nanaimo River watershed is 750 square kilometres in area, but only

10 square kilometres are in a conservation area and less than two square kilometres are designated as parkland. The Nanaimo River is very important ecologically and needs greater conservation, and 25% would be a welcomed inclusion.

Like my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands, I see a great Speech from the Throne, but it is hard to be optimistic. The previous Speech from the Throne from the Liberal government promised that 2015 would be the last first-past-the-post election. It was not.

There are a couple of other things my colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands has highlighted that were promises that were not kept. Canadians were also promised concrete action to combat climate change, but the targets for reducing emissions have not changed from the ones put in place by the previous Conservative government before the Paris accord. We are not even on target to meet those commitments. Instead, the government has approved environmentally destructive projects, has bought a pipeline that guarantees an increase in emissions and has continued to provide subsidies to the fossil fuel industry. It is for those reasons that I will vote against the Speech from the Throne. I am ready to work with the government to establish new targets, because until we commit to do our part and follow through on our commitments, all of the other issues I have mentioned will not matter. Climate change will impact every area of our lives, overwhelm our health care system and destroy our economy.

I was elected on a promise to continue pressing the government for real and substantive action on climate change, and that is a promise I intend to keep.

● (1345)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, with reference to the environment, there are different ways we have approached it as a government. We could talk about the incentives to get people to purchase hybrid or electric cars. I personally like a couple of them that are quite significant. The price on pollution is one, which I think overall has been fairly well received in the different regions of the country. Also, in the last election we talked about the planting of two billion trees over the next decade. That is significant and really tangible. People can see that, understand it and relate to it.

I wonder if my colleague could talk about the different ways in which a government can appeal to Canadians to think more about the environment.

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As I said, I like the planting of two billion trees over the next decade. I think that is a very strong, tangible action by government. We see the price on pollution, something that is taking place around the world. Only the Conservative Party seems to be offside with that. We see tax incentive programs, such as the one to encourage people to buy electric cars, which complements the Province of Quebec's program and is really making a difference. Could the member provide his thoughts on progressive measures such as those?

Mr. Paul Manly: Madam Speaker, in the previous election I listened to the environment minister tell us from Canadian Tire how, as consumers, we can change our light bulbs and do that sort of thing. I have already done that. I have done two home energy retrofits and I have taken care of my own carbon footprint. What we need to do is regulate industry.

We have the Copenhagen agreement, which has its targets due this year. Ten of the provinces and territories, representing 85% of the population, have met their targets, but Alberta and Saskatchewan have not. That is mainly because of oil and gas extraction and because of fracking and the expansion of the oil sands.

We talk about Teck Resources wiping out a whole area of the boreal forest and turning it into a tailings pond when we should be talking about planting trees. Why not leave those trees in place? Why not look at renewable energy and real solutions to climate change, rather than the expansion of fossil fuels. That includes fracking and the LNG projects. We need to stop subsidizing fossil fuel industries in this country.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, a Yiddish proverb says, "All that glitters is not gold."

The member talked about fleecing the rich, about taxing the rich some more. Looking at the tax numbers in 2017, we see that 54.1% of all taxes paid were paid by the top 10% of income earners. If 54.1% is not enough, how much more taxes would that member like to see being paid by those income earners?

Mr. Paul Manly: Madam Speaker, I would like us to follow the northern European model of taxation. There is much more equity in that system. There they do not have the kind of poverty that we have here in a wealthy country. The wealth is shared, and the wealthy are doing just fine. They are paying their fair share. They are using the social services provided by those taxes, and their workers are benefiting from them as well.

We should have an extreme wealth tax on people who make more than \$1 million a year. What do they need all that wealth for?

• (1350)

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I have a quick question with regard to federal policy.

We have been trying to protect an area in my riding called Ojibway Shores, which has 100 endangered species at risk on it. The federal government wants local taxpayers to spend millions of dollars to pay for their own property. I am wondering what the member thinks about that situation. We have asked the federal government to transfer that so that local taxpayers will not have to pay for property they already own since it is federal land and has hundreds of endangered species on it.

Mr. Paul Manly: Madam Speaker, the federal government has a large role to play in making sure that conservation areas are conserved. This is really important to my area, where most of the land is private land, so putting conservation measures in Nanaimo—Ladysmith would mean that we would need to deal with private land. It is going to need both federal and provincial funding.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Fredericton.

I will begin by saying it is such an honour to address the House today on the Speech from the Throne. I want to once again thank the constituents of Davenport and all the friends, family and volunteers who were so generous with their time and energy in ensuring my success in the 2019 campaign.

Davenport is an amazing, vibrant riding in the downtown west end of Toronto, and I cannot put into words what a privilege it is to be re-elected as the member of Parliament for Davenport. My highest responsibility is to serve Canadians, and I hope to always do my constituents and our country proud. In fact, it is a privilege and responsibility for all of us who work in this great chamber to address key issues facing Canadians today and to do all we can to create an even better Canada, ensuring Canadians are ready and have the tools to address the challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow.

The throne speech mentioned the long history and the many differences in Canada, and the enduring stability and progress of our Parliament despite those differences. Canada, as we know, has three founding nations. Our country originated on the talents and values of our first nations and aboriginal peoples, as well as the settlers from Britain and France. At times in our history, relationships among the three groups have been contentious, to say the least, but as we evolved, our governments always found ways to compromise, collaborate and move forward toward a fairer and more just society.

Generations of immigrants to Canada from all over the world have only made our society richer and stronger. My riding of Davenport has Canada's largest Portuguese population, many of whom arrived over the same few years decades ago, but there are also people of Italian, Hispanic, Brazilian, South Asian, Middle Eastern, Chinese and Ukrainian descent, just to name a handful, all living together in the same wonderful community. I am the daughter of immigrant parents from Ukraine and Mexico, and I know as well as anyone the disagreement and beauty that come when cultures meet. We have had some of those arguments in my house, but at the end of the day, we are all family.

The Address

I want to turn my attention to the key priorities mentioned in the Speech from the Throne that are so important to Davenport residents.

I heard so much at the doors during the election campaign in October 2019. The first priority I want to touch on is environment and climate change. I would say this is the top preoccupation for most residents in Davenport. They were absolutely delighted to hear that we are already spending around \$63 billion and have over 50 climate actions under way right now. They were also happy to hear that we have made a commitment to net-zero emissions by 2050 and that we will be studying legally binding five-year milestones based on the advice of experts and consultants. They know that in order for us to move to net zero by 2050, we will have to exceed our current 2030 targets. They were really happy to hear about the just transition act, because we want to make sure we give those working in high-emissions industries access to the training, support and new opportunities they need to succeed in a clean economy. A number of groups in the Davenport community have already met with me to say that this continues to be the key priority for them and Davenport.

I want to mention the promises about energy-efficient homes and lower energy bills that we made in our platform. I mention this point because many Canadians want to feel that they are taking their own steps to combat climate change in order to move us into a low-carbon economy.

What we promised in our platform and mandate letters is that we are going to give homeowners and landlords free energy audits. This, to me, is a game-changer. This would allow homeowners and apartment dwellers to take their own steps in order to reduce their energy bills, increase their energy efficiency and lower their individual emissions. We have also made a commitment to retrofit 1.5 million homes to help Canadians make their homes more efficient. This is wonderful.

I will mention a couple more things on the environment, because the environment is important for Davenport residents. We promised to protect 25% of Canada's land and oceans by 2025. We have the longest coastline in the world, one-fifth of the world's fresh water, and vast and wild forests. Our ecosystem depends on all of this for its survival, and our quality of life will depend on it moving forward.

• (1355)

My riding is also delighted with the ban on single-use plastics that will begin in 2021, but we know we have some more things to do. Davenport residents are very much looking for a full plan on how our government is going to ensure that we reach our Paris accord targets. They are also looking for the systemic changes that we need to make, such as perhaps putting all of our spending through an environmental lens, and various other systemic changes that we should be looking at moving forward.

I will turn to the second top issue that is preoccupying Davenport residents. That is housing.

Many people have owned homes in my riding for 20, 30 or 40 years, and they are starting to wonder how they are going to continue to be able to live in Davenport. They are older. They want to sell

their homes. They want to, as seniors, continue to live in downtown west Toronto. They want their kids to live close to them. They are really happy with a number of the measures we are taking in order to ensure affordable housing moving forward.

We have already made a huge commitment to the national housing strategy, putting \$11.2 billion over 11 years to build, renew and repair Canada's stock of affordable housing. We have also taken some steps for those who are new buyers. In our platform and the throne speech we said that we are going to improve our first-time home buyer incentive, which will give people up to 10% off the purchase price of their first home. We have also increased the qualifying value of a home to \$800,000. In places like downtown Toronto, unfortunately houses are that expensive, so we need to provide some additional support.

I have a lot of confidence that with these measures I have mentioned and other measures we will be introducing or have introduced, we will continue to ensure that people who want to live in our cities will be able to do so affordably.

I will move on to seniors, because I have so many of them in my riding. They are so wonderful and engaged, and they want to continue to be active citizens. We, as a federal government, want to help them to live affordably and to have a good standard of living. They were really happy with three key things in our platform that we had promised.

The first is that they do not have to pay taxes on the first \$15,000 of whatever income they earn. They were pleased to hear about our commitment to increase OAS by 10% for those who are 75 years of age and over. They were also really happy with our promise to increase the survivor benefit by 25%. That is going to help 1.2 million more Canadian seniors to live more affordably in Canada.

In my remaining time I will talk about arts and culture. We have such a rich group of artists, creators and those working in the cultural industry in Davenport. I told them that our national government cares about them, and what we want to do is make sure there is more support and more funding to create and support Canadian content in Canada. We have made a strong commitment to impose a tax on foreign-based Internet platform providers to fund the creation of cultural content in this country.

I think everybody knows the importance of arts and culture to us as a nation, to getting a better understanding of each other and who we are in all of our complexities. It is a way for us to be able to share our joy, our pain and our way of understanding the world around us, not through words, but through pictures, dance and every way possible.

There are other commitments to health care, immigration and community safety in the Speech from the Throne that are really important to Davenport residents and that we are really happy about. We are in a minority government, and I still believe that we, as a minority government, can do great things. What we have to do is continue to listen to Canadians. We have to be willing to compromise and we have to never forget that we are here to serve Canadians.

I will end with a quote from our Prime Minister, “Canadians are counting on us, and this plan is a path forward for everyone. We have common ground and shared purpose. Together, we can and we will overcome the challenges of today to build a brighter tomorrow.”

• (1400)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member will have five minutes of questions and comments after question period.

I want to remind members that there are items that are being dealt with in the House, and if members want to have side conversations, they should take them outside, because it is hard to hear members who have the floor.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

FRANK MONTEIRO

Mr. Bryan May (Cambridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a distinguished member of my community. Sadly, we lost Cambridge city councillor Frank Monteiro to his second battle with cancer.

Frank came to Canada as an immigrant from Portugal in his teenage years. He dedicated his life to service and was a proud member of our Portuguese community. He was the first Portuguese police officer in Ontario and the first Portuguese city councillor for Cambridge. Frank always stood up for the residents of Ward 7 and the city of Cambridge. He championed initiatives for more outdoor recreational sites, the development of our downtown cores and improved community safety.

He will be remembered fondly as a police officer, a city councillor, a mentor and a friend. We miss Frank. On behalf of Cambridge, on behalf of Canada, we thank him. I say *obrigado* to Frank.

* * *

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we embark on this new year and in this new Parliament, I am honoured to rise today on behalf of the wonderful citizens of Red Deer—Mountain View.

As a farmer, I always have weather top of mind, and this crop year has seen challenges that Albertans have not faced since the 1960s. Beyond the cold and unpredictable moisture that we always face, we are also dealing with other issues that governments can control. Our diminished competitiveness in world markets due to

Statements by Members

disjointed trade strategies, a carbon tax for agricultural producers where the cost cannot be passed on to consumers, and a non-existent strategy to ensure that our environmentally conscious farmers have the tools necessary to feed humanity lie at the feet of the government.

Our agricultural producers need resolutions to non-tariff trade barriers, an energy exemption for drying grain, and acknowledgement of and respect for their environmental stewardship to the rest of the world.

* * *

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR SNOWSTORM

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the storm of the century hit Newfoundland just over a week ago. While Newfoundlanders back home are still cleaning up the remains of Snowmageddon 2020, I want to take this time to thank those whose dedication and hard work cannot go unrecognized.

To the medical and hospital staff, paramedics, heavy equipment operators, hydro workers, RNC, RCMP and of course members of the Canadian Armed Forces, we extend our thanks for everything they have done to help keep our communities and our people safe. To every person who helped dig out a senior or a person with mobility issues, to anyone who checked on neighbours, family members and friends, to those who took someone in who had lost power, to those who offered food to people or volunteered their time to help those less fortunate, we extend our thanks.

There is not enough time to thank every person who deserves it, but they know who they are. I thank them for showing this country and indeed the world what true Newfoundland generosity and spirit look like.

I invite my colleagues to join me in thanking the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

* * *

• (1405)

[Translation]

SNOWMOBILE ACCIDENT IN LAC-SAINT-JEAN

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): On January 21, what should have been a snowmobile trip like any other in our region turned into a horrific tragedy that has brought France and Lac-Saint-Jean together in the face of adversity.

Each winter, we proudly invite the world to discover our majestic landscape. Hospitality is our watchword, and we reserve a special welcome for our brothers and sisters from France. That is why this tragedy has hit us so hard. This accident should never have happened, not in our region, and not to our guests, our friends.

Statements by Members

As the member for Lac-Saint-Jean and on behalf of the people of Lac-Saint-Jean, I want to extend our deepest sympathies to the families of the five missing snowmobilers. Today my thoughts go out to the rescuers, who are still searching as we speak and are sparing no effort to make sure every family can mourn with dignity.

Lastly, I want to commend their courageous guide, Benoît L'Espérance, who died trying to save them. He acted valiantly, knowing the risks. In Lac-Saint-Jean, we never leave anyone behind.

* * *

[*English*]

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week Governor General Julie Payette was in Jerusalem with a delegation of members from all parties in the House of Commons. At Yad Vashem, world leaders came together in the state of Israel to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Today, the Governor General and the delegation are at Auschwitz for another commemoration.

[*Translation*]

In a world grappling with a rise in anti-Semitism and hate, our leaders gathered to honour the memory of the approximately six million Jews and millions of others who were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators.

[*English*]

In Canada, I am pleased we have adopted the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, but we know there is much more we need to do to confront one of the world's oldest evils. I ask all members of the House to join me in commemorating those killed in the Holocaust, honouring the survivors and loudly and clearly saying, "Never again."

* * *

BASEBALL HALL OF FAMER

Mr. Marc Dalton (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I join the people of Maple Ridge in congratulating our hometown hero, Larry Walker. There are over 19,000 former major league baseball players. Larry is only the second Canadian to be elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

Larry's family has a long history with baseball in Maple Ridge. Back in the 1940s and 1950s, Larry's father and grandfather played for local teams in what is now Larry Walker Field. Larry was a bat boy for his dad's team, but was more interested in hockey at the time.

[*Translation*]

He took up baseball again in the mid-80s and signed his first contract with the Expos in 1989.

[*English*]

Larry won three batting titles, seven Gold Gloves and was an all-star five times. He was a fan of the number "3". He wore the num-

ber 33, was married at 3:33 p.m. and is the 333rd member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

I ask members to please join me in congratulating Larry Walker.

* * *

FIREFIGHTING IN AUSTRALIA

Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the people of Pontiac for putting their trust in me and allowing me to serve as their voice in this House of Commons for a second mandate.

[*Translation*]

Five years ago, I promised my constituents I would fight for their needs and interests, and I intend to keep that promise. I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

Today I rise to thank Maniwaki-based SOPFEU firefighters who went on a 31-day mission to Australia to support other firefighters already battling the disastrous blazes there. These firefighters are doing everything they can to protect Australian people, wildlife and land, and they all deserve our deepest respect.

I would like to thank Simon Bordeleau, Alain St-Onge, Michel Bédard and Jonathan Bernard-Bisson and their managers, Garry Pearson, Marc Larche and Mélanie Morin, for their courage and dedication.

[*English*]

I am so incredibly proud of Canada's firefighters who have travelled across the globe to be a part of these relief efforts for fires that remind us of the immediate and urgent crisis that is climate change.

* * *

LUNAR NEW YEAR

Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, *chuc mung nam moi. Saehae bok manui badeuseyo. Gong hey fat choy. San nihn faai lok.*

This past Saturday marked the beginning of lunar new year for Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean communities. It is a time in Canada and across the world to celebrate the Year of the Rat, which is sure to be a year filled with wealth and abundance.

According to legend, the rat used its quick wit to ride in the ear of the ox in a race to the heavenly gate. It leapt across the finish line to earn its place as the first of the zodiac animals. The rat's arrival ushers in brand new beginnings.

In Scarborough—Agincourt, friends and families will be enjoying festivities filled with beautiful red decorations, delicious meals and gifts of lucky red pockets.

May all Canadians have a year filled with joy, prosperity and good health.

* * *

● (1410)

SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE OF EDMONTON

Mr. James Cumming (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a very important organization in my riding of Edmonton Centre, SACE, the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton.

SACE is a not-for-profit charitable organization composed of 40 staff and 80 dedicated volunteers who do admirable work helping those whose lives have been impacted by sexual violence. They see clients of all ages, genders, ethnicities and sexual orientations. Given the diversity of their clientele, it is clear that sexual violence is a societal issue that impacts everyone.

The work is not easy, but it is essential. As a husband, father and grandfather, I hope to see the day when sexual violence will be eliminated from our societies and our vocabularies, and organizations like SACE will be a thing of the past.

I thank the executive director, Mary Jane James, and her dedicated team at SACE for all they do. We see them and we appreciate them.

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UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT 752

Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address this House concerning an event that has dominated the hearts and minds of Canadians since the early hours of January 8. I refer to the downing of flight PS752 and the loss of 176 lives, including 57 Canadian citizens and 29 permanent residents.

Just saying these numbers brings to mind the pictures of all who died on that fateful day, and the many family members and loved ones who have been left behind. Their loss is a loss shared by our whole country. I want the families and loved ones who have lost so much to know that their grief is our grief, and we will be there to support them today, tomorrow and for as long as they need us.

On behalf of the Iranian Canadian community, I want to extend to the Prime Minister our heartfelt and sincere thanks for his strong leadership on this file and for the commitment of time he made to reach out and support the families.

In closing, I call on this House to join me in holding Iran fully responsible for this tragedy. I call for full transparency, accountability, compensation and justice for the families of the victims.

* * *

CANADA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this month the people of Taiwan went to the polls, and with a record 75% voter turnout, President Tsai was re-elected with nearly 60% of the popular vote. The election was a victory for all Taiwanese and demonstrates the robustness of Taiwan's democracy.

Statements by Members

It is also a reminder of the strong links between Canada and Taiwan. With more than \$7.9 billion in annual bilateral trade, Taiwan is Canada's 13th-largest trading partner. As Taiwan is one of the most dynamic economies in Asia, freer access to Taiwanese markets means new opportunities for Canadian businesses.

Now is the time to take the next step toward free trade with Taiwan. Now is the time to commence negotiations toward a foreign investment, promotion and protection agreement between Canada and Taiwan.

* * *

KOBE AND GIANNA BRYANT

Ms. Nelly Shin (Port Moody—Coquitlam, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, basketball legend Kobe Bryant and his daughter Gianna died tragically in a helicopter crash. Kobe Bryant was one of the best to ever play the game, and his record speaks for itself: five championships, MVP, finals MVP, 15-time all-star and Olympic gold medalist. It was not just these impressive achievements that made him basketball royalty to millions; it was the way he played the game. His grit, unmatched talent, determination and focus earned him the nickname the Black Mamba, derived from what is widely considered the deadliest snake on the planet.

Kobe changed the way people view basketball. His work ethic and mamba mentality inspired countless people to work harder to achieve their dreams and goals, not just in basketball but in their everyday lives. Kobe Bryant has forever left his mark on the hearts of basketball fans and in the souls of millions around the world. While he is no longer with us, his spirit lives on.

I thank Kobe for everything. May he and Gianna both rest in peace. I send Kobe and Gianna's family and friends my deepest condolences.

* * *

● (1415)

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the death camps. We join with survivors all around the world to remember the atrocities that were committed against them, their families and their communities.

Oral Questions

It is important to remember those who were murdered and the survivors of these unimaginable crimes, but we must also commit to standing up against intolerance and hateful speech wherever we find them. We are seeing a rise in divisive rhetoric and attacks on synagogues and religious freedoms. It is more important than ever to say “never again” and put meaning to those words.

We must stand together for the rights and dignity of all people. Together we must act to call out prejudice and hate wherever we see it. It is the only way we can truly make “never again” a reality.

* * *

*[Translation]***INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY**

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, 75 years ago, the world discovered a whole new dimension to the horrors of war. Seventy-five years ago to the day, we discovered Auschwitz. Within its walls, over one million men, women and children were murdered because of their religion. They were killed because they were Jewish.

Today, it is our duty to take a moment to reflect on the memory of these victims of genocide. It is also our duty to pay tribute to the memory of the survivors. Some of them are still among us, their lives changed forever. It is our duty to remember the emaciated faces of those subjected to forced labour, violence, terror and grief. People who experienced Auschwitz will never forget it, nor must we. It is also our duty to take a stand against anti-Semitism wherever it appears and to ensure that this black mark on our history remains in the past.

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*[English]***INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY**

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as members on all sides will know, today is International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Today we remember one of the darkest chapters in human history and honour the remaining survivors.

It was on this fateful day 75 years ago that Allied forces liberated the largest Nazi death camp, Auschwitz-Birkenau. Unspeakable evil took place there and elsewhere. As the president of the Knesset said, “The gates of hell were opened” wide for all to see. By the end of the war six million Jewish people had been murdered.

With the recent increase in violence against Jewish people in North America and around the world, today is a stark reminder that we must always combat anti-Semitism, racism and bigotry in all of its forms. We here in this chamber and all Canadians must stand up to those who spread hate.

Also, we cannot ignore the risk posed by indifference. Evil wins when good people do nothing. Together we must stand in solidarity against anti-Semitism and bigotry in any form, in any place around the world.

Today, we renew our solemn pledge that never again will this be allowed to happen. Never again.

UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT 752

Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this first day of Parliament, I rise to recognize the tragic event that occurred on January 8: the downing of Ukraine Airlines flight 752 over Tehran. My riding of Willowdale joins many other ridings across our great country that have been grieving the loss of innocent lives. This event has struck at the heart and soul of our nation, because in every passenger we saw ourselves, our parents, our grandparents, a friend or maybe a neighbour. We have mourned deeply as a country because they were us, and we are lesser as a country without them enriching every facet of Canadian life.

The outpouring of support from friends and strangers alike, of all faiths and communities, has been overwhelming. It reminds us why Canada is the best country in the world. Indeed, we have experienced Canada and Canadians at their very compassionate best.

All those who have lost loved ones should know that their country shares their grief.

● (1420)

The Speaker: Following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand that there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence in memory of the victims of Ukraine International Airlines flight PS752. I invite hon. members to rise.

*[A moment of silence observed]***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT 752**

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on January 8, 57 Canadians lost their lives when Ukrainian Airlines flight 752 was shot down by Iranian missiles. I want to thank the Prime Minister for keeping me and the official opposition and all Canadians informed throughout the process, but there are still, of course, many unanswered questions.

Could the Prime Minister update the House as to whether there has been progress made on returning Canadian remains home and what steps are being considered to bring the perpetrators of this attack to justice?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the downing of flight PS752 was truly a national tragedy, and I thank the member opposite and indeed all members in the House for supporting their communities as we all grieve through a very difficult time.

We are committed to supporting the families and loved ones, with our priorities continuing to be transparency, accountability and justice. I told President Rouhani directly that Canadians expect and demand full co-operation from Iranian authorities. That means respecting the wishes of the families in regard to burial. I can confirm that the families that have wanted burial in Canada are receiving it so far, and we continue to expect full transparency and a full investigation from Iran.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Prime Minister for that update.

Here at home, the government has overseen more than \$100 billion in cancelled energy projects. Across the country, wages have stagnated and have not kept up with increases in the price of consumer goods. Food bank usage by people with jobs is up 27%.

The Prime Minister has an opportunity to show that Canada's energy sector is open for business. Will he do the right thing, stand with energy workers and approve the Teck Resources frontier mine, or will he stand with the activists and celebrities who are trying to shut it down?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the very beginning, we demonstrated to Canadians that we understand we cannot make a choice between protecting the environment and growing the economy. We need to do them both absolutely together, and that is how we have moved forward on historic protections for our environment and for our natural beauty while at the same time we have created jobs. We have seen the economy grow.

We will continue to do just that. We will continue to go through rigorous assessment processes and make choices that are the right ones for Canada for now and into the future.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has made the choice to destroy Canada's energy sector, cancelling billions of dollars' worth of projects and chasing billions of dollars of private sector investments out of the country. It is starting to have an impact.

The IMF has found that Canada's economy is growing at a much slower rate than our international competitors'. The Prime Minister's recipe is to borrow more, rack up debt and chase away private sector investment, all to fund a massive increase in government spending.

Does the Prime Minister realize that this has been a recipe for disaster in literally every country where it has been tried?

Oral Questions

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past five years we have made a very different choice from those of Conservative governments in the past. We chose instead to invest in Canadians rather than looking to balance the books on the backs of service cuts to Canadians. We have invested in the services that Canadians need to help them through times of anxiety. We have increased the Canada child benefit to families that need it, which has lifted hundreds of thousands of people, including young people, out of poverty.

We will continue to invest in the growth and the services that Canadians need.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in cities across this country, gang crime committed with firearms is a serious concern, yet the Prime Minister's only approach is the lazy approach of asking people who are already following all the rules to follow a few more rules. It is much harder to track down illegal guns, it is much harder to stop the flow of smuggled firearms and it is much more difficult to infiltrate gangs and hold them accountable. However, that is the difficult work that Conservatives are prepared to do.

Will the Prime Minister admit that asking honest, law-abiding people to follow more laws will do nothing to stop crime?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, far too many families in this country, far too many communities in this country suffer the devastation of gun violence. We have taken many initiatives to counter that, whether it is enhanced background checks or requiring sellers to check licences of anyone who wants to buy a gun.

We have invested over \$327 million to address gun and gang violence. We will continue to strengthen our gun laws by banning dangerous assault weapons and working with provinces, territories and mayors to keep communities safe.

The bottom line is we will strengthen gun control. Conservatives want to weaken it.

* * *

ETHICS

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, nothing he just said will actually have an impact on people who are already criminals.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Thanks to the Prime Minister, Canada has fallen three spots on the Transparency International index. That comes as no surprise considering the Prime Minister interfered in a criminal case and his cabinet racked up several ethics violations.

Does the Prime Minister realize that his actions are hurting Canada's reputation abroad?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada continues to show the international community how important it is to invest in communities and families and to engage in positive efforts globally, whether by fighting climate change or promoting the importance of international trade and the rule of law in international affairs. We will continue to work to show that Canada has a strong presence on the world stage while helping Canadians here at home.

* * *

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Rose Eva is a programmer from Saint-Jérôme who will be deported this evening if the Minister of Immigration does not step in.

Rose Eva is from Cameroon and made a name for herself as a student in Quebec. She was literally showered with job offers. That type of success story needs to be encouraged. The Government of Quebec wants to keep her in our province. The community of Saint-Jérôme is rallying to keep her there.

Will the minister use his discretionary power to grant this woman a temporary resident permit until her situation is resolved?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the profound impact that immigration-related decisions can have on the lives of individuals. We are committed to ensuring that every case is evaluated on merit, in a fair manner and according to Canadian law. Each case is unique, but every applicant can expect professional and impartial treatment and clear rulings.

We are aware of this particular case, but privacy laws prevent us from commenting on it.

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Rose Eva's case perfectly illustrates why Quebec should have the right to veto immigrant deportations. Quebec needs Rose Eva. We cannot afford to lose a woman who has studied here, is qualified, received her training in French and wants to work in the regions in an area of expertise that specifically meets our needs. Employers have been fighting over her, yet if no action is taken, Rose Eva will leave the country at eight o'clock tonight.

Will the immigration minister follow Quebec's lead and use its discretionary power to let Rose Eva stay?

● (1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we will always be committed to a fair and impartial assessment of each case. This goes to show how important it is to have an immigration system that works to bring people from all over the world and build a better society every day for everyone. We know that im-

migrants bring economic opportunities for all Canadians. We will continue to defend the importance of immigration, pluralism, multiculturalism and the respect we have for all those who want to come live, build their lives, and work in Canada.

* * *

*[English]***INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, four years ago first nations kids won a historic victory in the Human Rights Tribunal. The tribunal found that the government discriminated against first nations kids and denied basic health care services. The Liberals are continuing to take these kids to court.

[Translation]

The Prime Minister had four years to remedy the situation. While the kids continue to suffer, the Liberals are spending millions of dollars in legal fees.

Will the Liberals stop taking kids to court and start providing equitable services?

[English]

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that reconciliation is something of importance not just to this government but to all Canadians, and that is why we have taken so many historic steps to move forward the relationship with indigenous peoples in this country.

We have ensured that we are respecting Jordan's principle. Under the last years of the previous government, zero cases were approved under Jordan's principle, and since then, hundreds of thousands of approvals under Jordan's principle have made a real difference in the lives of indigenous children across this country. We recognize there is much more to do. That is why we are continuing to work hard every day to create better opportunities for indigenous families.

* * *

PHARMACARE

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, taking first nations kids to court is not respecting reconciliation.

[Translation]

For 22 years, the Liberals have promised to introduce a universal pharmacare program, but there is still nothing in place.

[English]

There are millions of Canadians who cannot afford the medications they desperately need, but the Liberals are telling them to just wait. Well, we are not going to wait. We have announced that the first bill we are introducing in this House would implement pharmacare for all based on the Canada Health Act principles.

Will the Liberals continue to tell Canadians to wait, or are they ready to work with us to bring in pharmacare for all?

[Translation]

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no Canadian should be forced to make an impossible choice between medication and food.

That is why, in one generation, we have done more than any other government to reduce the price of medications. We have taken action and will continue to take action. We are in discussions with the provinces and territories with a view to implementing pharmacare based on the principles found in the Hoskins report.

We are working to reduce expenses for families with a strategy for drugs to treat rare diseases.

We are setting up the Canadian drug agency. We will continue to reduce the cost of medications for all Canadians.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we now have two confirmed cases of the coronavirus in Canada. There is still justifiable reason to be concerned about the current measures in place. Health officials stated that there is a likelihood of other cases in Canada.

Respectfully, I ask the minister this: What is the plan, knowing that more cases are likely, and how can Canadians be assured that this spread is being properly contained?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will say that the risk to Canadians remains low. Our systems continue to work extremely closely together and to collaborate, which allows us to quickly identify people who have the virus and treat them appropriately. We will continue to monitor the situation and add resources as necessary.

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the national emergency antiviral stockpile was created to ensure that antivirals could be accessed quickly in response to an influenza pandemic. Canadians need to be sure that the government is maintaining enough antiviral drugs to treat people and keep more people from getting sick.

Can the health minister confirm that there are enough antiviral drugs in the national emergency stockpile to address a possible broader outbreak?

• (1435)

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact, there is no particular antiviral developed for this coronavirus, as it is relatively new, but I can tell you that Canada's research com-

Oral Questions

munity is working closely with our international partners. The fact that we have a copy of the live virus allows us to continue that research, and our labs are well prepared to be part of the international solution to finding immunization.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague mentioned a few moments ago, we learned this morning that there is now a second case of coronavirus in Canada. People are increasingly worried, and the government must act swiftly.

Can the Prime Minister tell us what his plan is to protect Canadians from this new virus?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Ontario says that it has identified a second case of coronavirus in Toronto. The second person is related to the one who was diagnosed in the first case. The two individuals are in isolation and receiving care. Canada is well prepared to fight this virus, and the risk of an outbreak remains low.

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health said herself that other cases could arise in Canada.

Given that this file obviously involves federal and provincial jurisdictions alike, can the Prime Minister tell us what steps he has taken with all the provinces, including Quebec, to prepare for and deal with the coronavirus?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I repeat, the risk remains low, and we are working closely with our partners.

[English]

I am working very closely with our international and provincial and territorial partners to make sure that we track the spread of the disease and that we identify individuals who are at risk of contracting the disease and are positive for the disease. We will continue to make those efforts diligently to make sure that we contain the spread within Canada and that we take appropriate measures internationally with our partners.

Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC): Mr. Speaker, every day thousands of passengers from China and elsewhere in Asia arrive at our ports of entry of Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto. Oftentimes, they board domestic flights and connect throughout Canada and elsewhere in North America.

Oral Questions

Calling the coronavirus a grave situation, China has quarantined whole cities and millions of people. The WHO has now listed the global threat as high. The safety of Canadians is currently dependent upon screening in China and self-reporting by infected passengers.

When will the government institute a real plan that includes an enhanced screening process?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact, our government has been well ahead of the World Health Organization's strategies in terms of screening at ports of entry. We have multiple measures to alert travellers from the affected regions about what to do if they suspect that they have the illness. We have trained our CBSA officers to ensure that they have the tools they need to support people who may be ill. We have worked with partner airlines to ensure there is information on flights.

We will continue to monitor the situation and add additional measures as necessary.

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CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on December 31, China alerted the World Health Organization to several cases of pneumonia. Then on January 7, the WHO announced that it had identified a new virus, the coronavirus, originating in Wuhan, China.

Days later, China announced its first death from the virus. As of yesterday, the death toll had risen to 81, with almost 2,800 cases confirmed. Beijing has quarantined more than 50 million people.

Of the 50 million people in quarantine, how many are Canadian, and what is the Prime Minister doing to bring them home?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is an opportune time to remind Canadians to register with the Global Affairs Canada website to let people know when they are leaving the country.

I am working very closely with my ministerial counterparts and our international counterparts to make sure that Canadians who are abroad in the affected areas have the resources they need to get the support from our country to return. We will have more information as the situation evolves. I commit to all Canadians complete transparency.

* * *

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois stands firmly behind aluminum workers, not multinational aluminum companies. This government has not been able to offer aluminum workers the same protections provided to steelworkers. Instead it is creating ideal conditions for those companies to move jobs and investments out of Canada and to flood our markets with products made of Chinese aluminum. China now produces 15 times more aluminum than Quebec.

Is the Prime Minister trying to take advantage of the Conservative Party's temporary weakness to ram through an agreement that would otherwise not pass in the House?

• (1440)

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to defending the aluminum sector and its workers. We fought to have the U.S. tariffs on aluminum fully lifted. When the new NAFTA is ratified, we will have a guarantee that 70% of the aluminum in cars manufactured in the area covered by NAFTA will be sourced in North America. Currently, 0% of the aluminum in cars manufactured under NAFTA must be sourced in North America, so 70% is definitely better than 0%.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers are well aware that the aluminum that is subject to dumping in the Mexican market will be considered North American. That is the catch.

We have read and heard in several places that the Bloc jumped the gun when it refused to lend its support. Today, however, it is the Prime Minister and the government who seem to want to jump the gun by skipping over as many steps as possible in the legislative review process involving this agreement.

I have a clear and simple question for the Prime Minister. If solutions are put forward to resolve the Quebec aluminum issue, will he be open to them?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow me to quote the Premier of Quebec, Mr. Legault, with whom I spoke this morning. He knows how important this agreement is to Canadians. In December, he said, "I believe the Bloc Québécois has to defend the interests of Quebecers, and it is in the interest of Quebecers for this agreement to be ratified and adopted."

It is a good deal for Quebec workers and businesses. I agree with Premier Legault.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, 70% of manufactured parts are protected, not aluminum itself. Five expansion projects and a modernization of Quebec aluminum plants had been planned before the CUSMA was signed, but now they are in limbo.

Is the Prime Minister aware that by failing to give aluminum the same protections as steel, he is compromising the production of carbon-neutral Canadian aluminum and putting Canadian jobs in jeopardy? He is also encouraging the production of the dirtiest aluminum in the world and promoting jobs in China.

Does the Prime Minister fully understand the implications of the agreement he signed?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we do indeed understand the implications of this agreement, which is a good agreement for Quebec and for Canada.

The new NAFTA is excellent for jobs in Canada and Quebec and for providing economic certainty. Jean Simard, president of the Aluminium Association of Canada, even said that the new NAFTA is the right way to go.

* * *

[English]

JUSTICE

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals carelessly rushed through changes to Canada's criminal justice system in Bill C-75. Conservatives raised concerns over the impacts of the bill and how it would impact and harm victims of crime. Legal experts warned the Prime Minister that his poorly drafted legislation would result in guilty verdicts being nullified. Now in Ontario we see that is indeed the case.

What is the Prime Minister planning to do now that criminals are being set free and victims will have to go through painful retrials due to the government's incompetence?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to welcome back the hon. member for Beauséjour. I will go so far as to say that I missed his sense of humour.

We introduced a number of important changes in Bill C-75 to make our criminal justice system more efficient, more fair and more just. Among these were the ways in which juries were selected, to increase transparency and to address long-standing concerns of Canadians as regards this process.

We are aware of the Ontario Court of Appeal's ruling and we will continue to monitor the situation.

• (1445)

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not good enough.

The Liberal government's poorly drafted Bill C-75 means criminals are now facing retrial and victims of crime will have to relive the horrific situations yet again in court. This is a significant failure of the Liberal government to protect victims. We already know that the sloppy implementation of the bill will lead to retrials in Ontario.

When will the Prime Minister act before more criminals go free?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was the federal government's view that the Interpretation Act and the case law provide that amendments to the jury selection process should have been applied as of the date Bill C-75 came into force. Federal prosecutors adopted this approach, and we are happy that the Ontario Court of Appeal has agreed.

Given that there is litigation in issue, I have tasked my department and legislative drafters to ensure that temporal provisions are always considered as we move forward.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2004, the man who murdered Marylène

Oral Questions

Levesque was convicted of killing his partner with a hammer and knives.

Twelve years later, he was granted parole with some very questionable conditions. The government, as represented by the Parole Board of Canada, gave him permission to obtain sexual services, even though it knew full well that this murderer had a problem with women.

Could the minister tell the family why the board gave that permission to a man who was known to be violent?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I join the member opposite in expressing our deepest condolences to the Levesque family in this tragedy.

Public safety is and must be the main consideration in all parole decisions. The Parole Board of Canada makes these decisions independently, based on long-standing criteria established to promote safe and effective reintegration of offenders into society. In this case, the commissioner of Correctional Services and the chair of the Parole Board have agreed to jointly conduct a full investigation into all of the circumstances that led to this tragic case to ensure that all established protocols are followed and that lessons are learned.

* * *

[Translation]

ETHICS

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): In recent years, Volkswagen has been caught lying about its vehicles' polluting emissions.

We know this because the company pleaded guilty in the United States in 2017. Canada waited three years before laying charges. Three years. The Liberals did not report anything to the RCMP. The company was offered a backroom deal to avoid trial.

Does this complacency have to do with the fact that Volkswagen lobbyists were invited into the offices of the environment, transport, global affairs and innovation ministers, as well as that of the Prime Minister?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this investigation, the resulting legal action and the judge's approval of the penalty imposed on Volkswagen are independent of the minister's office.

As a result of the investigation, the company had to pay a record-setting fine in Canada. That fine is 26 times higher than any environmental fine ever imposed at the federal level, and the money will go toward environmental protection projects.

*Oral Questions**[English]***TAXATION**

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal tax changes give the most benefit to those who need it the least. Our plan caps the tax changes and saves enough to pay for dental care for Canadians making \$90,000 or less a year.

The Liberals delayed the vote on their scheme. Does that mean they will work with us to deliver dental care to millions of Canadians who need it, or will they just keep focusing on the wealthy and well connected?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to work to make sure that our tax system ensures that people pay the appropriate amount of taxes.

We have reduced taxes on middle-class Canadians. Our most recent approach is to make sure that not only middle-class Canadians but also those at the lowest end of the income scale have the opportunity to have reduced taxes. Through our tax changes, nine million Canadians will see reduced taxes. We believe this is important in helping them to be able to afford the things they want for themselves and their families.

* * *

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Jaime Battiste (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, being the first-ever Mi'kmaq member of Parliament and also a member of the Eskasoni First Nation, I want to acknowledge the significant role indigenous people have played in Canada's history. Our government is committed to working together to advocate for indigenous languages and for the well-being of indigenous peoples across Canada.

Could the Minister of Canadian Heritage update the House on what this government is doing to protect and promote indigenous languages?

• (1450)

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Sydney—Victoria for his excellent question.

[English]

This government is committed to reconciliation with indigenous peoples. That is why our government is investing to strengthen and revitalize indigenous languages.

[Translation]

Our government created the first Indigenous Languages Act in the history of Canada. That is one more step toward reconciliation.

* * *

*[English]***PUBLIC SAFETY**

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when British Columbians read about the scourge of money laundering, the stories of women being prostitut-

ed and billions being whitewashed through casinos and real estate, they expect a country dedicated to the rule of law to not sit idly by. However, that is exactly what the Liberal government has done. Last year it promised only \$10 million to help provinces prosecute money launderers, but that money has not been spent. How can the Liberals find \$12 million for Loblaws but cannot find any money to prosecute money launderers?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to hear the member opposite's new interest in dealing with money laundering, keeping in mind that the previous Conservative government closed all of the integrated proceeds of crime units.

In fact, we have budgeted \$172 million for the RCMP, FINTRAC and CRA to establish new enforcement teams. We have been working very closely with the provinces to rebuild the capacity that law enforcement needs to deal with this scourge.

* * *

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 40,000 veterans are trapped in a benefits backlog boondoggle of the current government's own making. Unable to access the medical benefits they have earned, many of these veterans have been waiting over two years for a decision. There was no backlog in 2015 and 2016.

I have a simple question. How many veterans are currently waiting longer than 16 weeks, which is the standard, for a decision on their benefits?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's concern, but I wish he would have had the same amount of concern when he and his government fired a thousand Veterans Affairs workers. That is what happened.

The fact is that the application process has practically doubled. About twice as many people have applied for veterans benefits. We have hired 700 people. I can assure my hon. colleague that this situation will be rectified by hiring people and taking care of veterans.

The Speaker: We really started off well and it was going well. I just want to remind everybody that I was really proud for the first three quarters. Let us not ruin the last quarter. I am talking to both sides. I am not pointing out one side or another. I just want to remind everyone that when someone is asking a question, we have to listen, and when someone is answering a question, we owe that person the same courtesy.

The hon. member for Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT CANADA

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if one asks any small business owner, they will say that dealing with government contracting is a disaster. Only a government lawyer could dream up these contracts.

In its 2019-20 departmental plan, Public Services and Procurement Canada promised to advance the contract simplification initiative and produce a highly simplified contract model. If PSPC is successful, it would make life easier for the hundreds of small and medium-sized businesses that contract with the government.

Will this contract model be ready in the new fiscal year?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time I am rising in the House, I would like to thank the residents of Oakville, Ontario, for electing me to be their member of Parliament.

We are looking at our regime relating to procurement and government contracting. I have taken over from my colleague and I am examining our processes in this area. We will move forward with a regime with integrity.

* * *

• (1455)

[Translation]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2015, the Liberals were elected because they promised to run small deficits in order to invest in infrastructure.

It is now 2020. The deficits are enormous. Promises to invest \$180 billion in infrastructure have not been kept. Those are not my words. The Parliamentary Budget Officer confirmed that overall growth in public infrastructure spending has not changed. The government announced that it would spend billions of taxpayer dollars on infrastructure, but that money has gone missing.

Can Canada's biggest-spending Prime Minister ever tell us how he lost track of those billions of dollars?

[English]

Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have committed to historic investments and infrastructure across the country. This includes building affordable housing, community centres, libraries, bridges, retrofitting municipal buildings and so much more, including a commitment to high-speed Internet across the country.

In fact, more than 4,800 projects are in progress or planned, which is more than four times what the previous government did. In budget 2019, we have \$2.2 billion in the gas tax fund. We are creating work for workers, and as a result, families and communities are doing better. We are building a Canada of the 21st century: green, resilient and modern.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

HEALTH

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that like all Canadians, everyone here is concerned about the coronavirus in China.

We all need to make sure this disease will not become a pandemic and spread in Quebec and Canada, so the minister can count on the Bloc Québécois' full support in that regard. All I want from her today is an update on her emergency plan and the main steps being taken to contain the coronavirus and halt its spread.

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Montcalm for his question.

[English]

I would like to let Canadians know that the risk is low to Canadians and that we are working collaboratively with all provinces and territories, including the Province of Quebec, to make sure that we are prepared, that our health systems are prepared and that everything is functioning as it should. We will continue to work with the international community, including the World Health Organization, and we will continue to adjust our processes as necessary. I have confidence in our public health system.

I thank the professionals who are working so hard to ensure that Canadians are protected.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Harry and Meghan, have decided to cut ties with the royal family and live freely. The lovebirds are leaving the monarchic nest and moving to Canada. Good for them. Frankly, it is none of our concern. The thing that concerns us is the matter of whether taxpayers will be footing the bill for the couple's security costs.

Can the minister assure us that Quebeckers will not be paying for the royal couple's security costs?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know this is an issue of discussion for many Canadians.

The Government of Canada is certainly aware of the recently confirmed plan of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex to step down from their duties and to relocate to Canada on a part-time basis. This is an unprecedented situation. Discussions are taking place between our security officials and the RCMP and security officials in the United Kingdom in relation to security obligations and how to most appropriately cover these security costs.

There have been no decisions made at this time. The ongoing security assessments and threat assessments are taking place.

*Oral Questions***NATURAL RESOURCES**

Mr. Ron Liepert (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, recently a UN committee called on our country to immediately shut down three major resource projects: the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, the Coastal GasLink pipeline and the Site C dam. These projects have gone through years of endless environmental reviews and they have the support of the first nations and the communities along the lines that look to directly benefit from these projects.

I ask the Prime Minister today if he is willing to stand in the House and let this unelected, unaccountable committee of the UN know that he rejects this recommendation and that he sends a clear message that it is full steam ahead for these projects?

• (1500)

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can give assurances to the House that it is of the utmost importance that every natural resource project under way in the country takes input, that it is done in the right and proper way and that it follows the processes that we have worked so hard on, with an understanding that the most important thing we can offer here as well to the investment community is certainty of process, a certainty that the process goes well.

We will continue in that vein to ensure that other projects are heeded and see construction in the same way that TMX has in these days.

* * *

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when we talk about inequality in Canada, we have to talk about reliable access to fast, affordable Internet.

Big telecom has a stranglehold on the market, with government regulation preventing any meaningful competition or protection for consumers. Every one of us in this place, regardless of stripes, should be working to move beyond this archaic current state. The Prime Minister is getting lobbied hard to overturn a ruling that would allow for more competition.

More needs to be done, but at a minimum, will the Prime Minister uphold this ruling?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to hear that every single member of the House is going to work together to ensure that Canadians, regardless of where they live, have access to high-speed Internet. It is certainly a commitment by our government, backed by significant funding. Over 400,000 households have been connected since we formed office.

I can assure my hon. colleague that we are going to work very hard to make sure that every Canadian is able to benefit from the social and economic opportunities that come with connectivity.

* * *

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Canada Revenue Agency re-

vealed in the “Serving Canadians Better” report that 83% of respondents had a service experience that did not meet their needs. Now public accounts show the Minister of National Revenue wrote off over \$4 billion.

While everyday Canadians continue to receive very poor service from her agency, could the minister confirm which corporations and billionaires are getting the minister's sweetheart deal?

[Translation]

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Canadian Federation of Independent Business for its work.

The CRA will take the federation's comments into account to improve services at the call centres. The CRA is also committed to working with the CFIB to better serve businesses across the country. We have taken measures to better serve Canadians. Improvement in connecting to an agent was highlighted in the CFIB's analysis. Thanks to our investments in procuring new technology and new tools to improve services, our government is convinced that Canadians will continue to see improvements that will help us meet their expectations.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Han Dong (Don Valley North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this weekend we saw Canada's first presumed cases of coronavirus. While this was not unexpected, many people in my community of Don Valley North are wondering what this means for them and their families. Toronto's border service officers, public health officials and hospital staff have been working very hard to protect our citizens.

Could the Minister of Health please update the House on the current situation and what steps are being taken to address the public health impact of this virus?

[Translation]

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. Protecting Canadians is our priority.

[English]

We have learned a lot from the SARS outbreak in 2003 and we are well prepared to deal with this in Canada. We are all working collaboratively at all levels of government and we are sure that our system is prepared.

We continue to work with the international community and the World Health Organization to ensure our measures and responses are effective.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the crisis created by coronavirus underlines the importance of effective co-operation among all peoples and governments on health matters.

Will the Government of Canada finally join us in supporting full membership in the World Health Organization for Taiwan?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we take the safety and security of all Canadians abroad very seriously.

Canadian officials in Ottawa and in China are working closely together with their Chinese counterparts to address this situation that we are currently facing. I spoke with the Canadian ambassador to China today. Our mission in Beijing is working to help Canadians in China.

We will continue to offer consular services to all Canadians who may be affected in China.

* * *

• (1505)

ETHICS

Mr. Michael Barrett (Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Liberal government's performance in the previous Parliament, marred by ethical breaches and cover-ups, the Prime Minister has mandated that his ministers hold themselves to the highest ethical standards. However, now we know that they are in the process of awarding a sole-source contract to former Liberal MP Allan Rock.

Could the Minister of Foreign Affairs tell the House if he believes that this blatant example of Liberal cronyism meets the highest ethical standard?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we are always going to uphold the highest standard of ethical behaviour. We are committed to a transparent government. We are going to welcome any voices who can contribute to our foreign policy.

If the member has any recommendations or any policies he would like us to consider, we will gladly listen to his as well.

[Translation]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government is awarding a former Liberal minister a lucrative contract for consulting services with no call for public tenders. The Liberal culture of giving gifts to their cronies is far from over, even though it is 2020.

Canadians are tired of seeing this trading of favours, especially when it involves the public purse.

Why does the Prime Minister continue to waste our money for the benefit of his Liberal cronies?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, on this side of the House, we will always uphold the highest standards of ethical behaviour. We are happy to be able to count on many Canadians who want to help develop—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order.

Oral Questions

[English]

I am trying to hear the answer. However, when members near the Speaker shout, I really have a hard time hearing the answer. Therefore, I just want them to temper their voices. They can whisper stuff, but I want to remind them that when they shout, the Speaker cannot hear the answer. That makes it really difficult for the Speaker to keep a handle on things.

The hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

[Translation]

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, we are willing to listen to Canadians when it comes to our foreign policy. If the member opposite has any ideas he would like to share, we will gladly listen to his as well.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Centre for Greening Government was established in 2016 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the whole of government by 40% by 2030.

Could the President of the Treasury Board update the House on the progress made by the Centre for Greening Government in reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by congratulating the member for Orléans on her election and her hard work.

Setting an example is the Government of Canada's duty, which it has done by establishing an ambitious greenhouse gas reduction target of 40% below 2005 levels by 2030.

Producing results is what the Government of Canada has demonstrated today, since it has already reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 33% in 2020.

Providing hope is showing that we can grow the economy while protecting the environment.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals promised that they would stop the former Conservative government's practice of outsourcing public sector jobs and wasting money on private corporate contracts. However, a new report from the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada shows that contracting out has doubled over the past decade.

This is \$12 billion to private corporations for work that the public service can and should be doing.

How does the minister explain handing over \$12 billion to the Liberals' corporate friends?

Routine Proceedings

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, growing the economy by growing the middle class is exactly what this government's agenda is doing. For this, we have the privilege of having a public service of incredible quality. In some circumstances, to improve the quality of services, we need external support. That is exactly what this government has the responsibility to do from time to time.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

We are in, unquestionably, a situation of climate emergency globally. Canada participated at COP25 in Madrid, and we all know that this year every country within the Paris Agreement has to improve our target. We know we are not yet on a track to hit the weak Harper target that we still have.

Could the Prime Minister assure the House that his cabinet will not accept new greenhouse gases in the millions and millions of tonnes through the giant Teck Frontier mine, which must be turned down?

• (1510)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected us to protect the environment, grow the economy, advance reconciliation and create good jobs. They also expect their government to oversee a fair and thorough environmental assessment process.

The Teck Frontier project is a major project that is under active consideration by our government. Under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, the decision on this project must be made by February 2020. We will consider a whole range of factors, including environmental impacts, very much including greenhouse gases. We will consider advancing reconciliation and growing the economy in making our determination.

* * *

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of His Excellency Juan Gerardo Guaidó Márquez, Interim President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

* * *

[Translation]

UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT PS752

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I hope you will find unanimous consent of the House to adopt the following motion:

That this House:

- (a) stand alongside the families and relatives of the victims who lost their lives during the tragedy of flight PS752 on January 8, 2020;
- (b) request that a full and transparent international investigation be carried out so that families obtain the answers to their questions and justice;

(c) demand cooperation from Iran which must remain fully transparent about the investigation;

(d) demand that Iran offer fair compensation to the families of the victims;

(e) demand that Iran fully respect the will of families of victims;

(f) demand that Iran hold those responsible for this tragedy to account by conducting an independent criminal investigation followed by transparent and impartial judicial proceedings which meet international standards; and

(g) request that Canada continue to support the families of the victims, hold Iran accountable for its actions and work with the international community to that end.

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

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?

Hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER

The Speaker: Pursuant to section 79.2(2) of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present to the House a report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer entitled “Economic and Fiscal Update 2019: Issues for Parliamentarians”.

• (1515)

[Translation]

Pursuant to subsection 79.2(2) of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present to the House a report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer entitled “Evaluation of Election Proposal Costing 2019”.

[English]

Pursuant to section 79.22 of the Parliament of Canada Act, it is my duty to present to the House a report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer entitled “Cost Estimate of Increasing the Basic Personal Amount Tax Credit”.

* * *

[Translation]

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the annual reports to Parliament on the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages for the year 2018-19.

[English]

These reports are deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

*Routine Proceedings***GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's responses to five petitions, and these returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

* * *

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.

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

* * *

UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT 752

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to 176 people who were taken from this world too soon, to remember who they were and to stand in solidarity with the people they loved.

On January 8, 167 passengers and nine crew members took their seats aboard Ukrainian International Airlines Flight 752 and waited for takeoff. For 138 of them, Canada would be their final destination. Among these passengers there were newlyweds, a mother and her teenage daughter, a father on his way home to his young son, families of three, families of four, a grade 12 student who wanted to become a doctor, a talented dentist focused on starting a practice here in Canada and an ambitious 10-year-old boy who was confident that one day he would sit in the very seat from which I rise, confident that one day his voice would be heard in this House.

[*Translation*]

It is tragic that this boy will never get a chance to sit in the House, but his story, and the stories of all the victims of Flight 752, will resonate not only in this House but across our great nation. They are stories of hope, ambition and courage. They are unique, inspiring stories of resilience, determination and joy, because these 176 people are much more than mere victims.

[*English*]

Over the past weeks I have sat down with many grieving families. They told me about their loved ones, about who they were, about what they liked to do and about their plans for the future. They lived lives far too rich to be defined by this tragedy. Before any of this happened, they were not just shaping their own lives: They were building our country, building a future we all share that is now diminished by their loss.

We cannot change the terrible events that took them away from us, but we can choose how we remember them. Today we choose to remember their strength, their kindness, their passion for life. In a way, we all knew these passengers: the friend one could always count on, the child one watched grow up, the inspiring teacher, the superhero mom or dad.

These people, they shape our lives. They make us who we are, and losing them like this, so unexpectedly, is devastating. This is in part why so many Canadians across the country came together in support of the families and loved ones of the victims because, while we can only imagine the magnitude of their loss, we refuse to see them go through this tragedy alone.

● (1520)

[*Translation*]

In the darkest hours, Canadians came together to support the families and loved ones of these people who left us too soon. Canadians across the country attended memorial ceremonies. They lit candles, placed flowers and offered their condolences. Some even started community organizations like Canada Strong to help the grieving families. Faced with tragedy, faced with injustice, neighbours, friends, acquaintances and strangers responded with compassion, support and generosity. These are the values and spirit that led many of the passengers to choose not just Canada, but Canadians.

[*English*]

I wish I were not delivering this speech today. I wish all 176 people aboard Flight 752 were still with us. This tragedy should never have occurred, and these families deserve to know how and why it did. That is why our government is working closely with our international partners to ensure that a thorough, credible investigation is conducted. We will not rest until we get accountability and justice for the victims' families.

We have been in close contact with the families to ensure they have all the support they need, from facilitating travel and fast-tracking visas to providing legal and financial assistance. We are also matching up to \$1.5 million in donations to the Canada Strong fund for those affected by this tragedy.

I want to end this tribute by addressing the families and loved ones of the victims on behalf of all Canadians.

[*Prime Minister spoke in Farsi*]

[*English*]

Know that we stand with you. We will not let you weather this storm alone and we will never forget the people you loved.

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, like the Prime Minister, I too wish this was a speech that none of us had to deliver today.

On January 8, 176 passengers and 57 Canadians boarded Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 in Tehran. They were flying to Kyiv, where 138 of them were set to transfer and fly to Canada. They never made it to Kyiv. Mere minutes after takeoff, the plane was gunned down by the Iranian regime with two surface-to-air missiles 30 seconds apart.

*Routine Proceedings**[Translation]*

Those 176 innocent passengers and 57 Canadians lost their lives. They were mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, friends, students, colleagues. Their lives were cut short far too soon by an act of cruelty.

[English]

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, it was heartwarming here at home to watch our country come together during this trying time. Countless Canadians braved the winter cold to attend vigils across the country and pay their respects. On display was a range of emotions: anger, sadness, fear and despair. We stood together and were there for each other. That is who we are as Canadians.

However, the work of Canadians cannot end and we cannot forget what happened on January 8. Here in the House of Commons and across this great country, we must continue to fight for justice for the families and the loved ones of those who lost their lives. We must continue to demand accountability from those responsible within the Iranian regime.

[Translation]

It was the Iranian regime, and the Iranian regime alone, that was responsible for this horrific crime.

[English]

We in the Conservative caucus have called on the government to take a few reasonable and measured actions in response to this atrocity.

First, the government must explain why it has not yet adopted a parliamentary motion to list the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or the IRGC, as a terrorist organization. The IRGC's fingerprints have been all over some of the worst terrorist attacks in the Middle East over the past few decades.

Second, the government should be prepared to impose Magnitsky sanctions on Iran if it does not fully and immediately cooperate with international investigations. There have already been several worrying signals that the Iranian regime may not fully be cooperating.

Finally, the government must deliver compensation from the Iranian regime to the families of victims and do its best to repatriate all Canadian remains.

I would be remiss if I did not briefly address the outpouring of support Canadians have received from the Iranian people. Immediately following media reports of the plane being shot down, the people of Iran flooded the streets to fight for accountability, justice, democracy, freedom and human rights.

• (1525)

[Translation]

The regime in Tehran is murderous and corrupt, so participating in those demonstrations put those people's lives at risk, but the protesters stood with us.

[English]

We as Canadians must stand with them as they fight for real and lasting change and the same freedoms and rights we as Canadians hold dear.

[Translation]

One hundred and seventy-six people and 57 Canadians lost their lives. They left this world far too soon. Their friends and families woke up to the realization that they would never see their loved ones again. All of us, myself included, look forward to working with our colleagues as we continue to fight for the justice and closure these 57 families deserve.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, its elected officials, members and friends, as well as all those we represent, I want to extend my sincere condolences to the families and friends of the victims from Quebec, Canada, Iran and elsewhere in the world. This terrible tragedy cast a permanent shadow over the end of 2019.

We must not just point the finger at who is to blame; rather, we also need to take stock and to understand that this tragedy is the result of military tensions and that it could have been prevented through lasting peace. I cannot and do not want to overlook that fact. However, Quebeckers, Canadians and people from every nation affected are entitled to the whole, unvarnished, hard truth, with all the possibilities that today's technology has to offer.

Accordingly, we will, of course, support the efforts of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It is only fitting that the families of victims be offered some compensation to help mitigate the serious daily and lasting impact of this tragedy. However, let us not delude ourselves. These mothers, brothers, daughters and spouses are not coming back, and no amount of money will change that.

There is diplomacy. Diplomatic relations with any country are no more than common courtesy between friendly countries. They are the preferred channel of communication between states that recognize the other's relative weight for the purposes of prevention and redress. The notion of justice is also crucial, and we will also support any measures that will make it possible to obtain the all-too-insufficient relief that will come with the application of credible, neutral and, if necessary, tough institutional justice. However, we are of the opinion that there are only two solutions, if any, to this tragedy, though they may be imperfect and late in coming; I am talking about compassion and, above all, lasting peace.

• (1530)

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to rise and speak to honour the victims of the flight 752 tragedy.

This has been an unspeakable tragedy for the Iranian Canadian community and a disaster for Canada. It is the kind of tragedy and disaster that will be forever etched in our minds and in the history of this country.

[*English*]

The horrible irony of loss is that it reminds us of the value of life. We were all captured by the stories told by the survivors, by the loved ones and families of those who have been lost.

We all remember when Ryan Pourjam spoke about his dad, Mansour Pourjam. In eloquent tone and eloquent words, this young boy talked about a father who was so optimistic, giving and kind and he was lost and gone forever.

In Richmond, I attended an event where a father spoke about the indescribable rage and sadness at losing both his daughter and his granddaughter. In Coquitlam, I spoke to members of the community who spoke about their family members, their cousins and their friends who were lost. In this tragedy, it was a loss to the Iranian community and it was a horrible loss to Canada as well.

We look at the people who were lost in this flight, the students, Ph.D. students, health care workers, educators, entrepreneurs, future doctors and folks who work in real estate and finance sectors. These were people who did not only have great potential for their own lives, but had tremendous potential to give back to all of us, to enrich our country and it was a loss to all of us.

I remember a story recounted by a member of the Iranian community when we attended an event in Richmond. The story was told from the perspective of U.S. visitors who were in an airport in transit in Canada when the news broke. As the news broke on TV, the U.S. travellers noted that everyone was silent. It was a pin-drop silence in hearing the news and it could be seen visibly that people were shaken and broken, with tears streaming down their faces. He asked people there if they knew any of the people, as he was concerned that maybe they were relatives. No one in the room knew anyone on the flight personally, but they said they were one of us, Canadians. The traveller was struck by the fact that Canadians stood together.

As other speakers have mentioned, Canadians did come together in a powerful way. That is who we are. We come together in times of need. I was struck by the power, grace and beauty of so many Canadians acknowledging this as a loss to Canada.

My parents taught me a traditional teaching, that the weight of sadness cannot be borne alone. It is too much. The loss and the pain is too much for one person to bear and that is why we attend events of sadness to share in that pain, to share that burden together. As Canadians, that is what we have done and will continue to do for our brothers and sisters who have lost loved ones.

The community has called for continual steps to achieve justice. The pursuit of justice in this matter is important, and New Democrats are committed to seeking that justice.

I want to acknowledge the Prime Minister, who reached out after these horrible events. We had a good conversation. I want to acknowledge that gesture and the steps to support loved ones of those who have been lost.

In the memory of those who have lost, I call on all of us to acknowledge their loss by working for peace. The loss that we witnessed is an example of the horrible cost of war, the horrible cost of escalation of tension and violence. Violence begets more violence.

Routine Proceedings

It is incredibly important for all of us to commit to peace and stability in the region, in the memory of those who have been lost.

● (1535)

[*Translation*]

I want the victims' loved ones to know that at this difficult time, they can count on all of us, the NDP and all parliamentarians, to do everything we can to support them.

In the weeks and months to come, we must also do everything in our power to ensure that this kind of senseless tragedy never happens again.

[*English*]

To the Iranian community, I want to end by saying on behalf of all New Democrats, you have our condolences. We stand with you. We want to shoulder the burden with you.

[*Member spoke in Farsi and provided the following translation:*]

Friend, I give you my condolences.

[*English*]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, this is a grief that particularly falls on the Iranian Canadian community, but it is a shared grief. We grieve as one country. As the other party leaders in this place have already said, this cut right to our hearts.

I do not think there is a single member of the Iranian Canadian community who has not been touched by this. However, as other members have said, the ways in which the Iranian Canadian community has so integrated and made a difference means that in tearing into the web of life as those ground-to-air missiles did, they have torn a large hole that will extend well beyond the individuals whose lives were so tragically taken.

Everybody has a connection to a connection. It hit me hard when a friend of mine who is a professor at the University of Guelph, Dr. Faisal Moola, spoke of his brilliant graduate student. He spoke of her as a force of nature. Ghanimat Azhdari was doing her own research on the nomadic indigenous peoples of Iran. Who knows where that work would have taken her? Who knows what a difference that would have made in the lives of indigenous people in Iran, as we look at the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

In case after case and story after story, some which have been very eloquently shared here, it is made very clear that we all mourn every single life lost, all innocents, all 167 passengers and nine crew members whose lives were so tragically taken.

I want to add a few words of thanks to the cabinet of this country, to the minister of defence and the minister of international affairs, for making full briefings available very early to members of Parliament in opposition parties.

Routine Proceedings

Like the hon. member for Burnaby South, I want to thank the Prime Minister for a personal phone call to emphasize that we must not, as I am afraid some members have tried to do already, make this political. We have to approach this in a non-partisan way and make sure our focus is on justice for the families who were affected, but more than that, to stand in solidarity and show our deepest sense of condolence, sympathy and love, and to extend to them all the supports we possibly can.

I also want to thank the Prime Minister for avoiding letting this issue become simplistic. I think the Prime Minister was right in saying that if there had not been an assassination by drone, these people would have made their own way home safely. The situation was created by more than one event, by more than one country. On another occasion, we need to find out exactly what took place and if the initial event that led to the rising of tensions was in any way legal under international law. However, this is not that time.

• (1540)

[*Translation*]

This is a time to tell all the families and loved ones affected by this tragedy that we stand with them.

[*English*]

We are with those families and will not allow them to stand alone as the time of grieving continues. As we say in Farsi, deepest condolences.

[*Member spoke in Farsi*]

[*English*]

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statements, Government Orders will be extended by 24 minutes.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order or usual practice of the House:

(a) the members to serve on the Standing Committee on Health be appointed by the whip of each recognized party depositing with the Clerk of the House a list of his or her party's members of the committee no later than the ordinary hour of daily adjournment today;

(b) the Clerk of the House shall convene a meeting of the said committee no later than Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 3:30 p.m.;

(c) following the election of the Chair and the Vice Chairs, the committee shall proceed to a briefing from officials on the Canadian response to the outbreak of the coronavirus.

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

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

Hon. Mark Holland (Ajax, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and I believe and hope that if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House: (a) the members to serve on both the Standing Committee on International Trade and the Standing Committee on Finance be appointed by the whip of each recognized party depositing with the Clerk of the House a list of his or her party's members of the said committees no later than the ordinary hour of adjournment today; (b) the Clerk of the House shall convene a meeting of both said committees no later than Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 3:30 p.m.

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

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be presenting a petition signed by many members of Canada's vibrant Muslim community, highlighting an important issue of civil rights and religious freedom in Canada.

[*Translation*]

I wish to present a petition regarding Quebec's Bill 21. The petition acknowledges that the bill opposes Canadians' basic human rights and calls on the House of Commons to condemn this piece of legislation.

[*English*]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling a petition that calls on the government to collaborate with the provinces on the immediate development and implementation of a comprehensive national strategy to reduce waste in Canada, including the development of mandatory extended producer responsibility programs and deposit return programs, which will both reduce environmental impacts and save Canadians money.

PACIFIC HERRING FISHERY

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise today to table a petition on behalf of residents of coastal British Columbia.

The petitioners draw attention to the fact that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans announced that the Pacific herring population dropped by nearly a third from 2016 to 2019, and it looks as though it will drop by more than 50% by 2020. The unexpected drop in the herring population has led to overfishing of the existing stock. Pacific herring is the basis of the food web that supports wild Pacific salmon, killer and humpback whales, cod, halibut, sea birds and other interdependent species on the Pacific coast.

Routine Proceedings

The petitioners want recognition of first nations' constitutional protective rights to herring, which are an important food source and an integral part of first nations culture.

The petitioners are calling on the Government of Canada to suspend the 2020 Salish Sea herring fishery until a whole-of-ecosystem plan is developed, to fairly compensate local fishers for the economic losses they might incur and to ensure that decisions are made with the full participation of first nations and local communities.

• (1545)

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise to present this petition.

The petitioners are calling on Canada to return to the United Nations convention on drought and desertification. We had withdrawn from the convention in 2012 under the former Conservative government and were the only party to do so.

In the time it takes to present petitions, I am happy to inform the House that the government has rejoined the convention on drought and desertification, and I am happy to so inform the petitioners.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 2, 5, 14, 18 to 20, 24, 31, 32, 35, 40, 46, 58, 61, 63, 65 to 67, 70, 77, 80, 87 to 91, 103, 106, 107, 114, 119, 120, 125, 127 to 129, 130, 132, 133, 135, 138 to 140, 143, 146, 149 to 151, 157 to 160, 163, 173, 175, 178, 179, 183, 194, 200, 204, 206, 208, 212, 216, 225, 231 and 238.

[Text]

Question No. 2—**Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to the practice known as "March Madness" where expenditures are made in order to avoid having unspent funds at the end of each fiscal year: what are the specific policies, programs or incentives that are currently in place, if any, in order to discourage March Madness spending, broken down by (i) department, (ii) agency, (iii) Crown corporation, and (iv) other government entity?

Mr. Greg Fergus (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board and to the Minister of Digital Government, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Treasury Board's financial policy instruments apply to departments as defined in section 2 of the Financial Administration Act, or FAA. Organizations in the Government of Canada, for example Crown corporations, that are not defined in section 2 of the FAA are encouraged to adopt these policy instruments to the extent possible.

Under Treasury Board's policy on financial management, the deputy head, as accounting officer for the department, is responsible for ensuring that departments have effective systems of internal control to mitigate risks in the following broad categories: public resources are used prudently and in an economical manner; financial management processes are effective and efficient; and relevant

legislation, regulations and financial management policy instruments are being complied with.

Deputy heads are also responsible for effective multi-year expenditure plans, or multi-year financial planning, to ensure funds are spent on departmental priorities. Departments must maintain effective due diligence and ongoing monitoring of spending to ensure alignment to their mandates.

Additionally, most departments are able to carry forward a portion of unspent funds from one year to the next. This flexibility acts as a disincentive for the "March madness" spending.

Question No. 5—**Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to the SNC-Lavalin affair: (a) how many individuals has the Privy Council Office determined are to be bound by cabinet confidence and are thus unable to speak with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP); and (b) will the Prime Minister allow the RCMP to conduct a full investigation and waive cabinet confidence for all individuals the RCMP wishes to interview, and, if not, why not?

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Public Service Renewal) and to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, anyone having access to confidences of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, i.e., cabinet confidences, is required to maintain the confidentiality of that information. This includes ministers of the Crown, ministerial exempt staff and departmental officials. Before taking office as a member of the Queen's Privy Council, every minister swears to keep matters discussed in council, including cabinet, secret. Public servants and ministerial staff are required, as a condition of employment, to keep confidential any information that comes to their knowledge in the performance of their duties pursuant to the terms and conditions of employment.

The government fully co-operated with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

In the course of an investigation, the RCMP is independent of the control of the government. Whether the RCMP conducts an investigation is a decision of the RCMP alone. Therefore, only the RCMP would be aware if any minister of the Crown, ministerial exempt staff or departmental official invoked their confidentiality obligations in this matter.

The RCMP was given the same access to cabinet confidences and privileged information as was provided to the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner and the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, pursuant to Order in Council P.C. 2019-0105. The decision to provide access to the RCMP was made by the Clerk of the Privy Council as custodian of cabinet confidences.

Any questions concerning activities of the RCMP should be forwarded to them directly.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 14—Mr. Luc Berthold:**

With regard to projects funded under the Canada 150 Signature Project Program: (a) what are the details of each project, including (i) project name, (ii) description, (iii) location, (iv) original project cost, (v) final project cost, (vi) original funding commitment, (vii) final funding amount provided to the project, (viii) project completion date; and (b) for each project that went over budget or required additional government funding, what was the reason for the cost overrun?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, information on grants and contributions awarded by the Department of Canadian Heritage, including pan-Canadian signature projects of Canada 150, is available on the Government of Canada proactive disclosure website: https://search.open.canada.ca/en/gc/?sort=score_desc&page=1&search_text=&gc-search-orgs=Canadian%20Heritage.

Of note, the location of a beneficiary is not representative of the scope of a project. For instance, signature activities were of a national scale and, therefore, were delivered in many communities across Canada.

Question No. 18—Mr. James Bezan:

With regard to the late delivery of the Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship (AOPS) by Irving Shipbuilding, which was originally scheduled for 2018 and is now scheduled for 2020: (a) what is the new anticipated delivery date; (b) why was the delivery date delayed; and (c) will the government receive a discount or will Irving Shipbuilding be required to pay a late delivery fee as a result of the delay and, if so, how much?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a) of the question, the new anticipated delivery date for the first Arctic and offshore patrol ship by Irving Shipbuilding is early 2020.

With regard to part (b), shipbuilding is complex, especially for a first-of-class vessel, and schedules can be challenging to predict. In the case of the first Arctic and offshore patrol ship, the originally anticipated delivery date of summer 2018 has been adjusted to early 2020. The adjustments to the schedule result from challenges associated with new production processes within a new facility on a first-of-class vessel. Irving Shipbuilding has learned lessons from the build of the first ship that are being applied to the construction of the subsequent ships. Resulting efficiencies will help the planning and achievement of anticipated dates for the delivery of the other ships in the class and the program as a whole.

With regard to part (c), although there are no late delivery fees or discounts, the shipyard is financially incentivized to deliver on schedule and on budget. The level of profit varies depending on the final cost of each ship, which is a factor of time and level of effort. Further, the contract calls for the supplier to report regularly to Canada on schedule and cost performance, for individual ships as well as for the program as a whole, which is designed to provide the government with the information required to manage the program and to update planned delivery dates as is reasonable and appropriate.

Question No. 19—Mr. James Bezan:

With regard to the diplomatic letter received by the government from United States officials that criticizes the level of defence spending: (a) what are the details of the letter including, (i) date on which it was received, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) summary; and (b) how many similar letters critical of the level of defence spending have been received by the government since November 4, 2015, and what

are the details of all such letters, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) summary?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's defence policy, Strong, Secure, Engaged, positions Canada to remain strong at home, secure in North America and engaged in the world. Through this policy, Canada is making significant investments to the Canadian Armed Forces.

The United States remains Canada's most important ally and defence partner. The Canada-U.S. bilateral defence partnership covers the full range of defence activities, from joint training exercises to personnel exchanges, strategic policy discussions and operational co-operation both at home and abroad. Canada is committed to remaining secure in North America, through our partnership with the U.S., including through the North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD. Canada and the U.S. are both founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO, and Canada remains committed to working with the U.S. and NATO allies and partners to contribute to a more stable, peaceful world.

With regard to parts (a) and (b), in processing parliamentary returns, the Government of Canada applies the principles of the Access to Information Act and certain information is withheld on the grounds that disclosing such information would be injurious to national security, defence and/or international affairs.

Question No. 20—Mr. James Bezan:

With regard to the new search and rescue planes, which were supposed to be delivered by Airbus on December 1, 2019: (a) why was the delivery date delayed; and (b) what is the new delivery date?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is making investments to ensure that our search and rescue crews have the necessary aircraft to support life-saving services to Canadians in need. As such, we are procuring 16 new planes that are capable of providing improved search and rescue capabilities over long ranges, in difficult weather conditions and at night.

Canada accepted the first aircraft in Spain on December 18, 2019. As outlined in the defence capabilities blueprint, National Defence anticipates receiving all aircraft by 2022-23. For more information, please visit: <http://dgpapp.forces.gc.ca/en/defence-capabilities-blueprint/project-details.asp?id=1721>

With regard to part (a), the acceptance of the first aircraft was delayed to ensure final inspections of the aircraft could be completed and to assess the readiness of the aircraft operating manuals.

With regard to part (b), as noted above, Canada accepted the first aircraft on December 18, 2019.

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 24—Mr. John Barlow:**

With regard to page 25 of the Liberal Party of Canada election platform which stated that “we will merge existing financial and advisory services currently scattered between several agencies into Farm Credit Canada”: (a) which specific entities and services will be merged into Farm Credit Canada (FCC); (b) how many jobs at each of the entities in (a) will be (i) eliminated, (ii) transferred to FCC; (c) what is the breakdown of jobs in (b) by location; and (d) what is the projected timeline for this merger?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government is currently analyzing the platform commitment referenced by the member of Parliament for Foothills in Question No. 24 on December 5, 2019, with respect to Farm Credit Canada. An approach to implement this commitment is being developed in alignment with the mandate letter for the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, which tasks the minister to support farmers as they succeed and grow, and to lead the consolidation of existing federal financial and advisory services currently scattered among several agencies. The new entity, farm and food development Canada, will serve as a single point of service, delivering products from across government, with an expanded and enhanced mandate and additional capital lending capability.

Therefore, at this time, the following information is available with respect to the specific questions.

With respect to part (a), the scope of specific entities and services to be merged is still under analysis.

With regard to part (b), potential impacts on jobs cannot be defined at this time.

Regarding part (c), given that the potential on jobs cannot be defined at this time, a regional breakdown cannot be provided.

Finally, with respect to part (d), the projected timeline for the implementation of this commitment will depend on the results of the analysis and the implementation approach taken.

Question No. 31—Mr. Corey Tochor:

With regard to grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by Natural Resources Canada since January 1, 2018, what are the details of each including (i) date of funding, (ii) recipient, (iii) location, (iv) project description?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, grants and contributions, including those under \$25,000, provided by Natural Resources Canada since January 1, 2018, are proactively disclosed and can be found at https://search.open.canada.ca/en/gc/?sort=score-desc&page=1&search_text=&gc-search-orgs=Natural%20Resources%20Canada.

Question No. 32—Mr. Warren Steinley:

With regard to Bill C-69 of the First Session of the 42nd Parliament: what specific measures passed in Bill C-69, if any, will the government remove in order to improve the economy in western Canada?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a strong economy depends on a healthy environment. The Impact Assessment Act protects the environment and respects indigenous rights, while strengthening the economy and encouraging investment.

The Impact Assessment Act sets out a federal process for impact assessment of major projects that considers both positive and nega-

tive environmental, economic, social and health impacts of potential projects.

To support Canada's competitiveness and attract investment, the impact assessment system provides clear expectations and shorter legislated timelines, and aims to avoid duplication with other jurisdictions wherever possible, with the goal of one project, one review.

While our intention is not to reopen the legislation for amendments, we are open to constructive suggestions and discussions moving forward as we look to implement the law.

Question No. 35—Mr. Warren Steinley:

With regard to the fleet of Challenger aircraft: (a) does the government have plans to purchase new aircraft to replace the fleet; (b) which aircraft is the government considering as a replacement; and (c) what is the projected cost of replacements?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is providing the Royal Canadian Air Force the equipment it needs to succeed on operations, at home and abroad.

The Challenger fleet fulfills critical roles for the Department of National Defence, the Canadian Armed Forces and the Government of Canada, including rapidly deployable medical and military transport to theatres of operation and secure and reliable transport for Canadian representatives, including the Governor General and the Prime Minister. For example, the disaster assistance response team utilized a Challenger as part of Canada's initial response to the 2013 typhoon in the Philippines.

With respect to part (a), as outlined in the defence capabilities blueprint, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces will assess options for the continued provision of administrative and utility flight services.

With respect to part (b), following the development of operational requirements for the fleet, the Canadian Armed Forces will better understand which specific aircraft meets the parameters.

With regard to part (c), as the costs will depend on the option selected, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces are unable provide detailed projected costs at this time.

Question No. 40—Mr. Kerry Diotte:

With regard to training flights for the government's fleet of Challenger aircraft, since January 1, 2016: (a) what are all instances where the Prime Minister, ministers, or other government officials have had their “guests” fly on a training flight; and (b) for each instance in (a), what are the details of the leg of each such flight, including (i) names of guests on manifest, (ii) names of guests on each flight, if different than (i), (iii) date of flight, (iv) origin, (v) destination?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Royal Canadian Air Force provides flight services for official travel by the Governor General, the Prime Minister, ministers or other government officials, and their guests.

Routine Proceedings

Since January 1, 2016, the Royal Canadian Air Force has not conducted any Challenger training flights with guests of the Prime Minister, ministers or government officials aboard.

Question No. 46—Mr. Phil McColeman:

With regard to government statistics on veterans' homelessness: what is the current number, or estimated number, of homeless veterans, and what is the breakdown by (i) municipality, and (ii) province?

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as per the ESDC national shelter study, 2005 to 2016, 1.8% of shelter users, an estimated 2,400 people, reported having served in the military in 2016. This is a decrease from nearly 3,000 people, or 2.2%, in 2014.

Veterans who have used emergency shelters were more likely to be male, at 84.4%. Male shelter users tended to be older, 48 years old on average, than female shelter users, who were 38 years old on average. Nearly half, or 42.7%, of females having served in the military were under age 30, compared with 13.8% of males.

The national shelter study provides a national estimate of veteran emergency shelter use. However, reliable provincial community estimates of veteran shelter use are not available, as some provinces are under-represented in the data, and there are communities for which we do not receive data for the entirety of the shelter system.

Question No. 58—Mr. Chris d'Entremont:

With regard to the government's response to the need for a new sewage treatment plant in Inverness, Nova Scotia: (a) how much money has the government committed for a new sewage treatment plant; and (b) when will construction on the new plant (i) begin, (ii) be completed?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the government's response to the need for a new sewage treatment plant in Inverness, Nova Scotia, the federal government has not received an application for a new sewage treatment plant. Under the investing in Canada infrastructure program, projects must first be prioritized by the province before they are submitted to Infrastructure Canada for consideration.

Question No. 61—Mr. Blaine Calkins:

With regard to Destination Canada, excluding general tourism promotion: what measures, if any, is the agency taking to specifically promote Canada as a hunting, angling, and outfitting destination?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Economic Development and Minister of Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Destination Canada is not currently engaged in any marketing efforts related to hunting and outfitting. For angling, three provincial marketing organizations are currently developing a potential strategy. Upon completion of the strategy, Destination Canada will determine if it will support the provincial marketing efforts.

Question No. 63—Mr. Kerry Diotte:

With regard to the Phoenix pay system: (a) how many individuals currently owe the government money as a result of an overpayment; (b) how many individuals are currently owed money by the government as a result of being underpaid; (c) what are the median amounts for the individuals in (a) and (b); and (d) what are the highest amounts for the individuals in (a) and (b)?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), as of December 5, 2019, it is estimated that 98,249

individuals potentially owe the government money as a result of an overpayment.

As the Phoenix pay system cannot segregate true overpayments from administrative overpayments, it is not possible to accurately provide specific figures for true overpayment, which represent money owed to the government.

True overpayments are created in situations where employees receive pay to which they were not entitled. For example, this occurs when employees' termination or leave without pay, e.g. parental leave, is entered after the pay period of their departure date, resulting in extra paycheques.

Administrative overpayments are a result of the system's design. They have no impact on employees, given that refunds are automatically generated and netted out in the next pay period. Administrative overpayments are created to ensure employees receive the pay to which they are entitled.

For example, an acting situation is when an employee is temporarily moved from a regular position into a position at a higher classification, and therefore a higher salary rate. When the acting is entered late in Phoenix, the system pays the higher salary rate from the start of the acting period and reverses the payments that were made at the regular salary rate. The system records the inflow and outflow as an administrative overpayment. A new payment is then automatically generated, at the correct acting salary rate.

In recognition of extraordinary challenges due to the backlog, recovery of most overpayment balances will not begin until all of the employee's outstanding pay transactions have been processed, the employee has received three consecutive accurate pays, and the employee has indicated the preferred repayment option.

In response to (b), unpaid amounts owed to employees can be related to several factors. For example, they can result from regular pay transactions such as overtime and acting pay that are not yet processed or due to errors. It is not possible to report on these figures accurately until all pay-related transactions in the backlog are processed by compensation advisers. While accurate figures are impossible to obtain regarding total underpayments, estimates can be made by departments based on methods such as amounts self-reported by employees, or amounts paid to employees through priority payments due to missing pay.

Employees who have been underpaid can request emergency salary advances or priority payments from their departments.

In response to (c), the median value of total overpayment balances is \$1,383.

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The government is not in a position to provide the answer regarding underpayments as the system cannot automatically calculate such transactions.

In response to (d), to protect the privacy of the affected government employee, the highest overpayment value will not be reported.

It is important to note that when PSPC reports a balance of overpayments, the figure includes true overpayments as well as administrative overpayments. True overpayments represent employees receiving pay that they are not entitled to, whereas administrative overpayments are part of the system's design and have no impact on employees. As the Phoenix pay system cannot segregate true overpayments from administrative overpayments, it is not possible to accurately provide specific figures for true overpayment, which represent money owed to the government.

The government is not in a position to provide the answer regarding underpayments as the system cannot automatically calculate such transactions.

Question No. 65—Ms. Marilyn Gladu:

With regard to government statistics on medical malpractice in Canada: what are the government's statistics related to how many deaths occurred as a result of medical malpractice in each of the past 10 years, broken down by year?

Mr. Darren Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, oversight of the medical profession is a matter of provincial and territorial jurisdiction. However, the Canadian Institute for Health Information tracks occurrences of unintended harm during hospital stays that could have been potentially prevented by implementing known best practices, which can serve as an overall picture of safety in Canadian hospitals (data from Quebec is excluded for methodological issues).

Question No. 66—Mr. Michael Barrett:

With regard to the March 2019 leak of information related to the Supreme Court nomination process: (a) did the government investigate the leak, and, if not, why not; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, who investigated the leak; (c) was the leak referred to the RCMP and, if not, why not; and (d) is the government aware who leaked the information and, if so, who was responsible?

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Public Service Renewal) and to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, any and all unauthorized disclosure of confidential and private information is taken seriously. We have been informed that the Office of the Privacy Commissioner is investigating the matter. At this time, the Privy Council Office has no further comment?.

As stated on March 27, 2019, "We [the Prime Minister's Office] take the integrity of our institutions seriously. The PMO would never leak who would be considered for a judicial appointment."

Question No. 67—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to the Huawei's participation in Canada's 5G Networks: when will the government make a decision regarding Huawei's participation?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government acknowledges the importance of securing 5G telecommunications systems. Cybersecurity is complex and multi-faceted, particularly when we are considering the infrastruc-

ture of the network itself. 5G technology is expected to affect not just our telecommunications sector, but also many other sectors, as it will enable innovations such as automated transportation, smart cities and remote medicine.

The government's technical, economic, foreign policy, and security experts are working together diligently to examine the security challenges and potential threats involved in 5G technology, while recognizing the importance this technology holds in the continued development of a dynamic and digital economy. This examination will help determine the best way to maximize the benefits of this extraordinary technology for Canadians, and to minimize the associated security and privacy risks.

Canada will make appropriate decisions in due course.

Question No. 70—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to Public Services and Procurement Canada notifying companies about media requests received by the department, since November 4, 2015: what are the details of all instances where the department has notified a company about a media request, including (i) date, (ii) name of company, (iii) title of the individual who notified the company, (iv) title of the individual at the company who was provided with information related to the media request, (v) reason for notifying the company, (vi) summary or description of the media request, (vii) name of the media outlet the request was received from?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the department's standard media process does not include contacting nor sharing media requests with companies. That said, Public Services and Procurement Canada, PSPC, is committed to providing Canadians, including media, with timely, factual information about our work, and in doing so, PSPC may, from time to time, verify information with companies when working on inquiries involving work contracted to them. When doing so, PSPC is careful to protect the privacy of journalists.

PSPC does not systematically track these exchanges; thus, the department is unable to answer within the allotted time.

Question No. 77—Mr. Tim Uppal:

With regard to the Clean Fuel Standard and related regulations: (a) how was the estimated emissions reduction of 30 million tonnes of carbon dioxide or greenhouse gases determined; and (b) what is the margin of error of the estimated emissions reduction?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), Environment and Climate Change Canada modeled a scenario for the clean fuel standard, CFS, in the late summer/early fall of 2016 in support of the pan-Canadian framework on climate change.

The energy, emissions and economy model for Canada, E3MC, was used, which integrates the simulation of the supply, demand and price of all sources of energy and emissions and has a macroeconomic model that examines consumption, investment, production and trade decisions.

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The 10% reduction in life-cycle carbon intensity of the CFS was modelled through assumed changes in combustion intensity as follows: 10% renewable content by 2030 for diesel and gasoline, including light and heavy fuel oil, in transportation, buildings and industry, including off-road transportation; 5% renewable content by 2030 for natural gas in buildings, industry and electricity generation; 90% of petroleum coke and heavy fuel oil switch to natural gas in industry, excluding Newfoundland and Labrador.

A full cost-benefit analysis with updated greenhouse gas or GHG emissions reductions projections will be published as part of the regulatory impact analysis statement that will accompany the publication of the CFS regulations. This will include an estimate of emissions reductions in 2030.

In response to (b), the E3MC is not a probabilistic model and has no built-in representation of uncertainty. In turn, no margin of error for the 30 million tonnes was estimated.

In general, a variety of factors could affect the projected emissions reductions from a policy such as the CFS, including other policies that are targeting the same sources of emissions, such as carbon pricing; changes to assumptions on economic growth and world energy prices; and future developments in technologies, demographics and resources that cannot be predicted.

A full cost-benefit analysis with updated GHG emissions reductions projections will be published as part of the regulatory impact analysis statement that will accompany the publication of the CFS regulations. This will include a detailed discussion of the uncertainty associated with the modelled impact of the CFS.

Question No. 80—Mr. Tim Uppal:

With regard to carbon taxation: (a) what are the current projected annual emissions reductions resulting from carbon taxation by 2030, excluding output-based pricing system (OBPS), broken down by province; (b) what are the current projected annual emissions reductions resulting from OBPS, broken down by province; and (c) if these estimates differ from any estimate that has been published by the government since November 2015, what is the reason for the differences for all such cases?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is widely recognized that economy-wide carbon pollution pricing is the most efficient way to reduce greenhouse gas or GHG emissions. The Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act provided the legal framework and enabling authorities for the federal backstop carbon pollution pricing system. This system is composed of two parts: a regulatory charge on fossil fuels, which is the fuel charge, and the output-based pricing system, OBPS, for industrial facilities. The OBPS creates a strong financial incentive for the least efficient facilities to reduce their emissions per unit of output and for strong performers to continue to improve.

The federal backstop system applies in any province or territory that does not have a carbon pollution pricing system that meets the federal benchmark, or in those that request it. Currently, the federal fuel charge applies in Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, Yukon and Nunavut. Currently, the federal OBPS applies in Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Yukon and Nunavut, and partially in Saskatchewan.

Carbon pollution pricing will make a significant contribution toward meeting Canada's GHG reduction target. Carbon pollution

pricing across Canada is estimated to reduce GHG emissions by 50 to 60 million tonnes in 2022. As noted in the June 2019 OBPS regulatory impact analysis statement, the federal OBPS is estimated to reduce GHG emissions by 3.6 megatonnes in 2022.

While pricing carbon pollution is key, it is not the only thing we are doing to fight climate change. Canada's clean growth and climate plan includes more than 50 concrete measures to reduce carbon pollution, help us adapt and become more resilient to the impacts of a changing climate, foster clean technology solutions, and create good jobs that contribute to a stronger economy.

Question No. 87—Mr. Pat Kelly:

With regard to the federal carbon tax: what will the carbon tax rate be for each of the next 10 years, broken down by year?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, which received royal assent on June 21, 2018 as part of the Budget Implementation Act, 2018, No. 1, establishes the framework to implement the federal carbon pollution pricing system in provinces and territories that request it and in provinces and territories that do not have a system that meets the federal stringency requirements. The federal system has two components: a regulatory charge on fossil fuels, which is the "fuel charge", and a trading system for large industry, which is the "output-based pricing system" or OBPS.

The federal fuel charge applies, as of April 1, 2019, in Ontario, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Saskatchewan; as of July 1, 2019, in Yukon and Nunavut; and, as of January 1, 2020, in Alberta. The government has announced its intention to no longer apply the fuel charge in New Brunswick, as of April 1, 2020, as the province proposed to implement a provincial carbon levy, as of that date, that meets the federal stringency requirements for the sources that it covers.

The federal fuel charge rates reflect a carbon pollution price of \$20 per tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent, CO₂e, as of April 1, 2019, which will rise by \$10 per tonne annually until it reaches \$50 per tonne in 2022.

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The OBPS started applying in Ontario, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island and partially in Saskatchewan on January 1, 2019, and in Yukon and Nunavut on July 1, 2019. Rather than paying the fuel charge, covered facilities provide compensation for the portion of their greenhouse gas or GHG emissions that exceeds their applicable emissions limit, based on an activity-specific output-based standard. If a covered facility's GHG emissions exceed the prescribed emissions limit in a year, it may compensate for its excess emissions in three ways. It may submit surplus credits it earned in the past, or that it has acquired from other facilities; submit other prescribed credits that it acquired; or pay an excess emissions charge. The excess emissions charge rates reflect a carbon price of \$20 per tonne of CO₂e in 2019, and an increase of \$10 per tonne annually until it reaches \$50 per tonne in 2022.

First ministers have committed to reviewing carbon pollution pricing across Canada in 2022. This will inform the path forward and help ensure that carbon pollution pricing is fair and effective across Canada.

Question No. 88—Mr. Pat Kelly:

With regard to the increased number of tax files shared between the government and the Internal Revenue Service in the United States: (a) how many files were shared in (i) 2017, (ii) 2018, (iii) 2019; and (b) what is the reason for the dramatic increase in the number of files being shared in 2019?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada is one of 113 jurisdictions that have signed a model 1 intergovernmental agreement, IGA, with the United States of America, U.S., with respect to the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, FATCA.

Under the IGA, the CRA acts as a conduit to facilitate the transmission of financial account information of “U.S. persons” from Canadian financial institutions, FIs, to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, IRS. Information regarding “U.S. persons” can be found under article 1(ee) of the IGA: <https://www.fin.gc.ca/treaties-conventions/pdf/FATCA-eng.pdf>.

In response to part (a), the approximate numbers of records sent to the IRS under the IGA for the years in question are as follows: 600,000 in 2017, for 2016 tax year; 700,000 in 2018, for 2017 tax year; 900,000 in 2019, for 2018 tax year.

In response to part (b), with respect to the increase in records over time, the following factors are of particular relevance.

In addition to the IGA, the common reporting standard, CRS, was implemented in July 2017. As a result of this development and FIs' desire to align their compliance requirements for these two regimes, more U.S. reportable accounts were identified. Also, when the CRS came into force, legislation was amended to require self-certification on all new accounts for both the IGA and CRS, which also resulted in an increase in records.

Furthermore, as the exchanges under the IGA operate by records and not by account holder, more than one record can exist for any person or entity. As time goes on, new accounts are opened and there are changes to account information, such as updates to an address or to produce a tax identification number, which creates additional records, even though they relate to a single account and taxpayer.

Question No. 89—Mr. Pat Kelly:

With regard to the Minister of Middle Class Prosperity: broken down by riding, what is the number and percentage of individuals whom the minister considers to belong to the middle class?

Hon. Mona Fortier (Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government's focus on middle-class prosperity reflects its priority on policies that grow the economy and benefit a very broad group of Canadians.

The income required to attain a middle-class lifestyle can vary greatly based on Canadians' specific situations: e.g., what their family situation is, whether they face child care expenses or whether they live in large cities where housing tends to be more expensive. Canada has no official statistical measure of what constitutes the middle class.

Question No. 90—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:

With regard to government statistics on foreign oil imports: what was the amount of oil imported into Canada, broken down by country of origin in (i) 2016, (ii) 2017, (iii) 2018, (iv) 2019?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's energy sector is a key driver of the economy; provides good, well-paying jobs to hard-working Canadians; and is an overall net exporter of fuels. The government understands the importance of providing Canadians with reliable and transparent information. To that end, the Canada energy regulator or CER website provides information on oil imports, broken down by country of origin and year: <https://www.cer-rec.gc.ca/nrg/ntgrtd/mrkt/snpst/2019/03-03mprtsrdl-eng.html>. As noted by the CER, imports of oil from other countries into Canada decreased by 12% in 2018. Data for 2019 is not yet available; however, figures are expected to be similar to those from 2018.

Question No. 91—Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:

With regard to the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion project: (a) what specific sections of the project have been completed to date; (b) which specific sections of the project are expected to be completed in 2020; and (c) what is the current expected completion date for the project?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to parts (a) and (b),

in August 2019, Trans Mountain Corporation, TMC, resumed construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project. TMC intends to construct the project in seven segments and five terminals, each of which could be referred to as a “section”. As of December 6, 2019, the date of the question, TMC has not completed construction at any individual segment or terminal. As of that date, construction at Westridge terminal is the most advanced.

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In response to part (c), TMC will be providing updates on construction progress, including the completion of construction at individual segments and terminals, on a regular basis.

Question No. 103—**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:**

With regard to the transition from the National Energy Board (NEB) to the Canada Energy Regulator: (a) how many individuals or full-time equivalents (FTE) were previously employed by the NEB; (b) how many FTEs are employed by the Canada Energy Regulator; (c) what are the total costs associated with the transition; and (d) what is the itemized breakdown of the transition costs?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on August 28, 2019, the Canadian Energy Regulator Act came into force, replacing the National Energy Board Act, and the National Energy Board became the Canada Energy Regulator. The Canada Energy Regulator is a new, modern and world-class federal energy regulator with the required independence and the proper accountability to oversee a strong, safe and sustainable Canadian energy sector in the 21st century.

With regard to (a), on July 2, 2019, there were 494.7 FTEs employed by the National Energy Board.

With regard to (b), on November 29, 2019, there were 511.6 FTEs employed by the Canada Energy Regulator.

Note that information regarding parts (a) and (b) was pulled from material prepared for other internal reporting purposes on the date specified.

With regard to (c) and (d), funding for the National Energy Board to support its transition to the Canada Energy Regulator was outlined in budget 2019. Information regarding the transition costs from the National Energy Board to the Canada Energy Regulator is not systematically tracked in a centralized database. The regulator concluded that producing and validating the information for this question would require a manual collection of information that is not possible in the time allotted and could lead to the disclosure of incomplete and misleading information.

Question No. 106—**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:**

With regard to the promise on page 20 of the Liberal election platform, where it says the government will be “giving \$250 to every new business looking to expand their online services”: (a) what is the government’s threshold or definition of a “new” business; (b) will this be a one-time payment or an annual subsidy; and (c) how many businesses does the government project to be eligible for this payment?

Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion and Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is committed to helping small businesses in digital adaptation, which is essential for small and medium-sized enterprises to grow and compete in an interconnected global economy. Please refer to the ministerial mandate letters for further information: <https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters>

Question No. 107—**Ms. Raquel Dancho:**

With regard to the establishment of a minister of state for Diversity, Inclusion and Youth to assist the Minister of Canadian Heritage: how many public service employees have been transferred from the Privy Council Office (PCO) to the Department of Canadian Heritage as a result of this change, broken down by secretariat or section of the PCO?

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Public Service Renewal) and to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the establishment of a Minister for Diversi-

ty, Inclusion and Youth, six employees from the LGBTQ2 Secretariat and nine from the Youth Secretariat have been transferred from the Privy Council Office to the Department of Canadian Heritage as a result of this change.

Question No. 114—**Mr. Scot Davidson:**

With regard to the document “Clean Fuel Standard: Proposed regulatory approach”, released in June 2019: (a) what is the estimated economic impact; (b) when was the estimated economic impact first received by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change; and (c) when will the estimated economic impact be shared publicly?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), in February 2019, Environment and Climate Change Canada published a cost-benefit analysis framework outlining the approach for undertaking the cost-benefit analysis that will estimate the cost impacts and benefits attributable to the proposed clean fuel standard regulations. Feedback on this framework is being considered as we continue to conduct economic analysis.

With regard to (b), as the design of the clean fuel standard has not been finalized, there has been no final economic impact assessment shared with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

With regard to (c), a full cost-benefit analysis will be published as part of the regulatory impact analysis statement that will accompany the publication of the draft regulations for liquid fuels.

Question No. 119—**Mr. Eric Melillo:**

With regard to the government’s plan for dealing with the mercury poisoning issues at the Grassy Narrows First Nation: (a) what are the government’s specific plans for the Grassy Narrows First Nation; (b) when will the promised medical treatment facility in Grassy Narrows be completed; and (c) what specific amount has been allocated for the medical treatment facility in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021, (iii) 2022, (iv) 2023?

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), Canada has committed to fund the design, construction and operation of a mercury treatment facility in Grassy Narrows First Nation in response to mercury poisoning that contaminated the English-Wabigoon River system and to expand the current health facility in Grassy Narrows First Nation to provide expanded services for all its residents.

With respect to the existing health facility, Canada is providing \$9 million in funding to enhance the current facility and to expand the services the current facility delivers. This expansion will include increasing primary health care delivery, including clinical spaces, medical equipment, and support for remote practice and telepractice, pharmacy and public health services and community-based programs such as mental health and wellness. The health facility and accommodations update is estimated to be 1,230.88 square metres when completed, compared to the current facility space of 347 square metres, which was built in 1989. The building design will include the ability for future expansion of other health services, i.e., a paramedic room, X-ray, additional residence units. Ongoing dialogue continues between Canada and Grassy Narrows First Nation, and it is anticipated that construction will begin in the summer of 2020 to renovate the current health facility.

Regarding the construction and operation of a mercury treatment facility, a feasibility study was completed by the community and discussions are ongoing about the design, construction and scope of health services to be delivered in conjunction with the Province of Ontario.

The proposed 22-bed centre provides space for clients impacted by mercury poisoning and includes space for additional accommodations for allied health professionals. On December 4, 2019, Minister Miller met with Chief Turtle of Grassy Narrows to discuss next steps to advance work being undertaken to support the specific health and assisted-living needs of Grassy Narrows First Nation. Canada remains committed to working in close partnership with the community to reach an agreement that will adequately meet their needs now and in the long term.

With regard to (b), the timelines for completion of the mercury treatment facility will be based on the outcomes of ongoing discussions with Grassy Narrows First Nation to ensure that the facility's design adequately supports and complements the health services required by the community.

The Government of Canada is strongly committed to ensuring the health and well-being of first nations communities and that addressing the health needs of communities must be achieved through collaborative relationships based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.

With regard to (c), discussions between Grassy Narrows First Nation and Canada are ongoing, and funding from 2020-23 will be allocated based on the successful conclusion of these discussions.

Question No. 120—Mr. Eric Melillo:

With regard to the Canadian Small Modular Reactor Roadmap and the note on the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission's website that "The Government of Canada is reviewing its recommendations and plans to develop an action plan in the near future": will the government be releasing the plan by the end of 2020, and, if not, what is the timeline for releasing the plan?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in November 2018, the Government of Canada welcomed the release of "A Call to Action: A Canadian Roadmap for Small Modular Reactors". The report was the culmination of a 10-month pan-Canadian, stakeholder-led engagement initiative convened by Natural Resources Canada. It brought together provincial and territorial governments, utilities, industry, civil society, indige-

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nous communities, and interested stakeholders to explore opportunities in Canada for this emerging technology.

The report found that SMRs could carry significant opportunities for Canada. It also made clear, however, that the Government of Canada cannot act alone, and included over 50 recommendations for 14 different partners and stakeholder groups.

The Government of Canada has already acted on a number of opportunities outlined in the report, including finding efficiencies and streamlining the regulatory system to mitigate barriers to innovation while always ensuring safety; working to connect nuclear industry partners with new potential end-users, including resource sectors; and collaborating with international partners to ensure that proper enabling frameworks are in place.

Partners across Canada have also been taking action on recommendations from the report, including Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, AECL; the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, CNSC; provinces; utilities; industry; and civil society organizations.

The Government of Canada will continue to engage stakeholders, as well as local and Indigenous communities, moving forward.

Question No. 125—Mr. Mel Arnold:

With regard to page 36 of the Liberal election platform, which stated that "we will work with [British Columbia] to develop a responsible plan to transition from open net pen salmon farming in coastal waters to closed containment systems by 2025": (a) what analysis has been conducted by the government with respect to (i) the current commercial viability of closed containment systems in Canada, (ii) the likely change in commercial viability of closed containment systems in Canada between now and 2025, (iii) the environmental risks and benefits associated with closed containment systems, (iv) the comparability of closed containment systems to alternative technologies that are designed to reduce potential impacts to wild salmon stocks, (v) the timeline that would be required for commercial salmon farmers to convert to closed containment, and (vi) the likely economic and social impact of requiring operators to convert to closed containment systems by 2025; (b) when were these analyses conducted; and (c) what were the results of these analyses?

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Hon. Bernadette Jordan (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as part of its commitment to an in-depth understanding of emerging technologies, in 2008, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, DFO, assessed the technical feasibility of closed containment methods for salmon aquaculture, sourcing input and information from 60 international experts. This peer review of six working papers was led by DFO through the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat, CSAS, which is the department's primary scientific, peer review process. In this review, land-based recirculating aquaculture systems, i.e., land-based closed containment, showed biological and technological potential; however, at that time none were producing exclusively adult Atlantic salmon, and numerous attempts to do so had resulted in failure for various reasons. Further research on the effects of high-density culture on fish welfare and disease management was recommended. The floating closed containment systems evaluated, especially rigid walled systems, presented engineering challenges that might limit use in more exposed areas; however, the potential for these to be addressed with engineering solutions was identified. The results of the 2008 report "Potential Technologies for Closed Containment Saltwater Salmon Aquaculture" are available at the following link: <https://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/332156.pdf>.

In follow-up to the CSAS study, in 2010, the department conducted an economic analysis of a model commercial-scale closed containment facility. The study concluded that while closed containment production of adult Atlantic salmon has the potential for financial feasibility, it is very susceptible to a range of commercial variables that could quickly make it uneconomical. The results of the report, the "Feasibility Study of Closed Containment Options for the British Columbia Aquaculture Industry", are available at the following link: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/programmes-programmes/BC-aquaculture-CB-eng.htm>.

As announced by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans in December of 2018, DFO, in partnership with Sustainable Development Technology Canada, SDTC, and the Province of British Columbia, B.C., commissioned and funded a study on the state of salmon aquaculture technologies to examine the risks and opportunities of the most promising emerging technologies for salmon farming in B.C. The study explored the financial, environmental and social elements of emerging aquaculture technologies and highlighted some of the ways to incent the adoption of these new technologies, including how other countries have incented adoption. The study explored four technology options: land-based closed containment, floating closed containment, offshore technologies, and hybrid systems, which combine both land- and marine-based systems. We expect that the state of salmon aquaculture technologies study will be released soon.

The state of salmon aquaculture technology study indicated that all four production technologies have the opportunity to reduce interactions between farmed and wild salmon compared to conventional open-net pen aquaculture production, but the assessment against other environmental, economic and social elements varied. While full grow-out to market-size fish in land-based closed containment inherently has the most strengths in environmental performance with respect to reducing interactions with the marine environment and wild fish, the study also indicated that a high amount of energy is used in closed containment system construction and

operation, but noted that this, as well as the corresponding greenhouse gas emissions, could be offset by locating systems closer to consumer markets and feed sources and by using low-carbon energy alternatives where possible.

The study concluded that overall, land-based closed containment and hybrid systems are the most technologically developed for application in B.C., while floating closed containment and offshore technologies still require about five to 10 years of further development and evaluation. The study indicated that land-based closed containment, though less financially proven, is the most socially acceptable technology by opponents of open-net pen aquaculture, as long as it is developed and operated in B.C. On the other hand, the study also indicated that the hybrid system is likely more profitable and the preferred choice for the majority of industry, contingent on its also operating in the B.C. coastal region, responding to some of the key economic and environmental performance criteria.

The government has not studied the commercial viability of closed containment systems in Canada between now and 2025, nor the economic and social impact of requiring operators to convert to closed containment systems by 2025.

Question No. 127—**Mr. Steven Blaney:**

With regard to the government's plan to provide almost \$600 million in subsidies to select media outlets: (a) what (i) objective criteria, (ii) subjective criteria will be used to determine which outlets receive funding; and (b) what weight or level of importance will be given to each of the criteria in (a)?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada introduced three tax measures in budget 2019 to strengthen Canadian journalism. These include the Canadian journalism labour tax credit, a 25% refundable tax credit on salaries or wages payable in respect of an eligible newsroom employee for periods beginning on or after January 1, 2019; the digital news subscription tax credit, a 15% non-refundable personal income tax credit for digital news subscription costs paid by an individual to a qualified Canadian journalism organization, which applies to qualifying amounts paid after 2019 and before 2025; and a new type of qualified donee called a "registered journalism organization" for not-for-profit journalism organizations, which is in effect as of January 1, 2020.

The “gateway” for eligibility for all the income tax measures is for an organization to first be designated as a “qualified Canadian journalism organization”, QCJO. While designation as a QCJO does not automatically entitle organizations to specific tax measures, it is the necessary first step in determining if any of the three income tax measures could apply.

With regard to (a) and (b), note that the terms “objective criteria” and “subjective criteria” do not appear in the relevant definitions of the Income Tax Act. The relevant criteria that must be met for the tax measures listed above are set out in the act as follows: qualified Canadian journalism organization, 248(1); Canadian journalism tax credit, subsection 125.6(1); digital news subscription tax credit, subsection 118.02; and registered journalism organization, subsection 149.1(1).

Budget 2019 also announced that an independent panel of experts would be established for the purpose of providing recommendations and guidance on the administration of the legislative provisions that were introduced to support journalism. The Journalism and Written Media Independent Panel of Experts delivered its report containing recommendations on certain aspects of the legislation in July 2019.

Question No. 128—Mr. Steven Blaney:

With regard to the Aid to Publishers component of the Canada Periodical Fund: what are the details of all grants awarded by the fund since January 1, 2019, including (i) name of the recipient, (ii) date on which the funding was received, (iii) amount received?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, please note that the requested information is available on the Government of Canada’s website at: <https://open.canada.ca/en/search/grants>

Instructions: open the link; enter in the search field, “Canada periodical fund, aid to publishers”; and select a year.

Question No. 129—Mr. Steven Blaney:

With regard to the \$600 million media bailout fund: (a) how much money has been distributed to date; (b) who were the recipients of the money; and (c) how much did each recipient in (b) receive?

Hon. Diane Lebouthillier (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government introduced three tax measures in budget 2019 to support Canadian journalism. These include the Canadian journalism labour tax credit, a 25% refundable tax credit on salaries or wages payable in respect of an eligible newsroom employee for periods beginning on or after January 1, 2019; the digital news subscription tax credit, a 15% non-refundable personal income tax credit for digital news subscription costs paid by an individual to a qualified Canadian journalism organization, which applies to qualifying amounts paid after 2019 and before 2025; a new type of qualified donee called a “registered journalism organization” for not-for-profit journalism organizations, which is in effect as of January 1, 2020.

The “gateway” for eligibility for all the income tax measures is for an organization to first be designated as a “qualified Canadian journalism organization”, QCJO. While designation as a QCJO does not automatically entitle organizations to specific tax measures, it is the necessary first step in determining if any of the three income tax measures could apply.

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With regard to (a), (b) and (c), the CRA does not have any data of the nature requested, as the tax measures to support journalism and the QCJO designation process have not yet commenced. As of December 6, 2019, that is, the date of this question, one of the three tax measures to support journalism has come into force and the CRA has not publicly released its application form and guidance, which are necessary for organizations to be able to apply for and be designated for QCJO status.

Question No. 132—Mr. Scott Reid:

With regard to the current ongoing construction taking place on the lawn of Parliament Hill between Centre Block and the Centennial Flame: (a) what is the specific purpose of the construction; (b) when will the construction be completed and the entire lawn be open to the public again; (c) what is the estimated cost associated with the construction; and (d) what are the details of all contracts signed in relation to the construction, including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date and duration of contract, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) file number?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), the current ongoing construction taking place on the lawn of Parliament Hill between Centre Block and the Centennial Flame is related to the Centre Block rehabilitation program, which includes excavating the northern portion of the lawn in order to construct phase II of the Visitor Welcome Centre. The project is being completed as part of the long term vision and plan, a multi-year strategy for restoring and modernizing Canada’s historic parliamentary precinct.

With regard to (b), the front lawn will be reinstated following the restoration of the Centre Block. The timelines for construction are in development and will be available in 2020 once a detailed building condition assessment program and schematic design are complete.

PSPC, in concert with its government and parliamentary partners, is committed to maintaining a positive experience on Parliament Hill while construction is taking place.

With regard to (c), critical information on the state of the Centre Block and its future functional requirements is still under assessment. The scope, schedule and budget will be available in 2020 once the detailed condition assessment is complete and schematic design is sufficiently advanced.

With regard to (d), the Centre Block rehabilitation program is utilizing a construction management contracting model to deliver the construction component of the project. Under this model, the construction manager competitively tenders and oversees all aspects of the construction execution. Contracting opportunities are posted by the construction manager on MERX. This construction management contract was competitively tendered and awarded to a joint venture comprised of PCL/Ellis Don in the spring of 2017.

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The link to the construction management contract can be found on the Government of Canada buyandsell.gc.ca website: <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/tender-notice/PW-FP-001-68514?order=title&sort=asc#title>

With regard to (d)(i), the vendor is PCL/EllisDon in joint venture. With regard to (d)(ii), the amount is \$598,000,000. With regard to (d)(iii), the contract was awarded in April 2017 and is valid until March 2029. With regard to (d)(iv), the goods and services consist of construction management services. With regard to (d)(v), the buy and sell reference number is PW-\$FP-001-68514, and the buy and sell solicitation number is EP748-151886/D

Question No. 133—**Mr. Erin O'Toole:**

With regard to the government's treatment of Vice-Admiral Mark Norman: what are the total expenditures incurred to date for the investigation and prosecution of Vice-Admiral Norman, broken down by type of expenditures?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to the extent that the information that has been requested is protected by solicitor-client privilege, the federal Crown can only reveal the total legal cost related to this case. Based upon the hours recorded, the total amount of legal costs incurred amounts to approximately \$1,425,389.68, as of December 9, 2019.

Question No. 135—**Mr. Erin O'Toole:**

With regard to international summits, meetings, and events held in Canada since January 1, 2016: (a) how often were RCMP members seconded from local detachments to perform duties related to an international summit, meeting or event; (b) of the cases referred to in (a), how often were members seconded from RCMP detachments with 10 or fewer members; (c) of the cases referred to in (a), how often were more than 50% of the members in a detachment seconded; and (d) of the cases referred to in (a), how often were more than 25% of the members in a detachment seconded?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the RCMP's protective policing program is mandated to ensure the safety and security of government-led events, as prescribed by Canadian legislation, directives and international conventions. This includes, for example, the 2016 North American leaders summit in Ottawa, Ontario, and the recent 2018 G7 leaders summit in La Malbaie, Quebec.

To execute this mandate and ensure the proper functioning of a government-led event, the RCMP deploys resources and implements security measures commensurate to the RCMP's assessment of the threat and risk environment for that particular unique event.

RCMP protective policing personnel, which are located in multiple divisions across the country, will be deployed in support of a government-led event to ensure the appropriate security posture. In some cases, divisional resources and personnel from within other areas of the RCMP, i.e., federal policing or vcontract, will also be deployed, if required.

For operational reasons, the RCMP cannot disclose detailed information that may expose security postures adopted to ensure the security of government-led events, including the number of resources deployed from divisions.

Question No. 138—**Mr. John Williamson:**

With regard to the government's response to the concern of small communities that they will be unable to meet the government's wastewater regulations by 2020: (a) will the government fine small communities who are unable to meet the regula-

tions; (b) will the government provide urgent funding to the communities in order to meet these new regulations; and (c) what remedies will be available to small communities that do not have the means to upgrade their facilities in order to meet the regulations?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), the Government of Canada has an obligation to enforce environmental laws and regulations and takes its responsibilities seriously. Environment and Climate Change Canada, ECCC, is responsible for administering and enforcing the pollution prevention provisions of the Fisheries Act, which prohibit the deposit of deleterious substances into water frequented by fish, and the wastewater systems effluent regulations, WSER, made pursuant to the Fisheries Act, FA.

ECCC aims to enforce the WSER in a manner that is fair, consistent and predictable.

If ECCC enforcement officers become aware of an alleged violation they may take appropriate action in accordance with the compliance and enforcement policy for the habitat protection and pollution prevention provisions of the Fisheries Act. This ECCC policy states that if there is evidence of a contravention, officers can take a number of different enforcement measures considering factors set out in this policy, including issuing warnings or directions. Warnings are administrative documents, which brings an alleged violation to the attention of an alleged violator in order to promote any necessary action to come back into compliance with the WSER. Directions are legal documents in which the enforcement officer orders the alleged offender to come back into compliance with the WSER. Warnings and directions are enforcement options used before prosecution, and do not involve monetary fines.

Further, according to the Fisheries Act, FA, no one can be convicted if the person establishes that they exercised due diligence or reasonably and honestly believed in the existence of facts that, if true, would render the person's conduct innocent.

With more serious alleged offences, officers can conduct investigations to collect evidence for the purposes of prosecuting in court. The evidence collected is sent to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada. A decision to prosecute an alleged offender is the sole discretion of the Public Prosecution Service of Canada. Once the person has been charged, an option that does not involve court proceedings is "alternative measures". Alternative measures are agreements negotiated with the accused by the Attorney General of Canada, in consultation with the Minister of the Environment. It will contain measures that the accused must take in order to restore compliance.

Where there are no alternative measures, a person who is found guilty of contravening the WSER following court proceedings is liable to a fine the amount of which will differ greatly depending on whether the offender is an individual, a small revenue corporation or another person and whether it is their first offence.

These regulations do not fall under ECCC legislation, which allows for ticketing or administrative monetary penalties, the contraventions regulations and the administrative monetary penalties regulations, for violation to certain other ECCC acts or regulations.

In response to (b), Environment and Climate Change Canada will not provide any funding related to Q-138.

In response to (c), Environment and Climate Change Canada does not have any remedies related to Q-138.

Question No. 139—**Mr. Tom Kmiec:**

With regard to the government funding transfers to the Asian Infrastructure Bank (AIB): (a) what is the total amount of money transferred to date; (b) what are the details of each transfer, including (i) date, (ii) amount; (c) how many Canadian infrastructure projects have been funded as a result of the money transferred in (a), and what are the details of all such projects, including the amount received from the AIB; and (d) how many jobs in Canada have been directly created as a result of the funding in (a)?

Mr. Sean Fraser (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance and to the Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to part (a), Canada became a member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, AIIB, through the purchase of shares valued at \$199.1 million U.S. To date, \$79.64 million U.S. has been transferred.

In response to parts (b)(i) and (ii), the dates and amounts are March 8, 2018, \$39.82 million U.S., and March 11, 2019, \$39.82 million U.S.

In response to part (c), multilateral development banks, MDBs, such as the World Bank and AIIB are organizations that provide development resources in the form of financing, grants and technical assistance to low- and middle-income countries, for the purposes of social and economic development. Canada does not borrow from MDBs, and no Canadian infrastructure project has been funded by the AIIB.

In response to part (d), the MDBs provide financing and other types of assistance to projects in developing countries. As such, no funding has been provided to Canada. However, Canadian companies can engage in AIIB projects and core functions, e.g., Hatch and TD Securities.

Question No. 140—**Ms. Rachael Harder:**

With regard to the Minister of Middle Class Prosperity: broken down by riding, what is the number and percentage of individuals whom the minister considers to be middle class?

Hon. Mona Fortier (Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government's focus on middle-class prosperity reflects its priority on policies that grow the economy and benefit a very broad group of Canadians.

The income required to attain a middle-class lifestyle can vary greatly based on Canadians' specific situations, e.g., what their family situation is, whether they face child care expenses or whether they live in large cities where housing tends to be more expensive. Canada has no official statistical measure of what constitutes the middle class.

Question No. 143—**Mr. Bob Saroya:**

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With regard to the over \$56,000 owed by the RCMP to the managers of the Aga Khan's private island in the Bahamas: (a) what is the exact amount owed; (b) why did the government not sign a contract for the expenditures prior to incurring them; (c) what is the itemized breakdown of the expenditures owed to the managers of the island; (d) when will this outstanding amount be paid; and (e) as this vacation was found by the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner to be a violation of the law, will the government require the Prime Minister to pay this outstanding amount from personal funds?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), there is no outstanding amount owed.

In response to (b), the RCMP is working to improve operational planning practices with the goal of ensuring adherence to Government of Canada policies.

In response to (c), for operational reasons, the RCMP cannot disclose detailed information that may expose security postures adopted to ensure the safety and security of any given principal and/or event.

In response to (d) and (e), the amount has been paid.

Question No. 146—**Mr. John Williamson:**

With regard to government support for the workers in New Brunswick impacted by the closing of the Glencore Smelter in Belledune: what specific measures, if any, is the government taking to support the affected workers?

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since the November 13, 2019 announcement, Service Canada has been working closely with the New Brunswick, NB, Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, PETL, to coordinate efforts and provide support to the workers impacted by the closing of the Glencore smelter in Belledune. The area director for NB has contacted the MP's office to inform them that Service Canada is supporting employees and that the employer can contact them if they have any questions.

Service Canada attended information fairs for unionized and non-unionized employees on December 2, 2019, in Belledune, New Brunswick, and December 3, 2019, in Beresford, New Brunswick. This event was a collaboration between the provincial department of PETL and the employer, Glencore. Employees in attendance had the opportunity to ask questions and Service Canada took note of them in order to better address their concerns about employment insurance, EI.

Service Canada and NB PETL held joint information sessions on December 11 and 12, 2019. Eight sessions were held for unionized employees and 82 people attended. The sessions provided general information on EI and other Government of Canada services and programs. A session for non-unionized employees was scheduled for December 13, 2019, but had to be cancelled because these employees are still working. It has been rescheduled to January 2020.

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Question No. 149—Mr. Peter Kent:

With regard to Canada's vote of "yes" on the United Nations General Assembly Agenda Item 69 "Right of peoples to self-determination": what is the government's rationale for Canada to change its previous vote of "no" on this annual agenda item?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers.

Canada is strongly committed to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, including the creation of a Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel. Canada's vote today is a reflection of this long-standing commitment.

Canada voted in support of this resolution as it addresses the core issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Canada strongly supports the international consensus on a two-state solution, so that both sides can have a secure and prosperous future.

Canada would also like to strongly reiterate our stated position and concern that there are too many resolutions related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a situation which unfairly singles out Israel for criticism. Canada would prefer to see the international community channel its efforts towards helping both sides to resume direct negotiations and work towards achieving a lasting peace for both peoples.

Question No. 150—Mr. Peter Kent:

With regard to the government voting in favour of the anti-Israel resolution at the United Nations on November 19, 2019: (a) why did the government vote in favour of the Palestinian resolution, which was sponsored by North Korea, Egypt, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe; (b) when did the government decide that it was going to vote in that manner; and (c) did the government notify any organization of its intention to vote in that manner prior to November 19, 2019, and, if so, which organizations?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers.

In response to parts (a) to (c), Canada is strongly committed to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, including the creation of a Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel. Canada's vote today is a reflection of this long-standing commitment.

Canada voted in support of this resolution as it addresses the core issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Canada strongly supports the international consensus on a two-state solution, so that both sides can have a secure and prosperous future.

Canada would also like to strongly reiterate our stated position and concern that there are too many resolutions related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a situation which unfairly singles out Israel for criticism. Canada would prefer to see the international community channel its efforts towards helping both sides to resume direct negotiations and work towards achieving a lasting peace for both peoples.

Question No. 151—Mr. Michael Barrett:

With regard to the SNC-Lavalin affair: (a) what are the details of all correspondence or other communication received by the government from the RCMP on this matter, including (i) dates, (ii) senders, (iii) recipients, (iv) titles or subject matters, (v) summary of content, (vi) forms (email, telephone call, etc.); and (b) broken

down by each instance in (a), what were the details of the government's responses, including (i) who responded, (ii) dates of response, (iii) summary of responses, (iv) forms?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, no records were found of correspondence or other communication from the RCMP to the government on the SNC-Lavalin affair.

Question No. 157—Mr. Richard Bragdon:

With regard to the government's election platform commitment to support the Newfoundland-Labrador fixed transportation link: (a) does the government have any specific timeline for this project, and, if so, what is the timeline; and (b) has the government allocated or budgeted any money for this project, and, if so, how much?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the government's election platform commitment to support the Newfoundland-Labrador fixed transportation link, the Government of Canada will work in collaboration with the provincial government towards the development of a proposal.

Further discussions are required before (a) a timeline and (b) budget and allocation of funds can be specified.

Question No. 158—Mr. Phil McColeman:

With regard to the finding of the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) in the February 2019 report that some veterans would be "greatly disadvantaged" by the new regime: (a) what specific action, if any, has the Minister of Veterans Affairs taken since the report was released to address the concerns of the PBO; and (b) if no specific action has been taken by the minister, (i) when will action be taken, (ii) why not?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Pension for Life is a combination of benefits that provides recognition, income support and stability to Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans who experience a service-related illness or injury. As of April 1, 2019, over 80,000 veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members were efficiently transitioned to the new suite of benefits.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer's report concluded that most veterans will receive lifetime payments that are between 6% and 24% higher under Pension for Life than they would have received under the previous regime, despite the significant increases in financial supports made to the new Veterans Charter through budget 2016.

As directed by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Affairs Canada is thoroughly reviewing the implementation of Pension for Life and may recommend changes, where needed, to improve the outcomes and experiences of veterans and their families.

Question No. 159—Mr. Phil McColeman:

With regard to the backlog of veterans waiting for their disability benefits: (a) what is the current status of the backlog; (b) how many veterans are still waiting for their compensation; (c) how many veterans receive less compensation under the new pension program as opposed to the previous program; and (d) what is the government doing to increase compensation for veterans who are now receiving less compensation under the new pension program?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a) and (b), Veterans Affairs Canada defines “backlog” as applications that have not been completed within the service standard of 16 weeks.

As of December 9, 2019, there are 19,663 backlogged disability benefit applications, consisting of 16,192 distinct clients in the backlog. A client could have more than one disability application. For example, a client could have a first application for hearing loss and then a reassessment application for cervical disc disease. A distinct client count represents the number of unique clients counted in the pending and backlog groups, regardless of how many applications they have. There has been a 90% increase in first applications since 2015.

With regard to the total number of veterans with pending disability benefit applications, including those that have not exceeded the service standard, there are 33,618 distinct clients who have a pending disability benefit application and are in the process of receiving a decision regarding compensation.

Veterans Affairs Canada continues to work to improve service delivery and ensure every Canadian veteran receives the benefits they deserve in a timely manner.

With regard to (c) and (d), Pension for Life is a combination of benefits that provides recognition, income support and stability to Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans who experience a service-related illness or injury. As of April 1, 2019, over 80,000 veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members were efficiently transitioned to the new suite of benefits.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer’s report concluded that most veterans will receive lifetime payments that are between 6% and 24% higher under Pension for Life than they would have received under the previous regime, despite the significant increases in financial supports made to the new Veterans Charter through budget 2016.

As directed by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Affairs Canada is thoroughly reviewing the implementation of Pension for Life and may recommend changes, where needed, to improve the outcomes and experiences of veterans and their families.

Question No. 160—Mr. Phil McColeman:

With regard to government expenditures related to *Bruyey v Canada* (Veteran Affairs): (a) what is the total of all expenditures incurred to date in relation to the case; and (b) what is the itemized breakdown of the expenditures, including estimated staff time?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to the extent that the information that has been requested in part (b) is protected by solicitor-client privilege, the federal Crown can only reveal the total legal cost of all government expenditures related to *Bruyey v Canada* (Veteran Affairs). Based upon the hours recorded, the total amount of legal costs incurred amounts to approximately \$183,551.04 as of December 9, 2019.

Question No. 163—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to the First Nations Child and Family Services Program: (a) how much money has been spent in total on legal proceedings pursuant or related to the

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Canadian Human Rights Tribunal since 2007; (b) how much money has been spent in total on legal proceedings pursuant or related to the decision of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal concerning the program (2016 CHRT 2), including but not limited to appeals, motions to stay, hearings regarding compliance orders or preparatory work for the same, since January 26, 2016; (c) in reference to the total costs in (b), what are the total costs broken down by (i) the CHRT, (ii) the Federal Court?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to the extent that the information requested in parts (b) and (c) is protected by solicitor-client privilege, the federal Crown can only reveal the total cost of legal proceedings pursuant to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, the CHRT, for the period starting in 2007 and up to December 9, 2019. Based upon the hours recorded, the total legal costs incurred amount to approximately \$5,261,009.14 as of December 9, 2019.

Question No. 173—Mr. Todd Doherty:

With regard to the National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSS): (a) where is the information on NSS contract awards being published; (b) what is the updated schedule for the Canadian Surface Combatant project; (c) what is the value of the contracts awarded to Irving Shipbuilding for the Canadian Surface Combatant to date; (d) what is the value of the contracts awarded to Irving Shipbuilding’s subcontractors for the Canadian Surface Combatant to date; and (e) have any licence fees been paid out under the Canadian Surface Combatant project, and, if so, what are the details, including (i) dates, (ii) amounts, (iii) vendor, (iv) description or summary of licence fee agreement?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), government contracts are posted on the Buy and Sell website at <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/>. This includes contracts under the National Shipbuilding Strategy, the NSS, with the exception of those subject to the provisions of the national security exemption, which are not posted publicly.

With regard to part (b), construction of the Canadian surface combatant is currently scheduled to begin in the early 2020s. Additional information on the NSS and its specific projects is available on the following Government of Canada web pages: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-services-procurement/news/2019/02/government-of-canada-selects-design-for-canadian-surface-combatants.html>, <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/amd-dp/mer-sea/sncn-nss/navcom-surfcom-eng.html> and <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/procurement/canadian-surface-combatant.html>.

With regard to part (c), the current total value of the contracts issued to Irving Shipbuilding Inc., or ISI, for the Canadian surface combatant, CSC, project, including ancillary contracts and the definition contract, is \$521.8 million including taxes.

With regard to part (d), the value of subcontracts issued by ISI for work on the CSC project is included in the total value of the contracts in part (c) above and is confidential commercial information that is not released separately.

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With regard to part (e), the competitive CSC request for proposals for the selection of the starting point design and the design team included the provision for bidders to include a cost for the license for the starting point design. The cost of the license for the starting point design is part of the cost of the CSC definition subcontract issued by ISI for work on the CSC definition contract. It is included in the total value of the CSC definition contract and is confidential commercial information that is not released separately.

Question No. 175—Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:

With regard to the Havana syndrome, where Canadian diplomatic employees in Cuba suffered various health symptoms in 2017 and 2018: (a) has the government determined the cause of the health issues, and, if so, what are they; (b) what specific efforts were made by the government to determine the cause of the health issues; and (c) what specific new measures, if any, has the government taken to ensure the health and safety of diplomatic employees and other individuals at the Embassy of Canada in Cuba?

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers. With regard to parts (a) to (c), the health, safety and security of our diplomats serving abroad and their families is a top priority for the Canadian government.

Global Affairs Canada continues to investigate the potential causes of the unusual health symptoms; a conclusive cause has not been identified. The Government of Canada has sent RCMP investigators and technical experts, Health Canada occupational health professionals, and representatives from Global Affairs Canada to address health concerns and to further the investigation.

Cuba has co-operated with Canada since the beginning of our investigation, including by working jointly with the RCMP investigators.

For privacy, security and legal reasons, Global Affairs Canada cannot comment on the specifics of the ongoing investigations or individual cases, nor on specific security measures.

Question No. 178—Mrs. Cathy McLeod:

With regard to page 30 of the Liberal election platform which promised to plant two billion trees over 10 years as part of a broader initiative to conserve and restore forests, grasslands, agricultural lands, wetlands and coastal areas: (a) what proportion of the estimated 30 Mt reduction in carbon emissions can be attributable to the tree planting component of the program; (b) what proportion of the estimated \$3 billion cost of this program will go to the tree planting component of the program; (c) will the two billion trees be incremental to the reforestation activities that already take place in Canada; (d) what proportion of these trees are expected to be planted in urban and suburban areas; and (e) for those trees planted outside of urban and suburban areas, will the government convert any areas to a forested condition where the current or climax condition is unforested?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a), natural climate solutions like planting trees can help get Canada significantly closer to reaching its emissions reduction targets while creating good, well-paying jobs for Canadians. The government is committed to working with experts to design a suite of natural climate solutions that will reduce emissions by an estimated 30 megatonnes by 2030. Canada's managed forests and forest products sequestered 26 megatonnes of CO₂ in 2017, not including emissions from natural disturbances. The amount of additional sequestration, or reductions in carbon emissions, realized specifically by the proposed tree planting component of the commitment will be determined based on the tree species, re-

gion of planting, current land use and site conditions, and the number of trees planted per year.

The government is committed to working with key partners, including provinces, territories and indigenous communities, as this initiative moves forward.

With regard to (b), the tree planting initiative is part of a broader commitment to fund natural climate solutions. The proportion of the estimated budget to be allocated to tree planting is currently being explored.

With regard to (c), the two billion trees will be incremental to the reforestation activities that already take place in Canada.

With regard to (d), the proportion of trees expected to be planted in urban and suburban areas is still being considered, but planting will take place in these areas. The government is committed to working with key partners, including provinces, territories and indigenous communities, as this initiative moves forward. In addition to operationalizing the plan to plant two billion trees, the mandate letter for the Minister of Natural Resources specifically mentions support for cities to expand and diversify their urban forests, including support for research and funding.

(e) Natural Resources Canada and other federal departments are considering both reforestation and afforestation as critical elements of the tree planting initiative. Afforestation efforts in areas outside of urban and suburban areas will be determined through stakeholder engagement and discussions. Typically, afforestation would occur in areas that could normally hold forest, but currently do not.

Question No. 179—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to Governor in Council appointments: (a) were each of the following appointments made in a manner consistent with the caretaker convention, (i) Order in Council P.C. 2019-1331 (October 15, 2019), (ii) Order in Council P.C. 2019-1332 (October 15, 2019), (iii) Order in Council P.C. 2019-1333 (October 15, 2019), (iv) Order in Council P.C. 2019-1335 (October 21, 2019), (v) Order in Council P.C. 2019-1336 (October 21, 2019), (vi) Order in Council P.C. 2019-1337 (November 1, 2019), (vii) Order in Council P.C. 2019-1338 (November 12, 2019), (viii) Order in Council P.C. 2019-1339 (November 19, 2019); and (b) for each appointment referred to in (a) made in a manner consistent with the caretaker convention, why was it making consistent with the convention; (c) for each appointment referred to in (a) not made in a manner consistent with the caretaker convention, why was the appointment made?

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Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Public Service Renewal) and to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all these appointments were of public servants to heads of mission positions, a routine part of the normal operations of government. Given the routine and non-controversial nature of these appointments, moving forward with them during the caretaker period was entirely consistent with the “Guidelines on the conduct of Ministers, Ministers of State, exempt staff and public servants during an election”, available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/publications/guidelines-conduct-ministers-state-exempt-staff-public-servants-election.html>.

Question No. 183—**Mr. John Barlow:**

With regard to the federal carbon tax: (a) what is the (i) number of farmer, (ii) percentage of farmers who have received the Fuel Charge Exemption Certificate for Farmers, broken down by province; (b) what is the total amount of federal advertising expenditures aimed at ensuring farmers know about the requirement to fill out the forms required to get the certificate; and (c) what specific remedies are available to Alberta farmers who have not received their Exemption Certificates by January 1, 2020?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, including the Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency, does not have information concerning the administration of the federal carbon tax.

Question No. 194—**Mr. Brad Vis:**

With regard to the prison needle exchange in facilities run by Correctional Service Canada (CSC): (a) how many needles were distributed to inmates in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019, broken down by correctional institution; (b) of the needles distributed, how many went missing or were not returned to CSC, broken down by correctional institution; (c) what specific procedures are in place to ensure the safety of correctional officers; and (d) how many incidents have taken place to date where (i) officers or staff, (ii) other inmates were “stuck” or injured by a needle from the program?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a)(i) and (a)(ii), since the start of the prison needle exchange program, the PNEP, in June 2018, 715 needles have been distributed. This number represents the number of needles distributed from the start of the PNEP program to the time of analysis, not the number of inmates who have received a PNEP kit. In 2018, 35 needles were distributed, 33 in the Atlantic Institution and two in the Grand Valley Institution for women. In 2019, 680 needles were distributed, 620 in the Atlantic Institution, three in Edmonton Institution for Women, and 57 in the Grand Valley Institution for women.

With regard to (b), all PNEP needles distributed were returned for a 100% return rate. In two instances at Atlantic Institution, a PNEP needle was not stored in the approved location; CSC staff seized the needles in question, and the participants were temporarily suspended from the program in order to be reassessed.

With regard to (c), specific procedures to ensure the safety of correctional officers and other offenders areas follows. First is threat risk assessment, or TRA. The application process includes a TRA, conducted by operations, in order to review pertinent security information to determine the potential risks from supporting the applicant’s participation in the program. The TRA model is similar to the one currently in place for offenders who use other needles and syringes, such as EpiPens and those for diabetic insulin use. This model has proven to be safe and effective. Second is kit monitor-

ing. Needles are provided in kits in a clear plastic storage container. Procedures are in place to ensure the kit and its contents are secure and accounted for through regular monitoring, generally two times per day, during routine “stand to” counts. The third procedure is for needle exchanges: When participants wish to exchange their needles, they must return the original CSC-issued needle/syringe unit with the safety glide cap properly in place to Health Services. A nurse ensures the needle is in place before it is discarded into a bio-hazard sharps waste container by the participant. Next are procedures for cell searching. Procedures have been established for the routine searching of a participant’s cell whereby the kit is secured before an officer or dog proceeds with a search. Finally, there are procedures on violation of terms. Participants sign a contract, and in the event the participant does not follow the institutional procedures and the agreed-upon terms and conditions of the contract for participation in the PNEP, the inmate may be suspended temporarily or removed from the program, and a new TRA may be required.

With regard to (d)(i) and (d)(ii), no incidents have been reported of officers or other staff being “stuck” or injured by a needle from the PNEP. No incidents have been reported of other inmates being “stuck” or injured by a needle from the PNEP.

Question No. 200—**Mr. Brad Redekopp:**

With regard to grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by Canadian Heritage since January 1, 2018: what are the details of each, including (i) dates of funding, (ii) recipients, (iii) locations, (iv) project descriptions?

Ms. Julie Dabrusin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, information on grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by Canadian Heritage, PCH, from January 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019, is available on the Government of Canada proactive disclosure website at [https://recherche.ouvert.canada.ca/fr/gc/?sort=score%20desc&page=1&search_text=&gc-search-orgs=Patrimoine%20canadien&gc-search-year=2018|2019&gc-search-agreement-range=\(b\)%20moins%20de%2010%20000%20%24|\(c\)%20de%2010%20000%20%24%20%20C3%A0%2025%20000%20%24](https://recherche.ouvert.canada.ca/fr/gc/?sort=score%20desc&page=1&search_text=&gc-search-orgs=Patrimoine%20canadien&gc-search-year=2018|2019&gc-search-agreement-range=(b)%20moins%20de%2010%20000%20%24|(c)%20de%2010%20000%20%24%20%20C3%A0%2025%20000%20%24).

Information on grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by Canadian Heritage, PCH, from October 1, 2019, to December 1, 2019, will be released via proactive disclosure by January 31, 2020.

Question No. 204—**Mr. Doug Shipley:**

With regard to individuals working full-time, part-time, on contract, or on a casual basis at Global Affairs Canada’s offices abroad, including local and third-country cooperants and advisors, as of December 1, 2019: (a) how many such individuals were required to have (i) a secret security clearance or above, (ii) a confidential security clearance, (iii) no security clearance; and (b) how many individuals were working at Global Affairs Canada’s offices abroad, as of December 1, 2019, either without the required security clearance or pending the issuance of a security clearance?

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Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers.

With regard to part (a), all Canadian-based staff, CBS, and there are approximately 1,304 at our missions abroad, have a top secret clearance. All locally engaged staff, LES, and there are approximately 3,986, have a reliability status.

Global Affairs Canada does not grant confidential security clearances.

All staff requiring clearances are compliant with Global Affairs Canada security requirements. Persons without security status require escort.

With regard to part (b), all CBS and LES have the clearances necessary to perform their duties. Top secret clearance is the minimum for CBS, while LES are cleared at the reliability status level. Some LES may qualify for and be granted a secret clearance, but only under exceptional circumstances.

Question No. 206—Mrs. Alice Wong:

With regard to the Minister of Middle Class Prosperity: (a) what percentage of seniors does the minister consider to be middle class; (b) what percentage of seniors does the minister consider to be (i) of an income or means lower than middle class, (ii) of an income or means higher than middle class; and (c) how does the percentage in (a) compare to the percentage of Canadians as a whole, whom the minister considers to be middle class?

Hon. Mona Fortier (Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government's focus on middle-class prosperity reflects its priority on policies that grow the economy and benefit a very broad group of Canadians.

The income required to attain a middle-class lifestyle can vary greatly, depending on Canadians' specific situations such as their family situation, whether they face child care expenses or whether they live in large cities where housing tends to be more expensive. Canada has no official statistical measure of what constitutes the middle class.

Question No. 208—Mr. David Sweet:

With regard to the government's list of terrorist organizations: (a) why has the government not yet listed the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran as a terrorist organization; and (b) does the government consider the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to be a terrorist organization?

Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to (a) and (b), keeping Canadians safe is of paramount importance to this government. We are working with like-minded countries to ensure that Iran is held to account for its support of terrorism.

As we have long said, Canada has already taken a number of actions against the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the IRGC.

We continue to list the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Force as a terrorist entity, and we also continue to impose sanctions on Iran and the IRGC, targeting its branches as well as senior-level members of its leadership.

The listing of entities is an ongoing process, and government officials continue to assess all groups and monitor new developments.

Last year we added three additional Iran-backed groups to the Criminal Code list as terrorist entities.

We remain unwavering in our commitment to keep Canadians safe, including by taking all appropriate action to counter terrorist threats in Canada and around the world

Question No. 212—Mrs. Karen Vecchio:

With regard to rail safety: (a) how many railway incidents have occurred as a result of sleep-related fatigue issues since November 4, 2015; (b) what are the details of all such incidents, including (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) summary of incident, (iv) damage caused, if applicable; (c) what specific measures has the government implemented since November 4, 2015, aimed at preventing railway incidents resulting from employee fatigue; and (d) what is the current minimum turnaround time between shifts for (i) conductors, (ii) railway yard workers, (iii) other railway workers?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to part (a), the Transportation Safety Board of Canada, TSB, is the independent agency that collects and analyzes data related to railway incidents in Canada and investigates the cause and factors contributing to their occurrence. As such, they are the appropriate authority to respond to this question.

With regard to part (b), as the authority responsible for collecting data on railway incidents in Canada, the TSB, is the appropriate party to respond to this question.

With regard to part (c), a number of specific measures have been implemented since November 4, 2015, which are aimed at preventing railway incidents resulting from employee fatigue. One is safety management system regulations. New regulations prescribing the implementation of a safety management system were published in 2015. They included specific requirements for railways to follow in terms of scheduling shifts based on the principles of fatigue science.

Another is a notice of intent, or NOI. In November 2017, Transport Canada, TC, published an NOI that described a fatigue strategy. The strategy included a review of fatigue risk management systems, FRMS, and research into key positions in the rail industry and their sensitivity to fatigue. The NOI also stated TC's intention to initiate amendments to the Work/Rest Rules for Railway Operating Employees, or WRR, and the Railway Safety Management System Regulations, 2015, and, if necessary, to pursue the development of new regulations to address fatigue in the rail industry.

Another measure was a Fatigue in Transportation forum. A Fatigue in Transportation symposium was held in Montreal in the summer of 2018. The forum, which brought together over 200 participants, included speakers from academia, government and the transportation industry to build knowledge and promote increased awareness of fatigue in the transportation sector.

Another measure was updated work/rest rules. The Minister of Transport issued a ministerial order in December 2018 that required industry to update the existing work/rest rules to reflect the latest principles in fatigue science. This includes revisions to maximum duty lengths, minimum rest periods, advance notice of schedules, maximum cumulative duty times and the development of fatigue management plans. Transport Canada received a revised proposed working draft of these rules on December 16, 2019, and the industry must conduct a consultation with its unions. Submission by industry of a new proposal is expected for consideration and approval in early 2020.

With regard to part (d), conductors and locomotive engineers who operate in freight service/yard service are subject to the provisions of the current work/rest rules. These rules do not contain a minimum turnaround time or mandated time off duty between shifts unless the employee has worked more than 10 hours. If the employee has worked in excess of 10 hours and is away from the home terminal, the employee must have six hours off duty. If they are at the home terminal, they must have eight hours off duty. Usually employees who are on regularly scheduled assignments, yard service, do not receive calls for work.

Railway yard workers are also subject to these provisions but are often assigned a regular schedule, obviating the need for a minimum turnaround time.

Other railway workers, which is interpreted to mean non-operating employees, are subject to part III of the Canada Labour Code, and their collective agreements where applicable. Under section 169.2 (1) of part III of the Canada Labour Code, employees are eligible for a minimum rest period of at least eight consecutive hours between work periods or shifts.

Question No. 216—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the Statutes of Canada 2019, Chapter 14 (An Act to amend the Fisheries Act and other Acts in consequence), over the development, drafting and legislative process for this legislation: (a) was any consideration given by the government as to how this legislation would affect the International Joint Commission's Lake Ontario–St. Lawrence River Plan 2014; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, were any briefing notes written detailing these considerations, broken down by (i) title, (ii) subject, (iii) author, (iv) date written, (v) department internal tracking number; (c) was any consideration given by the government as to how this legislation would affect water levels and shoreline properties in Canada; and (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, were any briefing notes written detailing these considerations, broken down by (i) title, (ii) subject, (iii) author, (iv) date written, (v) department internal tracking number?

Hon. Bernadette Jordan (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), in developing Bill C-68 to modernize the Fisheries Act, including restoring lost protections to fish and fish habitat, extensive consultations were undertaken with indigenous peoples, other levels of government, industry and non-government organizations, and the public at large. While there was no direct consideration of the International Joint Commission's plan, the modernized act draws on views and perspectives of many partners and stakeholders to pro-

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vide a wide range of tools to support the proper management of fisheries and the conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat.

In response to (b), for DFO, this is not applicable, given the reply to (a).

In response to (c), the purpose set out in Bill C-68 was to provide a framework for the proper management and control of fisheries, and the conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat, including preventing pollution. The powers, authorities and tools contained in the modernized act in and of themselves do not impact water levels and shoreline properties in Canada. Therefore, these impacts were not considered in developing Bill C-68.

The rationale is that prior to the amendments in Bill C-68 being adopted, the Fisheries Act included long-standing provisions for the management of water flow in relation to existing obstructions, such as dams or other barriers in a water course. These are for the purpose of the conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat, such as to provide for fish passage around such barriers by means of fish ladders, or to provide for the flows downstream of a barrier sufficient to protect fish and their habitat. These authorities were previously found in section 20 of the Fisheries Act as it read immediately prior to royal assent of Bill C-68, and with the coming into force of all the amendments provided for in Bill C-68, they are now found in section 34.3.

As the result of Bill C-68, section 34.3 was amended to establish subsection 34.3(7), that provides for the minister to make regulations respecting the flow of water that is to be maintained to ensure the free passage of fish or the protection of fish or fish habitat in relation to existing obstructions. Subsection 34.3(7) is enabling only and has no force or effect until such time as regulations may be made. Any future regulations would necessarily include broad consultation with affected partners and stakeholders.

In response to (d), for DFO this is not applicable, given the reply to (c).

Question No. 225—Mrs. Kelly Block:

With regard to the 16 CC-295 fixed-wing search and rescue aircraft purchased by the government: (a) what are the operational limitations of the aircraft; and (b) what specific limitations were discovered during operational testing in 2019?

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government is making investments to ensure that our search and rescue crews have the necessary aircraft to support life-saving services to Canadians in need. As such, we are procuring 16 new planes that are capable of providing improved search and rescue capabilities over long ranges, in difficult weather conditions and at night.

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Canada accepted the first aircraft in Spain on December 18, 2019. As outlined in the defence capabilities blueprint, National Defence anticipates receiving all aircraft by 2022-23.

Details can be found at <http://dgpapp.forces.gc.ca/en/defence-capabilities-blueprint/project-details.asp?id=1721>

With regard to operational limitations, the Royal Canadian Air Force has not yet commenced the initial testing and evaluation of the aircraft. The initial operational testing period for the CC-295 fixed-wing search and rescue aircraft is expected to be conducted in the first half of 2020.

Question No. 231—**Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to the government's profit policy as related to shipbuilding: (a) what risk assessment or mitigation does the government conduct related to guaranteed contracts for the Arctic off-shore patrol ships (AOPS), Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC), and Halifax Class Frigates; (b) what is the profit range offered to Irving Shipbuilding Inc. (ISI) for its work on the AOPS, CSC and Halifax Class Frigates; (c) what is the total profit offered for guaranteed work under the National Shipbuilding Strategy, whereby there are cost plus contracts; (d) what are the details, including findings, of any third party review of Canada's profit policy related to the AOPS and CSC, and (e) what are the details of all briefing materials related to the profit rate negotiated with ISI for the CSC and AOPS, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title or subject matter, (v) summary of contents, (vi) file number?

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in response to (a), the Government of Canada has developed a formal risk management plan for the national shipbuilding strategy, NSS. The plan is informed by international best practices and helps to predict, identify and manage the key risks facing the NSS. Key risks include: timely analysis and decision-making, mitigated through a senior-level governance structure; human resources capacity, mitigated through hiring more procurement officers, training government analysts on estimating cost, and supporting for training and apprenticeship programs; and public communications, mitigated through annual reports, announcements, technical briefings, and other opportunities to provide Canadians with timely information on the NSS.

Contracts for AOPS, CSC and Halifax class frigate work periods are subject to procurement risk assessments conducted in accordance with the Treasury Board framework for the management of risk, the PSPC integrated risk management policy and the PSPC acquisitions program risk assessment framework. Information on risk assessments in contracts is available online on the Buy and Sell website

<https://buyandsell.gc.ca/policy-and-guidelines/supply-manual/section/3/1/5> and <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/policy-and-guidelines/supply-manual/section/6/5/15/1>

Procurement risk factors are assessed on a continuous basis and steps are taken to support the effective administration of the contracts.

In response to (b), contracts issued to Irving Shipbuilding Inc., ISI, are negotiated to arrive at a fair and reasonable cost for the work, including the profit paid for performing the work. Profit ranges under the multi-ship contract, for work on the Halifax class frigates from 2008-21, the AOPS contracts and the CSC contracts are within the overall range of the policy on cost and profit as per

the PSPC supply manual. Information on the profit policy is available online on the Buy and Sell website:

<https://buyandsell.gc.ca/policy-and-guidelines/supply-manual/section/10>

The details of the profit level negotiated and approved for these contracts cannot be disclosed as it is confidential commercial information which could prejudice the competitive position of ISI.

In response to (c), profits under the NSS are negotiated through individual contracts and are guided by the policy on cost and profit. As such, there is no total profit offered for work under the NSS per se.

In response to (d), no third party reviews of Canada's profit policy related to the AOPS or CSC projects have been conducted. Contracts issued to ISI were negotiated to arrive at a fair and reasonable cost for the work, including the profit paid for performing the work. The negotiated profit is within the framework of the PSPC policy on cost and profit.

However, third party reviews have been conducted for both projects in support of contract negotiations, to undertake risk assessments prior to contract awards and amendments, and to evaluate the level of effort required for ISI to complete tasks. Details of these reviews cannot be disclosed as they contain confidential commercial information of ISI.

In response to (e), details of briefing material for the AOPS and CSC projects on negotiated profit rates cannot be disclosed as they contain confidential commercial information of ISI.

Question No. 238—**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:**

With regard to the Office of the Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise: (a) when will a system for fielding complaints be operational; (b) what will be the process for assessing complaints when they arrive; (c) how many official complaints has the office received to date; and (d) if the answer to (c) is none, what steps has the ombudsperson and her staff undertaken since her appointment on April 8, 2019?

Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Small Business and Export Promotion and Minister of International Trade, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following reflects a consolidated response approved on behalf of Global Affairs Canada ministers.

In response to (a), the Canadian ombudsperson for responsible enterprise, CORE, system for filing complaints is currently in development. It plans to implement phase one by launching a web portal for filing complaints in early May 2020. An electronic client management system, CRM, is under development and will be implemented as part of phase two of the complaint system, which will improve its accessibility.

In response to (b), CORE's standard operating procedures have been drafted and will be made available for consultation with stakeholders in early January 2020. When the CORE website is launched, there will be an opportunity for broader public consultation.

In response to (c), CORE has not received any official complaints to date.

In response to (d), since the appointment of Sheri Meyerhoffer as ombudsperson in April 2019, numerous activities have been undertaken, including: establishing the office, i.e., staff, space, systems, procedures, meetings with more than 150 stakeholders as of November 30, 2019, speaking engagements, participation in numerous national and international events and conferences and the negotiation of memoranda of understanding with Global Affairs Canada and other government bodies.

* * *

• (1550)

[English]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to the following questions could be made orders for returns, these returns would be tabled immediately.

Questions Nos. 1, 3, 4, 6 to 13, 15 to 17, 21 to 23, 25 to 30, 33, 34, 36 to 39, 41 to 45, 47 to 57, 59, 60, 62, 64, 68, 69, 71 to 76, 78, 79, 81 to 86, 92 to 102, 104, 105, 108 to 113, 115 to 118, 121 to 124, 126, 130, 131, 134, 136, 137, 141, 142, 144, 145, 147, 148, 152 to 156, 161, 162, 164 to 172, 174, 176, 177, 180 to 182, 184 to 193, 195 to 199, 201 to 203, 205, 207, 209 to 211, 213 to 215, 217 to 224, 226 to 230, 232 to 237, 239, 240.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 1—**Ms. Rachel Blaney:**

With regard to the barge Nana Provider and its grounding off of Quadra Island in the Salish Sea on November 9, 2019, while being towed by the Polar King: (a) was the government notified by domestic or international authorities if the Nana Provider was carrying any dangerous goods as defined in the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, and, if so, which authorities reported the dangerous goods and when; (b) were the barge and tug following a proper route as prescribed in the Canadian Coast Guards' Radio Aids to Navigation 2019 in the time leading up to the Nana Provider's grounding; (c) what are the requirements for a vessel to use the Inside Passage instead of travelling along the West Coast of Vancouver Island and did the Nana Provider meet those requirements; (d) was there any communication from the Coast Guard's Marine Communications and Traffic Services prior to the grounding that would have prevented it; (e) what has the government deter-

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mined was the reason for the barge running aground; (f) if the reason has not yet been determined, (i) when is the expected date of completion of the investigation; (ii) will the results of the investigation be publicly available; (iii) how does the government intend to inform local, Indigenous, provincial and federal representatives of the result of the investigation; (g) to which authority or authorities was the occurrence reported and when; (h) how were affected Indigenous communities consulted and involved in the reporting, management of the stationary barge, and salvage processes; (i) what was the capacity of each of the federal vessels that responded to the occurrence to mitigate damage to the environment and people nearby; and (j) how long did it take each of the federal response vessels to arrive from the time of reporting?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 3—**Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to government usage of cargo planes, excluding for military purposes, since January 1, 2016: (a) what are the details of all instances where government aircraft was used for cargo flights including (i) date, (ii) origin and destination for each leg, (iii) type of aircraft, (iv) description of cargo, (v) related government event cargo was used for, if applicable; and (b) what are the details of all instances where the government chartered cargo aircraft including (i) date, (ii) origin and destination for each leg, (iii) type of aircraft, (iv) description of cargo, (v) related government event cargo was intended for, if applicable, (vi) vendor, (vii) amount paid to vendor?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 4—**Mr. John Nater:**

With regard to government expenditures with the Internet media company BuzzFeed, since January 1, 2019, and broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity: what are the details of each expenditure, including the (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) description of expenditure or ad campaign, (iv) title for each "quiz" or "story" purchased?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 6—**Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to communication between the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the government: (a) with the exception of media inquiries, did anyone in the government receive any communication from the CBC, during the 2019 writ period and if so, what are the details of the such communication including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) subject matter, (v) summary of contents; and (b) what are the details of any correspondence or briefing materials which have been provided to the Privy Council Office, the Office of the Prime Minister or the Department of Canadian Heritage regarding the CBC since September 11, 2019, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title or subject matter, (v) file number, (vi) summary of contents?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 7—**Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to the government's policy on the political neutrality of Crown corporations: what is the government's policy regarding Crown corporations commencing legal action or suing political parties during a writ period?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 8—**Mr. Chris Warkentin:**

With regard to taxpayer-funded legal representation, since November 4, 2015: has any cabinet minister, including the Prime Minister, retained taxpayer-funded independent legal counsel and, if so, (i) what was the matter related to, (ii) what was the rationale provided to the Department of Justice to authorize the independent legal counsel, (iii) what was the name of the independent legal counsel, (iv) what was the total cost of the independent legal counsel, (v) what was the hourly rate authorized by the government to pay for the independent legal counsel, (vi) why were government lawyers not used instead of independent legal counsel?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 9—Mr. Martin Shields:**

With regard to government loans and grants to businesses since January 1, 2016: (a) what are the names of the companies that received grants and loans, including, (i) the program under which the loan was granted, (ii) the amount of the loan, (iii) the amount that has been paid back to date, (iv) the amount that is currently outstanding, (v) the amount that was originally announced, (vi) the reason for any write-down or write-off, (vii) the number of jobs that were supposed to be created by the loan, (viii) the number of jobs that were actually created after the loan was issued, (ix) the number of jobs that were committed to be maintained because of the loan, (x) the number of jobs that were actually maintained; and (b) for companies that failed to meet their job numbers, what action has the government taken to address the missed target?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 10—Mr. Martin Shields:

With regard to spending on stock photographs or images by the government since January 1, 2018, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation, and other government entity: (a) what is the total amount spent; and (b) what are the details of each contract or expenditure, including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) details and duration of contract, (iv) date, (v) number of photos or images purchased, (vi) where the photos or images were used (Internet, billboards, etc.), (vii) description of advertising campaign, (viii) file number of contract?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 11—Mr. Martin Shields:

With regard to government advertising, since June 1, 2018: (a) how much has been spent on billboards; and (b) for each expenditure in (a), what was the (i) start and end date, (ii) cost, (iii) topic, (iv) number of billboards, (v) locations of billboards, (vi) vendor, (vii) type of billboards, such as electronic or traditional?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 12—Mr. Martin Shields:

With regard to government expenditures on membership fees, broken down by department, agency and Crown corporation, since June 1, 2018: (a) how much money has been spent; and (b) what are the details of each expenditure including the name of the organization or vendor, date of purchase, and amount spent?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 13—Mr. Mike Lake:

With regard to the government's international development funding, since April 1, 2019: what are the details of all funding provided to civil society organizations, including the (i) name of the organization, (ii) amount received, (iii) amount requested, (iv) purpose of the funding and the description of related projects, (v) date of the funding announcement, (vi) start and end dates of the project receiving funding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 15—Mr. Luc Berthold:

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank: (a) what is the total yearly operations budget of the bank; and (b) what is the breakdown of the yearly operations budget by line item?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 16—Mr. Luc Berthold:

With regard to the Building Canada Fund: (a) what is the list of all projects currently being funded by the fund; (b) for each project in (a) what are the details including (i) project name, (ii) description, (iii) location, (iv) current status of the project, (v) projected completion date, (vi) whether or not federal payment for project has actually been delivered to date, and if so, what is the amount?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 17—Mr. Luc Berthold:

With regard to government-funded infrastructure projects: (a) what is the complete list of projects the government expects to be completed in the 2020 calendar year; and (b) what are the details of all projects in (a), including (i) expected dates of completion, (ii) locations, (iii) federal ridings, (iv) projects' title or summary, (v) total federal contributions, (vi) dates when projects began?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 21—Mr. James Bezan:

With regard to Canada's military presence in the Middle East and its participation in Operation ARTEMIS, Canada's mission to help stop terrorism and make Middle Eastern waters more secure: (a) how many Canadian Armed Forces members are currently deployed as part of Operation ARTEMIS; (b) does the Royal Canadian Navy currently have any naval assets deployed as part of Operation ARTEMIS; (c) what contributions is Canada making to regional maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz, the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the Arabian Sea; and (d) does the government consider the Islamic Republic of Iran to be in violation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and, if so, what action has the government taken to hold the Islamic Republic of Iran accountable for these violations?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 22—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank: (a) what is the complete list of infrastructure projects financed by the bank since June 1, 2018; and (b) for each project in (a), what are the details including (i) amount of federal financing, (ii) location of project, (iii) scheduled completion date of project, (iv) project description?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 23—Mr. Matt Jeneroux:

With regard to the September 2019 Globe and Mail story entitled "Minister intervened in decision regarding performance pay for Canada Infrastructure Bank CEO": (a) on what date or dates did the Minister of Infrastructure intervene regarding bonuses or performance pay for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Canada Infrastructure Bank; (b) what was the eligibility range of bonuses or performance pay; (c) what was the range of bonuses or performance pay (i) prior to and (ii) after each ministerial intervention, broken down by date of intervention; and (d) what is the current range for the CEO's (i) salary, (ii) bonus and performance pay, (iii) other compensation, (iv) total compensation?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 25—Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:

With regard to government spending announcements made between June 1, 2019, and September 11, 2019: (a) broken down by each announcement, which ones were (i) announcements of new money, (ii) re-announcements of funding already committed, (iii) announcements of a renewal of existing ongoing funding; and (b) of the announcements in (a) has any of the announcement funding actually been delivered and, if so, and broken down by announcement, (i) which announcements have had the funding actually delivered, (ii) how much was actually delivered, (iii) on what date was the funding actually transferred from the government to the recipient?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 26—Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:

With regard to contracts granted by any department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity, since January 1, 2017, to the Bluesky Strategy Group: (a) who authorized the contract; (b) what are the contracts' reference and file numbers; (c) what are the dates of the contracts; (d) what are the descriptions of the services provided; (e) what are the delivery dates; (f) what are the original contracts' values; and (g) what are the final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 27—Mrs. Stephanie Kusie:

With regard to appointments to federal boards, agencies, and associations since January 1, 2019, broken down by appointment: what are the details of each appointee, including (i) name, (ii) province, (iii) position, (iv) start and end date of term, (v) was the appointment a reappointment or a new appointment?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 28—Mr. Corey Tochor:

With regard to the additional goods and services tax (GST), or harmonized sales tax where applicable, revenue received as a result of the GST being charged on the carbon tax: how much revenue did the government receive from the GST being charged on the carbon tax in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 29—Mr. Corey Tochor:**

With regard to government spending for photographers or photography service contracts since January 1, 2019, broken down by department or agency: (a) how much was spent; (b) what were the dates and duration of each contract; (c) what was the initial and final value of each contract; (d) what were the details of all events or occasions for each contract including (i) date, (ii) event description; and (e) what were the locations where the services were performed for each contract?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 30—Mr. Corey Tochor:

With regard to materials prepared for ministers from January 1, 2019, to present: for every briefing document prepared, what is the (i) date of the document, (ii) title or subject matter of the document, (iii) departmental internal tracking number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 33—Mr. Warren Steinley:

With regard to expenditures on social media influencers, including any contracts which would use social media influencers as part of a public relations campaign, since June 1, 2018: (a) what are the details of all such expenditures, including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) campaign description, (iv) date of contract, (v) name or handle of influencer; and (b) for each campaign that paid an influencer, was there a requirement to make public as part of a disclaimer the fact that the influencer was being paid by the government and, if not, why not?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 34—Mr. Warren Steinley:

With regard to management consulting contracts signed by the government since January 1, 2019, broken down by department, agency, and Crown corporation: (a) what was the total amount of money spent; (b) for each contract, what was the (i) vendor name, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) file number; (c) each time a management consultant was brought in, what was the desired outcome or goals; (d) how does the government measure whether or not the goals in (c) were met; (e) does the government have any recourse if the goals in (c) were not met; (f) for which contracts were the goals met; and (g) for which contracts were the goals not met?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 36—Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:

With regard to the number of RCMP officers, broken down by province: (a) what is the total number of active Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers as of (i) January 1, 2014, (ii) January 1, 2015, (iii) January 1, 2016, (iv) January 1, 2017, (v) January 1, 2018, (vi) January 1, 2019, (vii) present; (b) what are the names and locations of each RCMP detachment open as of (i) January 1, 2014, (ii) January 1, 2015, (iii) January 1, 2016, (iv) January 1, 2017, (v) January 1, 2018, (vi) January 1, 2019, (vii) present; and (c) how many RCMP officers were assigned to each detachment referred to in (b) as of (i) January 1, 2014, (ii) January 1, 2015, (iii) January 1, 2016, (iv) January 1, 2017, (v) January 1, 2018, (vi) January 1, 2019, (vii) present?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 37—Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:

With regard to warrants issued pursuant to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act: (a) from 2010 to 2019, broken down by year, how many warrants have been issued; and (b) from 2010 to 2019, broken down by year, what is the average time from request to implementation of a warrant?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 38—Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:

With regard to inmates in facilities operated by Correctional Service Canada who have escaped custody or have been unlawfully at large: (a) how many individuals escaped or were unlawfully at large in (i) 2016, (ii) 2017, (iii) 2018, (iv) 2019 to date; (b) how many individuals are currently at large, as of the date of this question; and (c) what is the breakdown of (a) by correctional facility and by security classification?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 39—Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus:

With regard to correctional institutions, sorted by institution and by year since 2015: (a) how many offenders died while in custody; and (b) what was the cause of death?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 41—Mr. Kerry Diotte:

With regard to government expenditures related to the Canada 2020 sponsored speech of Barack Obama on May 31, 2019, including tickets, sponsorship and other expenses, and broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity: (a) what are the details of all expenses, including the (i) amount, (ii) description of goods or services; and (b) for all tickets or conference fees purchased, (i) who attended the event, (ii) what was the number of tickets, (iii) what was the amount per ticket?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 42—Mr. Robert Kitchen:

With regard to the government's CC-150 (Airbus), since January 1, 2019: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 43—Mr. Robert Kitchen:

With regard to government procurement and contracts for the provision of research or speech writing services to ministers, since April 1, 2019: (a) what are the details of contracts, including (i) the start and end dates, (ii) contracting parties, (iii) file number, (iv) nature or description of the work, (v) value of contract; and (b) in the case of a contract for speech writing, what is the (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) audience or event at which the speech was, or was intended to be delivered, (iv) number of speeches to be written, (v) cost charged per speech?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 44—Mr. Robert Kitchen:

With regard to the Prime Minister's claim that the government will not be legalizing or decriminalizing hard drugs: (a) does that include heroin; and (b) will the government exclude heroin from any so-called "safe supply" programs?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 45—Mr. Colin Carrie:

With regard to the merger of the Hamilton Port Authority and the Oshawa Port Authority: (a) what is the proposed timeline for the merger; (b) how many jobs are projected to be transferred as a result of the merger, and where will those jobs be transferred to; (c) how many jobs are projected to be redundant or eliminated as a result of the merger; and (d) did the government do an economic impact assessment on the merger and if so, what were the results for (i) Oshawa, (ii) Hamilton?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 47—Mr. Marty Morantz:

With regard to Section 2.33 of the Fall 2017 Report of the Auditor General of Canada which states in reference to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) that "They gave us wrong information almost 30 per cent of the time": (a) what specific action has CRA taken since the publication of the report to stop the dissemination or wrong information; and (b) what are the latest available statistics regarding how often CRA disseminates wrong information?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 48—Mrs. Karen Vecchio:**

With regard to the National Housing Co-Investment Fund: (a) what are the details of all funding recipients from the Fund since January 1, 2019, including (i) name of recipient, (ii) amount of federal contribution, (iii) date, (iv) description of project, (v) location; (b) what specific standards, for (i) accessibility, (ii) energy efficiency, are required of the recipients in (a); (c) did any of the recipients in (a) fail to meet the accessibility or energy efficiency standards and, if so, what are the details, including (i) name of recipient, (ii) which standards they failed to meet, (iii) what specific measures, if any, are in place to ensure that recipients meet the standards, (iv) whether a waiver issued to the recipient and, if so, by whom?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 49—Mrs. Karen Vecchio:

With regard to expenditures made by the government since January 1, 2019, under government-wide object code 3259 (Miscellaneous expenditures not Elsewhere Classified), or a similar code if department uses another system: what are the details of each expenditure, including (i) vendor name, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) description of goods or services provided, (v) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 50—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:

With regard to contracts granted by any department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity, since January 1, 2017, to the Pembina Institute: (a) who authorized the contract; (b) what are the contracts' references and file numbers; (c) what are the dates of the contracts; (d) what are the descriptions of the services provided; (e) what are the delivery dates; (f) what are the original contracts' values; and (g) what are the final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 51—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:

With regard to grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada since January 1, 2018: what are the details of each, including (i) dates of funding, (ii) recipients, (iii) locations, (iv) project descriptions?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 52—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:

With regard to contracts granted by any department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity since January 1, 2017, to Feschuk-Reid: (a) who authorized the contracts; (b) what are the contracts' reference and file numbers; (c) what are the dates of the contracts; (d) what are the descriptions of the services provided; (e) what are the delivery dates; (f) what are the original contracts' values; and (g) what are the final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 53—Mr. Earl Dreeshen:

With regard to usage of the government's fleet of Challenger aircraft, since May 1, 2019: what are the details of the legs of each flight, including (i) date, (ii) point of departure, (iii) destination, (iv) number of passengers, (v) names and titles of passengers, excluding security or Canadian Armed Forces members, (vi) total catering bill related to the flight?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 54—Mr. Bob Zimmer:

With regard to the Cambridge Analytica and AggregateIQ scandal and the Privacy Commissioner of Canada's comment that "Reform is urgently needed to maintain public trust in political parties and our democratic system": what specific reforms will the government commit to in response to the Privacy Commissioner's concerns?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 55—Mr. Bob Zimmer:

With regard to the Office of the Prime Minister and ministers' offices, from January 1, 2019, to present: (a) how much was spent on contracts for (i) consultants, (ii) advisors, (iii) other temporary personnel; (b) what are the names of the individuals and companies that correspond to these amounts; and (c) for each person and company in (b), what were their billing periods and what type of work did they provide?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 56—Mr. Chris d'Entremont:

With regard to projects funded since December 1, 2018, under the Atlantic Fisheries Fund: what are the details of all such projects, including (i) project name, (ii) description, (iii) location, (iv) recipient, (v) amount of federal contribution, (vi) date of announcement?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 57—Mr. Chris d'Entremont:

With regard to grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency since January 1, 2018: what are the details of each, including (i) date of funding, (ii) recipient, (iii) location, (iv) project description?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 59—Mr. Chris d'Entremont:

With regard to government funding for the proposed central Inverness County airport to service golf courses in Cabot, Nova Scotia: will the government be providing funding to the airport and, if so, what are the details of any such funding including amount?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 60—Mr. Blaine Calkins:

With regard to the funding announced in budget 2018 in relation to the opioid crisis: (a) how much of the funding announced in budget 2018 has been delivered to date; and (b) what are the details of the funding delivered to date, including (i) recipient (ii) date funding was received, (iii) amount, (iv) purpose of funding, (v) duration and intended location of funding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 62—Mr. Kerry Diotte:

With regard to government spending on online advertising since January 1, 2018: what is the total amount spent in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019, broken down by outlet or online platform?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 64—Ms. Marilyn Gladu:

With regard to the Federal Tobacco Control Strategy (FTCS), broken down by fiscal year for 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19: (a) what was the budget for the FTCS; (b) how much of that budget was spent within the fiscal year; (c) how much was spent on each component of the FTCS, specifically, (i) mass media, (ii) policy and regulatory development, (iii) research, (iv) surveillance, (v) enforcement, (vi) grants and contributions, (vii) programs for Indigenous Canadians; (d) were any other activities not listed in (c) funded by the FTCS and, if so, how much was spent on each of these activities; and (e) was part of the budget reallocated for purposes other than tobacco control and, if so, how much was reallocated?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 68—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to the government's decision not to fully cooperate with the RCMP in relation to the SNC-Lavalin affair, including the decision not to grant the RCMP access to all relevant documents: was the decision not to cooperate made by (i) the cabinet, (ii) the Prime Minister, (iii) the Clerk of the Privy Council without approval by the cabinet?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 69—Mr. Dan Albas:

With regard to the one-for-one rule with respect to regulations and red tape: for each new regulation which was put in place since January 1, 2019, what regulation was removed?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 71—Mr. Garnett Genuis:**

With regard to the government's policy in relation to the Islamic Republic of Iran: (a) when will the government comply with the will of the House as expressed in Vote No. 754 on June 12, 2018; (b) what is the cause of the delay in listing the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist entity under the Criminal Code of Canada; (c) has the government compiled a list of Iran's human rights offenders in preparation of imposing sanctions in accordance with the Justice for the Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law); and (d) if the answer in (c) is yes, what individuals are on this list?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 72—Mr. Garnett Genuis:

With regard to the ongoing internment and persecution of Uyghur Muslims in China: (a) what specific actions has the government taken to protect and promote the basic human rights of Uyghur Muslims in China; (b) has the government conducted any investigations or examinations into whether the People's Republic of China is committing ethnic cleansing or genocide of Uyghur Muslims; (c) has the Office of Freedom, Human Rights, and Inclusion undertaken any projects or activities to address the internment and persecution of Uyghur Muslims in China; and (d) if the answer in (c) is yes, (i) what is the total amount spent on said activities, (ii) how many full time employees have been dedicated to said activities, (iii) what is the description of the projects or activities?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 73—Mr. Garnett Genuis:

With regard to the Contracting Policy Notice 2019-01 from the Treasury Board Secretariat: (a) what is required on the part of the bidder to indicate that they meet the accessibility requirement; (b) how will the responsible departments ensure that suppliers are incorporating accessibility criteria into their bids; and (c) is accessibility being added to the value proposition evaluation criteria under the Industrial and Technological Benefits Policy?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 74—Mr. Kevin Waugh:

With regard to expense claims by a minister or ministerial exempt staff which were paid out, since June 1, 2018, but then later paid-back to the Receiver General: what are the details of each such payment or reimbursement, including (i) date of expense claim, (ii) date money was reimbursed to the Receiver General, (iii) amount of initial expense claim and payment, (iv) amount reimbursed to the Receiver General, (v) description of products or services for each claim, (vi) reason for reimbursement to the Receiver General?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 75—Mr. Kevin Waugh:

With regard to contracts granted by any department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity, since January 1, 2019, to The Gandalf Group or any of its partners: (a) for each contract, what are the (i) vendors' names, (ii) contracts' reference and file numbers, (iii) dates of the contracts; (iv) descriptions of the services provided, (v) the delivery dates, (vi) original contracts' values, (vii) final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values; and (b) what are the details of any research, polling or advice provided to the government as a result of the contracts in (a)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 76—Mr. Kevin Waugh:

With regard to the purchase of promotional products for handouts or giveaways at trade shows, conferences, and other events, since June 1, 2018 and broken down by department, agency, or Crown corporation: (a) what products were purchased; (b) what quantity of each product was purchased; (c) what was the amount spent; (d) what was the price per unit; (e) at what events, or type of events, were the products distributed at; (f) what country was each product manufactured in; and (g) what is the relevant file number for each purchase?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 78—Mr. Tim Uppal:

With regard to the proposed Department of Defence Procurement: (a) what are the anticipated or preliminary costs associated with creating the proposed department; (b) has a fiscal analysis been conducted on the creation of the proposed de-

partment; and (c) have any third parties been contracted to develop or evaluate the creation of the proposed department and, if so, who?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 79—Mr. Tim Uppal:

With regard to the Treasury Board's "Policies for Ministers' Offices": (a) when was section 3.6 of the policies amended to increase, from one to three, the departmental staff assigned to ministers' offices whose salaries and other personnel costs are not borne by ministers' offices' budgets; (b) are salaries and other personnel costs of departmental staff assigned to ministers' offices included in the information presented in the Expenditure of Ministers' Offices tables in Section 10 of Volume III of the Public Accounts of Canada; and (c) if the answer to (b) is no, what are the amounts, for the 2016-17, and subsequent fiscal years, of salaries and other personnel costs of departmental staff assigned to ministers' offices, broken down in the same manner as information is presented in those Expenditure of Ministers' Offices tables (i.e., by year, portfolio, individual minister, and standard object)?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 81—Mr. Eric Duncan:

With regard to government advertising: what percentage of government advertising was spent on media outlets that focus on primarily serving rural areas as defined by Statistics Canada, broken down by year since 2016?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 82—Mr. Eric Duncan:

With regard to contracts issued by ministers' offices for the purpose of media training, since January 1, 2018: what are the details of all such contracts, including (i) vendors, (ii) dates of contract, (iii) dates of training, (iv) individuals whom training was for, (v) amounts?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 83—Mr. Eric Duncan:

With regard to materials prepared for deputy ministers or department heads from January 1, 2019, to present: for every briefing document prepared, what is (i) the date on the document, (ii) the title or subject matter of the document, (iii) the department's internal tracking number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 84—Mr. Eric Duncan:

With regard to government expenditures on conference fees, since January 1, 2019, and broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation and other government entity: (a) what is the total amount spent on conference fees; and (b) what are the details of each expenditure, including (i) amount, (ii) host and title of the conference, (iii) date of the conference, (iv) location, (v) number of attendees paid for by the government?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 85—Mr. Chris Lewis:

With regard to federal taxes, including tariffs, service charges and fees, since 2015: (a) in which instance was there an increase, a new imposition or the elimination of a credit or benefit, broken down by (i) the particular tax, tariff, charge, fee or credit, (ii) the rate or amount, (iii) the date it took effect, (iv) the revenue any increase has generated, (v) the department that made the change; and (b) what is the annual total of revenue generated by each of the changes in (a), broken down by year?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 86—Mr. Chris Lewis:**

With regard to renovation, redesign and refurbishing of ministers' or deputy ministers' offices since January 1, 2019: (a) what is the total cost of any spending on renovating, redesigning, and refurbishing for each ministerial office, broken down by (i) total cost, (ii) moving services, (iii) renovating services, (iv) painting, (v) flooring, (vi) furniture, (vii) appliances, (viii) art installation, (ix) all other expenditures; and (b) what is the total cost of any spending on renovating, redesigning, and refurbishing for each deputy minister's office, broken down by (i) total cost, (ii) moving services, (iii) renovating services, (iv) painting, (v) flooring, (vi) furniture, (vii) appliances, (viii) art installation, (ix) all other expenditures?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 92—Mrs. Kelly Block:

With regard to reports of bed bugs and other insect infestation in government buildings in the National Capital Region: what are the details of all such infestation reports since January 1, 2017, including (i) name of building, (ii) address, (iii) type of infestation (bed bugs, wasps, etc.), (iv) was corrective action taken in response to the report, and, if so what action was taken, (v) date of infestation report, (vi) date of corrective action, (vii) total amount spent on each of corrective action, (viii) number of employees sent home as a result of the infestation, (ix) dates on which employees were sent home?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 93—Mrs. Kelly Block:

With regard to the 37,000 buildings owned by the government: (a) how many buildings are above the occupancy capacity; (b) how many buildings are at 100% capacity; (c) how many buildings are between 90% and 100% capacity; (d) how many buildings are between 80% and 90% capacity; (e) how many buildings are between 70% and 80% capacity; (f) how many buildings are between 60% and 70% capacity; (g) how many buildings are between 50% and 60% capacity; (h) how many buildings are under 50% capacity; and (i) for buildings referred to in (h), what are the costs related to (i) upkeep and maintenance, (ii) utilities, (iii) cleaning?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 94—Mrs. Kelly Block:

With regard to the acquisition of buildings by government departments or agencies, since June 1, 2018, for each transaction: (i) what is the location of the building, (ii) what is the amount paid, (iii) what is the type of building, (iv) what is the file number, (v) what is the date of transaction, (vi) what is the reason for acquisition, (vii) who was the owner of building prior to government acquisition, (viii) what is the government-wide object code?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 95—Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:

With regard to cyberattacks on government departments and agencies since January 1, 2016, broken down by year: (a) how many attempted cyberattacks on government websites or servers were successfully blocked; (b) how many cyberattacks on government websites or servers were not successfully blocked; and (c) for each cyberattack in (b), what are the details, including (i) date, (ii) departments or agencies targeted, (iii) summary of incident, (iv) whether or not police were informed or charges were laid?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 96—Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:

With regards to government computers and cyberattacks: (a) what is the government's policy when a ransomware attack occurs; and (b) has any department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity made any payments to any individuals or organizations as a result of a ransomware attack since November 4, 2015, and if so what are the details including (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) form of payment, (iv) recipient of payment, if known?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 97—Mr. Bob Saroya:

With regard to contracts under \$10,000 granted by the Privy Council Office, since January 1, 2019: what are the (i) vendors' names and locations, (ii) contracts' references and file numbers, (iii) dates of the contracts, (iv) descriptions of the goods or services provided, (v) delivery dates, (vi) original contracts' values, (vii) final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 98—Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to government expenditures on gala, concert or sporting event tickets since May 1, 2019: what was the (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) total cost, (iv) cost per ticket, (v) number of tickets, (vi) title of persons using the tickets, (vii) name or title of event for tickets purchased by, or billed to, any department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 99—Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to government expenditures on the rental of aircraft since January 1, 2019, and broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation and other government entity: (a) what is the total amount spent on the rental of aircraft; and (b) what are the details of each expenditure, including (i) amount, (ii) vendor, (iii) dates of rental, (iv) type of aircraft, (v) purpose of trip, (vi) origin and destination of flights, (vii) titles of passengers?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 100—Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to costs associated with the Prime Minister's transition team following the 2019 federal election: (a) what were the total costs associated with the transition team; (b) what is the breakdown of all expenditures by type; (c) what are the details of all contracts entered into by the government for the transition team, including (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services; (d) why did the government rent office space at 222 Queen Street in Ottawa for the transition team as opposed to using existing government office space; and (e) how much did the government pay for the office space at 222 Queen Street and what was the rental or lease start date and end date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 101—Mr. Ben Lobb:

With regard to materials prepared for ministerial exempt staff from January 1, 2019, to present: for every briefing document prepared, what is (i) the date on the document, (ii) the title or subject matter of the document, (iii) the department's internal tracking number, (iv) the author, (v) the recipient?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 102—Mr. Bob Saroya:

With regard to meetings of cabinet and its committees, since November 4, 2015: how many times, broken down by year, did cabinet and each of its committees meet?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 104—Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:

With regard to polling by the government since January 1, 2018: (a) what is the list of all poll questions and subjects that have been commissioned since January 1, 2018; (b) what was the (i) date and duration, (ii) sample size of each poll in (a); and (c) what are the details of all polling contracts signed in January 1, 2018 including (i) vendor, (ii) date, (iii) amount, (iv) date and duration, (v) summary of contract including number of polls conducted?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 105—Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:

With regard to the federal executive vehicle fleet for ministers, as of December 5, 2019: (a) what is the total number of vehicles in the fleet; (b) what has been the total cost of (i) procuring vehicles for the fleet, (ii) the fleet as a whole; (c) what is the estimated total annual cost of salaries for drivers, including ministerial exempt staff and federal public servants whose primary responsibility consists of driving vehicles in the fleet; (d) what are the models, years and manufacturers of each vehicle in the fleet; and (e) what are the names and positions of each authorized user of a vehicle in the fleet?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 108—Mr. Gérard Deltell:

With regard to annual budgets allocated to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and to the Office of the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs: (a) is there a separate annual budget for each office and, if not, is there one consolidated budget; (b) for the offices in (a), what is the allocated budget amount; and (c) how many Privy Council Office officials have been assigned to assist the minister in her role as (i) Deputy Prime Minister, (ii) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 109—Mr. Philip Lawrence:

With regard to government support for residents and property owners impacted by the high water levels on Lake Ontario: (a) what actions, if any, will the government take, either directly, or through the International Joint Commission/the International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board, in order to minimize the amount of flooding on Lake Ontario in 2020; (b) what is the government's (i) short-term, (ii) medium-term, (iii) long-term plans to address the water levels on Lake Ontario; (c) what specific financial assistance, if any, is the government providing to (i) residents or property owners, (ii) municipalities, impacted by the outflow levels in 2020; (d) what specific financial assistance, if any, did the government provide to (i) residents or property owners, (ii) municipalities, impacted by the outflow levels in (i) 2017, (ii) 2019; (e) since 2016, how many times has the (i) high trigger or (ii) low trigger of the H14 criterion been met; (f) for each instance in (e), (i) what was the date, (ii) water level, (iii) specific actions taken as a result of the trigger; and (g) for each instance in (e) where a trigger level was met, but action was not taken, what was the rationale for not taking action?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 110—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to the total amount of late-payment charges for telephone services, since June 1, 2018, and broken down by late charges incurred by government department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity: what is the total amount late-payment charges and interest charges incurred in each month for services provided by (i) Rogers, (ii) Bell, (iii) Telus, (iv) other cellular or cable provider?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 111—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to government purchases of tickets or passes for Canada 2020 events during 2019: what are the details of all such expenditures, including (i) date of event, (ii) event description, (iii) amount, (iv) number of tickets or passes, (v) price per ticket or pass, (vi) titles of individuals for whom the tickets or passes were intended?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 112—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to the government's participation in the UN Climate Change Conference COP 25 in Madrid, Spain, in December 2019: (a) how many individuals were in the Canadian delegation; (b) what were the titles of all individuals in (a); and (c) what are the titles of all other individuals who attended COP 25 for whom the government paid expenses?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 113—Mr. Arnold Viersen:

With regard to the new "For Glowing Hearts" logo unveiled by Destination Canada: (a) which firm or individual designed the logo; (b) what were the total expenditures in relation to designing the logo; and (c) what are the details of any other expenditures in relation to the logo, including (i) amount, (ii) description of goods or services?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 115—Mr. Scot Davidson:

With regard to the disposition of government assets, since January 1, 2018: (a) on how many occasions has the government repurchased or reacquired a lot which had been disposed of in accordance with the Treasury Board's "Directive on Disposal of Surplus Materiel"; and (b) for each occasion in (a), what was the (i) description or nature of the item or items which constituted the lot, (ii) sale account number or other reference number, (iii) date on which the sale closed, (iv) price at which the item was disposed of to the buyer, (v) price at which the item was repurchased from the buyer, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 116—Mr. Scot Davidson:

With regard to the government operating booths or displays at trade shows or similar type events, since January 1, 2019, and broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity: what are the details of each event, including (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) title of event, (iv) amount paid by the government for space at the event, (v) amount spent by the government in relation to the displays and a breakdown of such expenses, if known?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 117—Mr. Scot Davidson:

With regard to the consumption of alcohol and food on flights taken on government-owned Airbus and Challenger aircraft since January 1, 2019: (a) on which flights was alcohol consumed; and (b) for each flight where alcohol was consumed, (i) what is the value of the alcohol consumed, (ii) what was the origin and destination of the flight, (iii) what was the flight date, (iv) what is the breakdown of alcoholic beverages consumed by specific beverage and quantity, (v) what is the cost of food consumed on each flight?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 118—Mr. Todd Doherty:

With regard to Transport Canada's testing of the Boeing 737 Max aircraft: (a) will Transport Canada be conducting its own testing of the aircraft prior to recertification and, if so, which specific tests will Transport Canada be conducting itself; (b) will Transport Canada be relying on the testing of foreign nations or their relevant agency to recertify the aircraft and, if so, which specific tests will Transport Canada be relying on from foreign nations; (c) will Transport Canada be relying on the testing of Boeing to recertify the aircraft and, if so, which specific tests will Transport Canada be relying on from Boeing; and (d) will Transport Canada be relying on any other forms of testing to recertify the aircraft and, if so, which forms?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 121—Mr. Michael D. Chong:

With regard to foreign interference in the 2019 federal election: (a) is the government aware of any organized efforts from foreign nations to interfere in the 2019 election, and, if so (i) what nations were responsible for the effort, (ii) what efforts did each nation make; and (b) did any member of the government request that any foreign head of state or former foreign head of state endorse any particular party during the last election, and, if so, does the government considered that action to be foreign interference?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 122—Mr. Michael D. Chong:

With regard to social media "influencers" who have been selected to be paid by Elections Canada in relation to the 2019 election: (a) who are all of the "influencers"; (b) what are the details of each "influencer", including platforms and "handles"; (c) why was each "influencer" chosen by Elections Canada; and (d) how much remuneration has Elections Canada agreed to pay each "influencer", broken down by "influencer"?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 123—Mr. Michael D. Chong:

With regard to the True North Centre for Public Policy v Canada (Leaders' Debates Commission) litigation: (a) what costs have been incurred to date on behalf of the Leaders' Debates Commission; (b) what costs have been incurred to date on behalf of the Attorney General of Canada; (c) was the Minister of Democratic Institutions or the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada briefed, and, if so, what are the details of each briefing; (d) were instructions provided by the minister or the president; (e) were instructions sought from the minister or the president; and (f) if the instructions were not sought from the minister or the president, who is the most senior official who instructed counsel for the Attorney General of Canada?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 124—Mr. Mel Arnold:

With regard to the Small Craft Harbours program, since January 1, 2019: (a) what are the details of all grants and contributions made from the program, including for each the (i) recipient, (ii) amount, (iii) project description, (iv) start date and duration of project, (v) type of contribution (e.g. repayable grant, loan, etc.), (vi) location of recipient, including municipality and province; and (b) what is the total amount paid out from the program, broken down by province?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 126—Mr. Mel Arnold:

With regard to the Oceans Protection Plan (OPP): (a) what is the total amount of OPP funds disbursed since June 1, 2018; and (b) what are the details of each project or organization funded by the OPP, including (i) recipient, (ii) location, (iii) date of announcement, (iv) amount received to date, (v) project description or purpose of funding, (vi) duration of project?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 130—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to the federal Crown Borrowing Program (CBP), which seeks to increase the liquidity and efficiency of Crown corporation borrowings, from January 1, 2017, to date: (a) how many requests for loans were received by the CBP lending facility's lending desk; (b) of the applications for loans, how many were approved; (c) for each of the approved CBP loans, what was (i) the purpose of the loan, (ii) the total loan amount, (iii) the terms of the loan, (iv) the issuance date, (v) the maturity date; (d) what is the total aggregate amount of loans provided to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; (e) what is the total aggregate amount of loans provided to the Business Development Bank of Canada; (f) what is the total aggregate amount of loans provided to Farm Credit Canada; (g) of the CBP loans issued, how many have defaulted or been deemed to be non-repayable; and (h) what is the total outstanding issuance of CBP loans?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 131—Mr. Tom Kmiec:

With regard to the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive (FTHBI) announced by the government in 2019, from September 1, 2019, to date: (a) how many applicants have applied for a mortgage through the FTHBI, broken down by province and municipality; (b) of the applicants in (a), how many applicants have been approved and accepted mortgages through the FTHBI, broken down by province and municipality; (c) of the applicants in (b), what is that average value of the mortgage loan; (d) of the applicants in (b), what is that median value of the mortgage loan; (e) what is the total aggregate amount of money lent to homebuyers; (f) what is the breakdown of the percentage of loans originated with each lender comprising more than 5% of total loans issued; and (g) what is the breakdown of the value of outstanding loans insured by each Canadian mortgage insurance company as a percentage of total loans in force?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 134—Mr. Erin O'Toole:

With regard to the government's campaign for a United Nations Security Council seat in 2021: (a) what are the total expenses to date directly related to the campaign, broken down by type of expense; and (b) what are the details of all contracts related to the campaign, including (i) vendor, (ii) date, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 136—Mr. Erin O'Toole:

With regard to the government's position in response to the pro-democracy demonstrations in Hong Kong: (a) has there been any communication between the Government of Canada or its officials and the Government of China or its officials related to the demonstrations and, if so, what are the details, including (i) date, (ii) form of communications, (iii) who was involved in the communication, (iv) content of the messages sent or received; (b) what is the government's official response to the demonstrations; and (c) what is the government's position regarding offering asylum to pro-democracy demonstrators in Hong Kong?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 137—Mr. John Williamson:

With regard to the impact of the Muskrat Falls project on electricity rates in Newfoundland and Labrador: (a) what estimates or projections does the government have regarding electricity rates in Newfoundland and Labrador in (i) 2019, (ii) 2020, (iii) 2021, (iv) 2022; and (b) what specific measures will the government take to reduce electricity rates?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 141—Ms. Rachael Harder:

With regard to Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) inspections at the Port of Vancouver: (a) what is the average wait time for inspection of a shipment; (b) how does the current wait time relate to (i) the previous five years, (ii) other major ports in Canada; (c) what is the current number of employees working on container inspection and how does it relate to employee numbers in the previous five years; (d) what is the average cost (i) to the importer when a container is selected for examination, (ii) to the CBSA to perform each inspection; and (e) what resources are being allocated by the CBSA to (i) address findings of the Audit of the Commercial Program in the Marine Mode, dated December 4, 2018, (ii) decrease current wait times associated with inspection?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 142—Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:

With regard to cybersecurity penetration testing, since January 1, 2016, and broken down by department or agency: (a) has cybersecurity penetration testing occurred; (b) was the penetration testing conducted internally or by an external contractor; (c) if an external contractor was hired, what are the details of the contract, including the (i) date and duration of contract, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount; and (d) what was the nature of the penetration testing?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 144—Mr. Michael D. Chong:

With regard to the \$6-million budget for the Leader's Debates Commission: (a) how much has been spent to date; and (b) what is the breakdown of how the budget was spent, broken down by line item?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 145—Mr. John Williamson:

With regard to Canada Post domestic mail being opened by United States customs officials: (a) does the government or Canada Post allow foreign officials to open domestic mail under any circumstances and, if so, what are those circumstances; (b) what specific measures, if any, will the government take to ensure that Canada Post domestic mail sent to or from Campobello, New Brunswick, is not opened by a foreign government's officials; and (c) has the government raised this matter with U.S. government officials and, if so, what are the details, including (i) who raised the issue, (ii) with whom was it raised, (iii) date, (iv) form, (v) what was the U.S. response?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 147—Mr. Glen Motz:

With regard to Correctional Service Canada, broken down by year since 2008: (a) what was the average number of individuals in a maximum security penitentiary; (b) what was the average number of individuals in a medium security penitentiary; (c) what was the average number of individuals in a minimum security penitentiary; (d) what was the average number of individuals serving their sentence in the community; and (e) for each number in (a) through (d), what capacity percentage does that number represent?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 148—Mr. Peter Kent:**

With regard to the government's proposed Journalism and Written Media Independent Panel of Experts: (a) why does the government require panel members to sign a confidentiality agreement; (b) why will the panel's deliberations not be held in public; and (c) why will the government not list media applicants which are denied funding?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 152—Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay:

With regard to all government spending announcements between June 1, 2019, and September 11, 2019: (a) what is the total amount of all commitments; (b) for each announcement, what was the (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) amount, (iv) description or summary, (v) duration of proposed spending, (vi) name of the member of Parliament or the minister who made announcement, (vii) program from which funding was allocated?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 153—Ms. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay:

With regard to all contracts awarded by the government since January 1, 2019, broken down by department or agency: (a) how many contracts have been awarded to a foreign firm, individual, business, or other entity with a mailing address outside of Canada; (b) for each contract in (a), what is the (i) name of vendor, (ii) date of contract, (iii) summary or description of goods or services provided, (iv) file or tracking number, (v) country of mailing address; and (c) for each contract in (a), was the contract awarded competitively or sole sourced?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 154—Ms. Candice Bergen:

With regard to government revenue from taxes or duties related to cannabis sales: (a) what was the original projected revenue from these taxes or duties in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019; (b) what was the actual revenue generated from these taxes or duties in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019; and (c) what is the projected revenue from these taxes or duties in each of the next five years?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 155—Ms. Candice Bergen:

With regard to RCMP requests for cooperation directed at the Privy Council Office (PCO) or the Office of the Prime Minister (PMO) since January 1, 2016: (a) how many requests for cooperation have been denied by PCO or PMO; and (b) what are the details of each denied request, including (i) date of request, (ii) date of response, (iii) highest official in PCO or PMO who authorized the denial, (iv) summary and topic of request, (v) reason for denial?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 156—Ms. Candice Bergen:

With regard to the Minister of Middle Class Prosperity: what is the minister's definition of the middle-class?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 161—Mr. Glen Motz:

With regard to the number of Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) officers: broken down by province and job category, what is the total number of active CBSA officers as of (i) January 1, 2014, (ii) January 1, 2015, (iii) January 1, 2016, (iv) January 1, 2017, (v) January 1, 2018, (vi) January 1, 2019, (vii) present?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 162—Mr. Glen Motz:

With regard to contraband seized in correctional institutions, broken down by year and institution from 2015 to present: (a) what quantity of tobacco was seized; (b) what quantity of cannabis was seized; (c) what quantity of crack cocaine was seized; (d) what quantity of crystal methamphetamine was seized; (e) what quantity of opioids was seized; (f) how many cellular telephones were seized; (g) how many weapons were seized; and (h) what is the total institutional value of all seized contraband?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 164—Mr. Charlie Angus:

With regard to the First Nations Child and Family Services program: (a) how much funding has been allocated in each fiscal year since 2009-10, broken down by province or territory, fiscal year, and category of expenditure (i.e. operations, maintenance, prevention, and community well-being and jurisdiction initiative); (b) how much has been spent in each fiscal year since 2009-10, broken down by province or territory, fiscal year, and category of expenditure; and (c) how many apprehensions of children have been undertaken in each fiscal year since 2009-10, broken down by fiscal year, province or territory and by on- and off-reserve apprehensions?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 165—Mr. Terry Dowdall:

With regard to contracts under \$25,000 for communications research services or professional communications services signed since January 1, 2018: what are the details of each contract, including (i) vendor, (ii) date and duration of contract, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services provided?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 166—Mr. Terry Dowdall:

With regard to contracts under \$10,000 granted by the Department of Finance since January 1, 2019: what are the (i) vendors' names and location, (ii) contracts' reference and file numbers, (iii) dates of the contracts, (iv) descriptions of the goods or services provided, (v) delivery dates, (vi) original contracts' values, (vii) final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 167—Mr. Terry Dowdall:

With regard to diplomatic appointments made by the government since January 1, 2019: what are the details of all diplomatic appointments made of individuals who were not diplomats or employees of Global Affairs Canada prior to their appointment, including (i) name, (ii) position, including the country and title, (iii) date of the appointment, (iv) salary range?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 168—Ms. Rachael Harder:

With regard to the Ministries and Ministers of State Act: (a) on November 20, 2019, were ministers of state appointed pursuant to that Act, and, if so, (i) who are the ministers of state, (ii) who are the ministers to whom those ministers of state have been appointed to assist, (iii) what is the gender of the individuals listed in (i) and (ii); (b) is the answer to (a)(iii) consistent with the Prime Minister's commitment to a gender-balanced cabinet; and (c) which provisions of the Salaries Act, as enacted by Bill C-24 during the previous Parliament, prevented these ministerial appointments?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 169—Mr. Tony Baldinelli:

With regard to relocation costs for exempt staff moving to the National Capital Region since January 1, 2019: (a) what is the total cost paid by the government for relocation services and hotel stays related to moving these staff to the National Capital Region; and (b) for each individual reimbursement, what is the (i) total amount authorized to be paid out, (ii) cost for moving services, (iii) cost for hotel stays?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 170—Mr. Tony Baldinelli:

With regard to contracts granted by any department, agency, Crown corporation, or other government entity, since January 1, 2017, to Data Sciences Incorporated: (a) who authorized the contracts; (b) what are the contracts' reference and file numbers; (c) what are the dates of the contracts; (d) what are the descriptions of the services provided; (e) what are the delivery dates; (f) what are the original contracts' values; and (g) what are the final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 171—Mr. Tony Baldinelli:

With regard to projects funded under the government's Supercluster Initiative: what are the details of all funding delivered to date, including (i) project title and description, (ii) location, (iii) funding promised to date, (iv) funding actually delivered to date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 172—Mr. Jamie Schmale:

With regard to the purchase of carbon offset credits by the government, broken down by department, agency, and Crown corporation: (a) what is the total amount purchased in carbon offsets since January 1, 2018; and (b) what are the details of each individual purchase, including, for each, the (i) price of purchase, (ii) date of purchase, (iii) dates of travel, (iv) titles of individuals on trip, (v) origin and destination of trip, (vi) amount of emissions the purchase was meant to offset, (vii) name of vendor who received the carbon offset payment?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 174—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:

With regard to immigration to Canada since January 1, 2016, and broken down by year: (a) how many economic class immigrants have been admitted to Canada; (b) how many family class immigrants have been admitted to Canada; (c) how many refugees have been admitted to Canada; (d) how many (i) temporary student visas were issued, (ii) individuals were admitted to Canada on a temporary student visa; (e) how many (i) temporary worker permits were issued, (ii) individuals were admitted to Canada on a temporary worker permit; (f) how many (i) temporary visitor records were issued, (ii) individuals were admitted to Canada on a temporary visitor record; (g) how many temporary resident permits were issued; (h) how many temporary resident permits were approved by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship; (i) for (a) to (h), what is the breakdown by source country for each class of migrant; and (j) for applications for the categories enumerated in (a) to (h), how many individuals were found inadmissible, broken down by (i) each subsection of section 34 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, (ii) each subsection of section 35 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, (iii) each subsection of section 36 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, (iv) each subsection of section 37 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, (v) each subsection of section 40 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 176—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:

With regard to the government's Venture Capital Catalyst Initiative: what are the details of all funding provided from the program, including (i) recipients, (ii) dates, (iii) location of recipients, (iv) descriptions or summaries of business or programs receiving funding, (v) amounts of funding, (vi) whether the funding was in the form of a (vii) repayable loan, (viii) non-repayable grant?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 177—Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:

With regard to individuals who have illegally or "irregularly" crossed the border into Canada since January 1, 2016: (a) how many such individuals have been subject to deportation or a removal order; and (b) of the individuals in (a), how many (i) remain in Canada, (ii) have been deported or removed from Canada?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 180—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to correspondence, both on paper and electronic formats, received by the Office of the Prime Minister from the general public since January 1, 2019: (a) what were the top 10 topics or subjects matters, in terms of volume of correspondence; and (b) for each of the top 10 topics in (a), how many pieces of correspondence were received?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 181—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to the caretaker convention: (a) is the government, as of the date of the notice of this question, observing the caretaker convention; (b) if the answer to (a) is negative, (i) when did the government cease observing the caretaker convention, (ii) what prompted this change, (iii) is this consistent with section 1 of the Privy Council Office's "Guidelines on the conduct of Ministers, Ministers of State, exempt staff and public servants during an election" publication which provides that the caretaker period "ends when a new government is sworn-in, or when an

election result returning an incumbent government is clear"; and (c) what is the government's definition of "when an election result returning an incumbent government is clear" in cases where the government party represents fewer than a majority of seats in the House of Commons?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 182—Ms. Leona Alleslev:

With regard to the export of military goods: (a) what was the average, median, shortest and longest approval time for an export permit in (i) 2014, (ii) 2015, (iii) 2016, (iv) 2017, (v) 2018, (vi) (2019); (b) what is the precise process through which each permit application goes prior to final approval, including the titles of those required to sign off at each stage of the process; (c) has the process in (b) changed since November 4, 2015, and, if so, (i) what precise changes were made to the process, (ii) when was each change made; and (d) what specific measures, if any, is the government implementing to speed up the approval process?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 184—Mr. Damien C. Kurek:

With regard to defence procurements that have been delayed, since January 1, 2016: (a) what is the complete list of procurements that have been delayed and what are the details of each procurement, including (i) original procurement date, (ii) revised procurement date, (iii) description of goods or services being procured, (iv) reason for the delay?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 185—Mr. Damien C. Kurek:

With regard to grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by Western Economic Diversification Canada since January 1, 2018: what are the details of each, including (i) date of funding, (ii) recipient, (iii) location, (iv) project description?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 186—Mr. Gary Vidal:

With regard to foreign takeovers and acquisitions of Canadian companies by foreign state-owned enterprises covered by the Investment Canada Regulations and the Investment Canada Act: (a) from January 1, 2016, to present, how many foreign state-owned enterprises have taken over or acquired Canadian companies; (b) what are the details of each takeover or acquisition in (a), including the (i) name and country of the foreign enterprise, (ii) name of the Canadian company subject to the takeover or acquisition; and (c) for each transaction referred to in (b), (i) was a review conducted pursuant to the Investment Canada Act, (ii) was a national security review conducted?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 187—Mr. Gary Vidal:

With regard to Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members serving abroad: (a) how many CAF members were serving abroad as of January 1, 2019; (b) what is the breakdown of these deployments by country; (c) how many CAF members are currently serving abroad; and (d) what is the breakdown of current deployments by country?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 188—Mr. Jamie Schmale:

With regard to the Veterans Affairs Canada service standard of 16 weeks for decisions in relation to disability benefit applications, for the 2018-19 fiscal year or in the last year for which statistics are available: how many and what percentage of applications received a decision within (i) the 16-week standard, (ii) between 16 and 26 weeks, (iii) greater than 26 weeks (six months), (iv) greater than a year?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 189—Mr. Kelly McCauley:**

With regard to ministerial travel between June 21, 2019, and September 11, 2019: (a) how much money was spent by each minister and their accompanying staff, per trip, on (i) accommodation, (ii) flights, including number of flights, (iii) car rentals, including number of cars, (iv) fuel claims, (v) meals, (vi) incidentals; (b) how many staff members were on each trip, broken down by ministerial staff and departmental staff; and (c) what was the destination and purpose of each trip?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 190—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to ministerial travel between June 21, 2018, and September 11, 2018: (a) how much money was spent by each minister and their accompanying staff, per trip, on (i) accommodation, (ii) flights, including number of flights, (iii) car rentals, including number of cars, (iv) fuel claims, (v) meals, (vi) incidentals; (b) how many staff members were on each trip, broken down by ministerial staff and departmental staff; and (c) what was the destination and purpose of each trip?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 191—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to performance incentives or bonuses paid out in the last fiscal year: what amount was paid out, broken down by department and position level?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 192—Mr. Kelly McCauley:

With regard to the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB), for the last fiscal year: (a) how much money was spent by the CIB; (b) how many projects have been proposed for the CIB; (c) how many projects have been evaluated for the CIB; and (d) how many projects have been approved for the CIB?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 193—Mr. Jamie Schmale:

With regard to classified or protected documents, since January 1, 2019, broken down by department or agency: (a) how many instances have occurred where it was discovered that classified or protected documents were left or stored in a manner which did not meet the requirements of the security level of the documents; (b) how many of these instances occurred in the offices of ministerial exempt staff, including those of the staff of the Prime Minister, broken down by ministerial office; and (c) how many employees have lost their security clearance as a result of such infractions?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 195—Mr. Bob Zimmer:

With regard to grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, since January 1, 2018: what are the details of each, including (i) date of funding, (ii) recipient, (iii) location, (iv) project description?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 196—Mr. Dean Allison:

With regard to any focus groups administered by the government since January 1, 2019, and broken down by each instance where a focus group took place: (a) what were the specific topics being assessed or analyzed by the focus groups; (b) what are all costs associated with putting on these focus groups, including venue rental, incentives for attendees, food and beverage, travel expenses; (c) which government officials or ministerial staff were in attendance at each focus group; (d) for each of the focus groups conducted, what were the results or findings; and (e) what was the date of each focus group?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 197—Mr. Dean Allison:

With regard to privacy breaches since January 1, 2018, broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity: (a) how many privacy breaches have occurred; and (b) for each privacy breach, (i) was it reported to the Privacy Commissioner, (ii) how many individuals were affected, (iii) what were the dates of the privacy breach, (iv) were the individuals affected notified that their information may have been compromised and, if so, on what date and by what manner?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 198—Mr. Dean Allison:

With regard to government expenditures on media monitoring, since January 1, 2018, and broken down by department or agency: what are the details of all expenditures, including (i) vendor, (ii) amount, (iii) date, (iv) duration of contract, (v) description of goods or services provided?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 199—Mr. Brad Redekopp:

With regard to errors made and corrected on proactive disclosure, since January 1, 2019, and broken down by department, agency, Crown corporation or other government entity covered by proactive disclosure: (a) what was the total number of errors discovered; (b) for each error, what were the details of the original posting, including what information was originally published on the proactive disclosure website; (c) for each correction, what are the details of the corrected information, including the contents of both the (i) original information, (ii) corrected information; and (d) for each error, on what date was the (i) erroneous information published, (ii) corrected information published?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 201—Mr. Brad Redekopp:

With regard to contracts under \$10,000 granted by Global Affairs Canada since January 1, 2019: what are the (i) vendors' names and locations (ii) contracts' reference and file numbers, (iii) dates of the contracts, (iv) descriptions of the goods or services provided, (v) delivery dates, (vi) original contracts' values, (vii) final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 202—Mr. Greg McLean:

With regard to government statistics regarding foreign investment in Canadian real estate: (a) how much foreign money does the government estimate is currently invested in unoccupied or unutilized Canadian residential real estate, broken down by (i) value, (ii) number of dwellings, (iii) municipality, (iv) province; and (b) how much foreign money does the government estimate is currently invested in unoccupied or unutilized Canadian commercial real estate, broken down by (i) value, (ii) number of dwellings, (iii) amount of commercial space, (iv) municipality, (v) province?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 203—Mr. Greg McLean:

With regard to government scrutiny of foreign funding of Canadian real estate investments: (a) has the government conducted any specific studies in relation to examining the sources of foreign capital in Canadian real estate, and what were the findings of the studies; (b) what percentage of foreign capital in Canadian real estate does the government estimate to be from illegitimate or illegal sources; (c) what specific measures does the government take to ensure that foreign investment is from legitimate sources; (d) how many foreign-funded real estate transactions have been investigated for possible money laundering since January 1, 2018; (e) what is the status of each of the investigations in (d); and (f) what specific actions is the government taking to ensure that Canadian real estate transactions are not used for money laundering?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 205—Mr. Doug Shipley:

With regard to spending by departments, agencies and Crown corporations, since January 1, 2018: what were the total costs of rentals and purchases of individual staging, lighting and audio equipment, and production and assorted technical costs for all government announcements and public events, broken down by (i) date of event, (ii) location, (iii) event description, (iv) vendor name, (v) goods or services provided by each vendor, (vi) contract value, including cost of each good or service, if known?

(Return tabled)

Routine Proceedings

Question No. 207—Mrs. Alice Wong:

With regard to the impact of the carbon tax on fixed-income seniors: (a) did the government do any studies, prior to implementing a federal carbon tax, on the impact of the carbon tax on fixed-income seniors, and what were the findings of the studies; (b) what relief, if any, will the government provide to seniors who are unable to afford the higher prices of fruits and vegetables as a result of the carbon tax; and (c) what seniors organizations, if any, were consulted prior to the implementation of the carbon tax, and what are the details of each of their submissions?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 209—Mr. Tom Lukiwski:

With regard to the national security exception for federal procurements, since January 1, 2016: how many times has this exception been invoked, broken down by (i) date of contract, (ii) department, (iii) contract amount?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 210—Mr. Brad Vis:

With regard to requests from the District of Mission, British Columbia, for government assistance in relation to the Mission sanitary sewer crossing project: (a) what funding will the government provide to Mission in order to replace the sewage pipe system, and when will it be provided; (b) has the government conducted any studies on the potential impact of a sewage pipe breach into the Fraser River and, if so, what are the details, including (i) date, (ii) who conducted the study, (iii) findings, (iv) website where the study can be found online; (c) has the government performed a cost or risk assessment in relation to the cost of replacing the sewage pipe compared to the environmental and financial costs associated with a sewage breach along the Fraser River, and, if so, what were the findings of the assessment; and (d) if the answer to (c) is negative, why has an assessment not been done?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 211—Mr. Marty Morantz:

With regard to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA): (a) what are all of the current 1-800 telephone numbers that Canadians can use to call the CRA; (b) for each 1-800 telephone number, which taxpayers are intended to use each telephone number and which specific services are available; (c) broken down by month, since January 1, 2018, how many telephone calls have been received by each telephone number; and (d) broken down by month, since January 2018, what was the average wait time or time on hold for callers to each telephone number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 213—Mr. Randy Hoback:

With regard to the updated Canada–United States–Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) signed on December 10, 2019: what are the specific details of all changes between this agreement and the previous CUSMA signed on November 30, 2018?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 214—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the report entitled “An Examination of Governance, Existing Data, Potential Indicators and Values in the Ottawa River Watershed”, tabled in the House on June 19, 2019: (a) how many public servants were involved in the creation of this report; (b) how many organizations were invited to provide input, direction or consultation during the preparation of the report; (c) how many organizations responded to the invitation to provide input, direction or consultation during the preparation of the report; (d) of the input provided by the organizations that responded in (c), how many were directly used in the creation of the report; (e) for each of the organizations identified in (b), (c), and (d), what is the (i) name of the organization, (ii) contact information of the organization, broken down by question; (f) for each of the organizations invited in (b), since November 4, 2015, have any received funding from the government, broken down by (i) name of the organization, (ii) contact information of the organization, (iii) amount of money received, (iv) department and program that the funding came from, and (v) date on which the funding was received; (g) what is the total of all expenditures for the creation this report, broken down by category; (h) for any expenditure on advertising for the creation of this report, what are the (i) dates the advertising appeared, (ii) the medium used for the advertising, (iii) locations that the advertising could be seen, (iv) amount of money spent on advertising, (v) who approved the advertising expense; (i) for any expenditure on hospitality during the creation of the report, what is the (i) amount spent, (ii) date that the hospitality took place, (iii) location of the event, (iv) what kind of food and beverages were served, (v) who approved the hospitality expense; (j) for any expenditure on transportation and the rental of vehicles during

the creation of this report, what is the (i) amount spent, (ii) date that the transportation or rental took place, (iii) location of travel, (iv) what method of transportation was used, (v) in the case of rentals, what is the make and model of the vehicle that was rented, (vi) who approved the transportation or rental expense; and (k) for any expenditure on venue rentals or leases during the creation of this report, what is the (i) amount spent, (ii) location of the rental or lease, (iii) purpose of the rental or lease, (iv) who approved the venue rental or lease expense?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 215—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the International Joint Commission’s Lake Ontario–St. Lawrence River Plan 2014, since November 15, 2015: (a) have any briefing notes been prepared on Plan 2014; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, what are the details of each briefing note, broken down by (i) title, (ii) subject, (iii) author, (iv) department, (v) date written, and (vi) department internal tracking number; and (c) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, have any ministers or ministerial exempt staff issued a written response to a briefing note on Plan 2014, broken down by (i) author, (ii) department, (iii) method of response, (iv) date written, (v) summary of responses?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 217—Mrs. Cheryl Gallant:

With regard to the Statutes of Canada 2019, Chapter 14 (An Act to amend the Fisheries Act and other Acts in consequence): what is the anticipated total cost of implementing the 2007 Brisbane Declaration on Environmental Flows, broken down by (i) department, (ii) program, (iii) fiscal year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 218—Ms. Marilyn Gladu:

With regard to the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare: (a) what are the total expenditures of the Council to date, broken down by line item; and (b) what is the total of all costs associated with producing the report “A Prescription for Canada: Achieving Pharmacare for All”, broken down by line item?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 219—Mr. Pierre Poilievre:

With regard to government-owned buildings and properties on Sparks Street in Ottawa, between Elgin Street and Bank Street, from 2014 until present: (a) how many retail units are available for commercial lease; (b) what are the details of each unit, including (i) street address, (ii) cost to lease, (iii) whether is it vacant or occupied; and (c) for the units in (a), what is the total number of vacant and occupied units?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 220—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:

With regard to expenditures on single-use bottled water by the government in fiscal years 2017-18, 2018-19 and to date in 2019-20: (a) what are the total expenditures, broken down by department or agency; (b) what are the details of all such expenditures, including (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) vendor, (iv) description of goods, including quantity, (v) reason the bottled water was purchased; and (c) of the expenditures in (b), which expenditures were incurred for consumption in facilities where access to safe drinking water was readily available?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 221—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:

With regard to grants and contributions under \$25,000 provided by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, and the 17 federal departments and agencies that make up the innovation, science and economic development portfolio, since January 1, 2018: what are the details of each, including (i) date of funding, (ii) recipient, (iii) location, (iv) project description?

(Return tabled)

*Routine Proceedings***Question No. 222—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:**

With regard to contracts under \$10,000 granted by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, and the 17 federal departments and agencies that make up the innovation, science and economic development portfolio, since January 1, 2018: what are the (i) vendors' names and locations, (ii) contracts' reference and file numbers, (iii) dates of the contracts, (iv) descriptions of the goods or services provided, (v) delivery dates, (vi) original contracts' values, (vii) final contracts' values, if different from the original contracts' values?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 223—Ms. Michelle Rempel Garner:

With regard to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, and the 17 federal departments and agencies that make up the innovation, science and economic development portfolio, and broken down by year since the 2016-17 fiscal year: (a) what was the total amount spent on (i) travel for government employees, (ii) travel for stakeholders; (iii) travel for individuals who are neither government employees nor stakeholders, (iv) hospitality; and (b) what are the details of all travel for stakeholders, including (i) date of travel, (ii) cost of trip, broken down by flight cost, accommodation costs and other costs, (iii) name of stakeholder, (iv) organization represented, if applicable?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 224—Ms. Marilyn Gladu:

With regard to government enforcement of measures aimed at preventing vaping among youth: (a) how much has been spent since January 1, 2019, on enforcing anti-vaping regulations, broken down by type of enforcement and regulation being enforced; (b) what was the vaping rate among youth in (i) 2017, (ii) 2018, (iii) 2019; (c) what specific measures will the government take to lower the youth vaping rate; and (d) what is the government's target for lowering the vaping rate in (i) 2020, (ii) 2021, (iii) 2022?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 226—Mr. Michael Cooper:

With regard to Canada's submarine fleet: (a) what were the total number of days at sea for each submarine in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019; (b) how much money was spent to repair each submarine in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019; (c) what is the total cost of the current submarine maintenance plan to maintain the submarines in (i) 2018, (ii) 2019, (iii) 2020, (iv) 2021; (d) what are the projected future costs of maintenance of the submarine fleet until end-of-life; and (e) what are the details of all briefing notes prepared by the National Shipbuilding Strategy secretariat related to submarines in 2018 and 2019, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title or subject matter, (v) summary of contents, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 227—Mr. Michael Cooper:

With regard to the replacement of Canada's polar class icebreakers: (a) what is the expected date of their replacement; (b) what are the planned roles for these new vessels; (c) what is the budget or cost for their replacement; (d) what are the details, including findings of any reports or analysis related to operating older icebreakers (Louis St. Laurent and Terry Fox), including (i) expected years they will have to continue to operate before replacements are built, (ii) total sea days for each vessel in 2017, 2018 and 2019, (iii) total cost of maintenance in 2017, 2018 and 2019 for each polar class vessel; (e) what is the planned maintenance cost of the vessels for each of the next five years; (f) what are the details, including findings, of any review of the vessel meeting environmental standards or risk of not including the polar code for emissions; and (g) what are the details of any reports or briefing notes prepared for or circulated by the National Shipbuilding Strategy Secretariat related to these vessels in 2017, 2018 and 2019, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title or subject matter, (v) summary of contents, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 228—Mr. Michael Cooper:

With regard to the government's plans to build 16 multipurpose vessels of the Canadian Coast Guard: (a) what is the expected budget and schedule for the design and construction for each vessel; (b) what are details of all contracts related to (a), including (i) vendor, (ii) start date, (iii) end date, (iv) amount, (v) description of goods or services, including completion date, where applicable; (c) what is the total number of crew expected for each vessel; (d) what is the expected delivery date for each vessel; (e) what is the risk to cost or budget identified in the planning for these ships; and (f) what are the details of any reports or briefing notes prepared for or

circulated by the National Shipbuilding Strategy secretariat related to these vessels in 2018 and 2019, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title or subject matter, (v) summary of contents, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 229—Mr. Michael Cooper:

With regard to the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN): (a) which surface platform in the Royal Canadian Navy is deemed a warship and why has it been designated as such; (b) will the Joint Support Ship (JSS) be a warship; (c) what specific characteristics will enable to JSS to be a warship; (d) what is the RCN's definition of interim operational capability (IOC) and full operational capability (FOC); (e) when will the first JSS achieve IOC and FOC; (f) when will the second JSS achieve FOC; (g) what is the most recent cost identified to the Assistant Deputy Minister (Material) for (i) JSS 1, (ii) JSS 2; and (h) what are the details of the design contracts for JSS 1 and JSS 2, including (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) file number, (vi) start and end date of contract?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 230—Ms. Lianne Rood:

With regard to arctic off-shore patrol ships (AOPS): (a) will the two AOPS for the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) require redesign or changes and, if so, what specific changes are required and what is the anticipated cost of each change; (b) what are the details of any contracts signed with Irving Shipbuilding Inc. (ISI) in relation to the AOPS, including (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) file number, (vi) start and end date of contract; (c) when and in which reports did the CCG first identify the need for AOPS; (d) has the CCG identified any risks or challenges in operating the two AOPS and what are those risks; (e) what will be the total estimated costs of the two AOPS to CCG; and (f) what are the details of all briefing documents prepared on this matter, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title or subject matter, (v) summary of contents, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

*Speaker's Ruling***Question No. 232—Ms. Lianne Rood:**

With regard to the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) fleet: (a) how many ships were committed in the first phase of the contract with Irving Shipbuilding Inc. (ISI); (b) what are the details of all contracts related to the CSC design, including (i) date, (ii) amount, (iii) vendor, (iv) summary of goods or services provided, (v) file number, (vi) start date and end date of contract; (c) what is the most recent cost estimate for the first three ships as provided to the Assistant Deputy Minister of Defence (Materiel) and the Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy; (d) what are the specific design changes that are (i) being considered, (ii) being implemented, (iii) expected to increase the size, capacity, speed, and weight of the Type T26 from the original United Kingdom design; (e) who proposed each change and approved the changes in (d)(ii); (f) what was the rationale for each design change; (g) what, if any, are the specific concerns or issues related to costs, speed, size, weight and crewing of the T26 frigate design that have been identified by the Department of National Defence, third party advisors and any technical experts to the (i) Minister of National Defence, (ii) Minister of Finance, (iii) President of the Treasury Board, (iv) Privy Council Office, (v) Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy; (h) what were the technical requirements for the CSC; (i) what are the details of any reports from the independent third party advisors related to this project prepared in draft or final form in the past 12 months, including (i) date, (ii) third party advisor name, (iii) summary and findings of report; (j) what is the cost for spares for each of the CSC; (k) what is the cost of infrastructure upgrades for the CSC fleet; (l) what are the details of each contract signed between the government and ISI related to the CSC, including (i) date, (ii) vendor, (iii) amount, (iv) description of goods or services, (v) file number, (vi) start and end date of contract; and (n) what are the details of all briefing documents prepared on this matter, including (i) date, (ii) sender, (iii) recipient, (iv) title or subject matter, (v) summary of contents, (vi) file number?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 233—Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to the electoral district of Courtenay—Alberni, between the fiscal year 2005-06 and the current year: what are all the federal infrastructure investments (including direct transfers to municipalities, regional district associations or First Nations, national parks, highways, etc.), broken down by fiscal year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 234—Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to the Oceans Protection Plan (OPP) announced by the government in 2016: (a) how much money has been allocated to Transport Canada under the OPP since 2016, broken down by year; (b) how much money has been spent under the OPP by Transport Canada since 2016, broken down by year and program; (c) how much money has been allocated to Fisheries and Oceans Canada under the OPP since 2016, broken down by year; (d) how much money has been spent under the OPP by the Fisheries and Oceans Canada since 2016, broken down by year and by program; (e) how much money has been allocated to Environment and Climate Change Canada under the OPP since 2016, broken down by year; (f) how much money has been spent under the OPP by Environment and Climate Change Canada since 2016, broken down by year and by program; (g) how much money has been spent under the OPP on efforts to mitigate the potential impacts of oil spills since 2016, broken down by year and by program; (h) how much money from the OPP has been allocated to the Whales Initiative since 2016, broken down by year; (i) how much money has been spent under the OPP on the Whales Initiative since 2016; and (j) what policies does the government have in place to ensure that the funding allocated under the OPP is spent on its stated goals in a timely manner?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 235—Mr. Gord Johns:

With regard to Veterans Affairs Canada: what was the amount of lapsed spending in the department, broken down by year, from 2005-06 to the current fiscal year?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 236—Mrs. Cathy McLeod:

With regard to the government's negotiations with the United States on softwood lumber: (a) when did formal negotiations on a new softwood lumber agreement commence; (b) how many negotiating sessions have been held to date; (c) who participated in those negotiations in Canada, the United States or elsewhere; and (d) when was the latest negotiating session?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 237—Mrs. Cathy McLeod:

With regard to the government's Softwood Lumber Action Plan, announced June 1, 2017: (a) how was the funding allocated, broken down by (i) department, (ii) organization, (iii) location, (iv) date of allocation, (v) amount of funding; and (b) how much of this funding been delivered to date?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 239—Mr. Randy Hoback:

With regard to the new United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA) signed in December 2019: (a) what analysis was done by the government on the impact of the concessions made in the latest version of the agreement to the supply management sector and what were the conclusions; and (b) what is the projected impact of the new agreement on the incomes of (i) dairy, (ii) egg, (iii) chicken, (iv) turkey, (v) hatching egg producers and farmers?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 240—Mr. Randy Hoback:

With regard to the Prime Minister's comments in the House on December 11, 2019, that "I have had direct discussions with my Australian counterparts on the issue of protection of the Canadian wine industry": (a) what are the details of these discussions, including (i) date, (ii) location, (iii) Australian counterpart with whom the discussion took place; and (b) what specific commitments, if any, did the Prime Minister offer or receive during these discussions?

(Return tabled)

[English]

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

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

FIRST NATIONS CHILD WELFARE—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: On December 13, 2019, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby raised a question of privilege alleging that the government was in contempt of the House, this because, in his opinion, it was not in compliance with a motion calling on the government to abide by a decision made by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to compensate residential school survivors.

I am now ready to give my ruling on this alleged contempt.

[Translation]

As this is my first ruling, I would like to share with the House how we could deal with future questions of privilege and points of order.

While they are not the same, both questions of privilege and points of order involve a perceived departure from established norms, either with respect to the authority of Parliament and its recognized rights, immunities and powers, or with respect to the rules, practices and traditions of the House, all of which rely heavily on precedent.

As Speaker, my role is to protect the privileges of members and this House, and to interpret the rules when they are questioned or challenged.

[English]

In carrying out this responsibility, my objective will be to assist the House in facilitating the conduct of its business. To do this effectively, what I need understand is the objection that is being made by a member through a question of privilege or a point of order.

With the assistance of the House, I need to understand the nature of the complaint, to grasp what is in doubt. This is really the core of the issue, and it should be sufficient in most circumstances to allow me to make a ruling. It will not always be necessary to hear more arguments for or against the objection in question, particularly those reciting precedents available through the authorities.

As your Speaker, I am bound to be impartial and follow the rules, practices and precedents that I will interpret to the best of my ability. Also, in service to the House, I believe it is best to render rulings quickly, rather than to leave these challenges to privilege or rules and practices in suspension for an undue length of time.

[Translation]

In this case, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby made a clear and succinct statement identifying his complaint, for which I sincerely thank him. As he is alleging that certain actions from the government constitute a contempt, I believe it is useful to define what is meant by contempt of Parliament.

The third edition of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, at page 81, defines it as, I quote, “an offence against the authority or dignity of the House, such as disobedience of its legitimate commands or libels upon itself, its members or its officers.”

[English]

As it was the contention of the member for New Westminster—Burnaby that there is “a clear contradiction between the direction set by the House and the government’s response,” the central question then becomes whether the motion adopted by the House on December 11, 2019, was in fact a legitimate command that compels the government to act in a specific manner or whether it was the expression of an opinion of the House. In other words, was the motion an order or a resolution?

The motion in question begins by stating that the House calls upon the government to comply with the ruling of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. This wording, calling upon the government to take some action, is quite common in motions adopted by the House and is typical of a resolution.

• (1555)

[Translation]

House of Commons Procedure and Practice, third edition, reminds us, at pages 536 and 537, that “[a] resolution of the House is a declaration of opinion or purpose; it does not require that any action be taken, nor is it binding.”

[English]

Even if the wording of this motion had been somewhat different, it would have remained a non-binding resolution, the effect of which stands in contrast to the compulsory nature of an order or, even more so, legislation.

Privilege

For a motion to constitute an order of the House, it would have to pertain to those matters where the House, acting alone, possesses the power to compel an action. This is true, for example, when the House sends for persons, papers or records, or when it regulates its own internal proceedings. Only in such circumstances will the Chair determine whether disregard for the order in question constitutes a *prima facie* case of contempt.

In the present case, the motion is clearly a resolution expressing the opinion of the House that the government should take certain steps. It does not order the government to take these actions, nor could the House do so by way of resolution. Consequently, the motion cannot be viewed as binding upon the government.

[Translation]

In support of this conclusion, I would refer honourable members to a decision made by my predecessor in a very similar context, when on October 16, 2018, at page 22460 of the Debates, he stated:

The House regularly adopts motions, by unanimous consent or by a simple majority, intended to allow members to express themselves on all sorts of matters. Depending on their intent, these motions take the form of a resolution or an order. Resolutions...are intended, regardless of their precise wording, to be expressions of opinion and do not order or require that measures be taken by the government.

Such motions can not bind the government or prevent it from pursuing a particular course of action.

[English]

Based on this analysis and following established precedent, I cannot conclude that the matter raised by the hon. member for New Westminster—Burnaby constitutes a *prima facie* contempt of the House.

I would like to thank the members for their attention.

STATEMENT MADE ON FEBRUARY 5, 2018

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a matter of personal privilege. On February 5, 2018, in the 42nd Parliament, I misled the House. Because we now sit as the 43rd Parliament, I was uncertain as to how to correctly deal with this procedurally, so I contacted you to determine how best to proceed. I thank you and the Clerk for the guidance provided in this regard, and in particular for your suggestion that I raise the matter at this hour and at this point in today’s proceedings.

On the aforementioned date in 2018, at roughly 1:20 p.m., I responded to a very courteous remark from my esteemed colleague, the member for Burlington, then the minister of democratic institutions, who said she was saddened that I was no longer the critic for her portfolio. I thanked her and said:

As members may know, my family runs Giant Tiger. I am now the vice-chair of Giant Tiger and that is the reason I am no longer the critic on this file.

The Address

Although it was true that I had assumed this new position at my family's business, it was not true that this was the reason I was no longer the critic for democratic institutions. The actual reason I was no longer the critic for this file was that I had been relieved of my responsibilities as a consequence of having voted against my party's position on Bill C-45, the Cannabis Act, at third reading.

It goes without saying that if I had said anything at all in the House of Commons on February 5 with respect to my being relieved of this position, it should have been the truth, although a judicious silence would also presumably have been acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, you wisely counselled me to keep my remarks as brief as possible, so I will conclude with what I believe to be an important clarification.

In addition to withdrawing the words in question and apologizing for having misled the House, I want to assure the House that my transgression was entirely my own and that no colleague, nor any other person, prompted me in any way to say these words in the House. The purpose of an apology ought to be to correct the record as thoroughly as possible, and this task would be incomplete if I did not clarify that the responsibility lies entirely upon my own shoulders.

I thank all colleagues for their indulgence in letting me speak about this matter today.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

• (1600)

[English]

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session.

The Speaker: Are there any questions for the hon. member for Davenport?

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, happy new year to you and to everyone.

Did the Speech from the Throne address the issue of national unity that, as a matter of fact, is happening now and is a big concern in western Canada? I would like a comment from the member opposite on that topic, please.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the Speech from the Throne mentioned quite a bit about the fact that it is not always easy for us to reach a consensus about how diverse we are and that there is a diversity of opinion across this country, and we have talked about the different factions across Canada.

I assure the member that national unity is of the utmost importance to our Prime Minister, our Deputy Prime Minister and everybody in this government. I assure the member that it is a top priority for us. Every province and territory is of equal importance. We are stronger when we are together and when we move forward together in addressing the key issues of each of our regions.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my question for the member relates to the topic of pharmacare, which came up in the Speech from the Throne. We know that many Canadians are making the difficult choice between taking their medications or paying for other necessities of life, like rent, food or the other things they need to survive.

Could the member comment on how important it is that we move forward with a pharmacare plan and what impact it will have on middle-class and lower-income Canadians?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, I know that pharmacare is important to the middle class and to vulnerable Canadians, but in my riding of Davenport, the number-one group that mentions it to me is seniors. It is their top issue. They say that they have to make choices between their living expenses and housing and prescription drugs.

Seniors were elated to hear that we will be putting in a national pharmacare program in this upcoming term. I have told them that we have taken some of the initial steps. We have started on the drug formulary, which they were happy to hear about, and have also created the Canadian drug agency, which will help to establish prices for the drugs that would be covered under national pharmacare.

We still have one final step, which is to negotiate with each of the provinces and territories. We have to do this because the pharmacare program would actually be delivered through our provinces and territories.

• (1605)

[Translation]

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Davenport for her speech.

[English]

I want to get to this question about pharmacare again, as I have been concerned. The Minister of Health recently said to the media that she is not certain that the current government can bring in universal pharmacare. An overwhelming number of voters chose parties that had pharmacare in their platform. The New Democrats, the Greens and the Liberals all promised that universal pharmacare could be accomplished.

I wonder if my hon. colleague from Davenport, who has spoken about the work that has already started with the formulary, can assure Canadians that we will establish a national plan of bulk-buying pharmaceutical drugs to bring down prices. The provinces could then decide if they want to buy from that. I was disturbed by the comment from the Minister of Health that somehow nothing could move unless all provinces were on board.

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Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Madam Speaker, I am not quite sure what the Minister of Health has mentioned to the media, but there is unequivocal and strong support from this government to put in universal pharmacare across the country. It is never easy to negotiate with the provinces and territories. That always takes a bit of time. However, I know that provincial and territorial leaders will be listening to their constituents, who will be saying that this is of the utmost importance. Ultimately, we all want the same thing, and that is to serve Canadians to the best of our abilities.

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, GP): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand today in the House to address not only my fellow members but the many Canadians across this country who are tuning in to hear what their representatives on this floor have to say on their behalf.

I want to recognize that today is the international day of remembrance for the Holocaust. We are also on the cusp of Black History Month, which begins this weekend. In 2020 it is crucial to recognize the lessons history have taught us, the progress we have made on human rights and all the work that remains to be done. I also want to recognize the victims and the families of flight PS752.

Many of us have had the privilege of spending almost two months in our home communities connecting with constituents.

[*Translation*]

Over the past few weeks, I have had the pleasure of meeting hundreds of people during public events and my first round of community gatherings.

[*English*]

The people of Fredericton, Oromocto, Marysville, Maugerville and surrounding communities are engaged, and I am so proud to represent such a dynamic riding.

[*Translation*]

Fredericton is the capital of Canada's only officially bilingual province.

[*English*]

Indigenous leadership in the arts is putting New Brunswick on the map. We are also a riding where consistent, devastating floods are making climate change real to people, and where parents are standing up to demand more support for their children struggling with mental illness. I am proud to stand with and beside them as their MP.

I want to address the Speech from the Throne. I was, in all honesty, very pleased to see where our priorities have landed: addressing climate change, healing regional divides and acknowledging the need to further advance forward relationships with indigenous peoples. I was ready to support the speech. I thought if there was ever a Speech from the Throne to support, this would be it.

However, then I was reminded of the last four years. I was reminded of the reason I decided to run in the past election and the promises I made to my constituents to hold the government accountable and challenge pretty words and superficial statements. As a wife and a mother to two indigenous sons, I must stand in the House to protect their future, to protect their inherent collective

rights and be firm in my affirmation that their rights are non-negotiable.

I want to speak for a moment on the proposed legislative and policy framework, the Prime Minister's two-track approach to a pan-indigenous policy. It is being called the "two-track termination plan" by many indigenous scholars and traditional leaders. It is reminiscent of the white paper on Indian policy from 1969. People have real, valid issues with what is being proposed, indigenous people, those directly impacted by this legislation. We owe it to them to listen.

The Government of Canada has been consistent in its top-down approach. The patriarchal relationship remains: Canada like a father to its children. Indigenous communities are not Canada's children. Their roots run the deepest on this land and they have the right to self-determination. We have convoluted, confused and complicated our end of the bargain, and that has gotten us where we are today: a deadlock over the land, the land we agreed to share. Canada's definition of sharing is not something I would feel comfortable teaching my children.

Reconciliation means giving back where we took too much. It is achieving an equilibrium. I have heard critics say that we are all Canadian, that we should all be treated equally and that there should be no special treatment. That only works if we are in fact equal.

I am not going to rattle off statistics to describe the disparity that exists. We know what they are. What they mean is that we have to do better. We need real action, real negotiations that find parity in the voices represented.

• (1610)

[*Translation*]

In Canada, the right to consultation is closely tied to free, prior and informed consent. That means issues must be considered at the individual level and that consultations must involve participants who truly reflect the views of indigenous peoples. The idea is certainly not that powerful and influential organizations and corporations at the top should have a greater say.

[*English*]

When Canada continues to ignore the voices of grassroots community members, traditional and hereditary chiefs, we have outrage and activism in the streets.

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The delays on certain energy projects like Coastal GasLink or fracking in New Brunswick are not to be blamed on the demonstrators. It was the wilful ignorance of the players involved from the beginning who made indigenous voices an afterthought. To see that indigenous considerations have been prioritized is very encouraging, but forgive me if I remain suspicious.

I was pleased to hear the mandate for UNDRIP in the throne speech.

[*Translation*]

I hoped those words signalled that real change was coming soon.

[*English*]

However, in the past few weeks we see the way the government has behaved in the unceded territory of the Wet'suwet'en peoples. It bears a striking resemblance to the behaviour of a previous government in my backyard in 2014, when traditional elders of the Mi'kmaq nation and Elsipogtog built a camp to protect the land and water from the encroachment of a fracking company. At that time, it was only the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, on behalf of the Green Party of Canada, and David Coon, on behalf of the Green Party of New Brunswick, who stood with the Mi'kmaq hereditary and traditional chiefs.

[*Translation*]

The RCMP's deplorable colonial practices in dismantling a peaceful demonstration made headlines across the country.

[*English*]

I have a personal connection to this history, as I had to see a family member, a traditional chief, handcuffed with zip ties and arrested as he was conducting a pipe ceremony.

A lot has changed since 2014. We have come through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report of findings. Canada has reversed its opposition to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Persons and has been working on legislation to see it enshrined in Canadian law.

The inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls has published its final report, including the testimony of 2,380 survivors and family members of those lost.

[*Translation*]

I am proud to be a member of a party that understands what this really means and does not shirk its responsibility for the need to work tirelessly on reconciliation across Canada.

[*English*]

Unfortunately, Canada seems queued up to repeat the same mistakes it has been making for generations, the same mistakes it made in 2014.

Despite my support for some of the words in the Speech from the Throne, I have little confidence in the Liberal government to understand its responsibilities or to implement the changes we need.

• (1615)

[*Translation*]

I strongly believe that when we establish a real nation-to-nation relationship with the Indigenous peoples, our relationship with mother earth will be much better.

[*English*]

Our relationship with indigenous peoples is a step forward for climate action.

Earlier today my fellow Green Party members both spoke about the urgency of climate change. Ridings across New Brunswick have been hit in each of the last two years by historic flooding. The river systems at home are jammed. The snow is piling up in our forests. Our wetlands and buffer zones are compromised. We are seeing an increase in precipitation. All signs point to another bad flood season this spring.

Action is required. The Prime Minister and his government know that. I want them to know I am committed to working with them to make progress on adapting to climate change and that I am committed to helping facilitate the rapid transition that our economy must also undertake.

I want to talk for a minute about that.

I am so excited by the opportunities that lay before us in the new economy. We know we have to end our dependency on fossil fuels and I am convinced we can do it, while looking out for workers who will need new careers. We have always been and will continue to be a resource-driven economy. Just look at the bounty of the resources we have to offer toward renewable energy: our long sunny summer days; powerful river systems across the country; beautiful forests; and right at home in New Brunswick, the highest tides in the world.

This new economy brings with it the promise of new jobs for electricians, mechanics, manufacturers, truck operators and the list goes on.

In New Brunswick, renewable energy companies are already accomplishing amazing things, showing leadership, sharing expertise and building capacity. One solar company in Fredericton has already trained 200 people in solar panel installation work, half of which has come from the Alberta oil sands.

[*Translation*]

This is an opportunity that will help reunite New Brunswick families. At the same time, this will allow workers to participate in the economy of the future.

[*English*]

The people of my riding are ready and willing to be part of the new economy and they are eager to reduce their own carbon pollution. It is up to the government to give them the way forward.

What is the plan to expand public transit and increase electric vehicle uptake? Where is the plan to help everyday Canadians make their homes most efficient to—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I am sorry, but time is up.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to congratulate you on taking on the role of chair occupant, as well as to extend my best wishes to the new member.

I suspect the hon. member and I may agree on some things and disagree on some others, coming from a riding that is very dependent on the energy sector. I would make the case for my province as well as for her province that the Canadian energy economy is very important.

For the foreseeable future, the world is going to be using hydrocarbon. Right now people in New Brunswick have jobs that involve the importation of foreign oil at world prices. It seems to be logical that as long as there is refining happening in her province, would it not be better if we could connect the country from coast to coast with pipelines so that western Canadian oil could be feeding jobs and opportunity in New Brunswick and in other parts of eastern Canada?

Given the reality that the energy sector exists and that right now we are importing foreign oil into eastern Canada, why not seize this opportunity for more Canadian innovation as we continue to grow and develop and try to improve our environmental performance?

Mrs. Jenica Atwin: Madam Speaker, we have been criticized by some, saying that we cannot turn the taps off now as there has to be that transition. We understand that. We are not turning the taps off. We know that we need to get some of what we have in the ground to market. I do not think that building the pipeline is the way to do that. We have existing infrastructure that can continue to fuel our current energy demands. As we ramp up renewables, we can decrease that dependency. I do not see the need for that pipeline.

I also do not agree that connecting those resources would necessarily mean that we are off our foreign oil resources. That will continue. It is more that I want to see the concrete steps toward this future plan we hear about. I need to see the actual steps forward.

I continue to support the member's province and what is happening there, but not by building new pipeline infrastructure.

• (1620)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I congratulate the member on her maiden speech in the House. My question comes out of some of the comments she made. She started by talking about the Speech from the Throne, that she very much liked the words that were in it and what it had to offer. However, she then seemed reluctant to support it based on her interpretation of what happened over the past four years.

I am curious if it is more important, in the spirit of trying to work together, to try to collaborate in a way that brings us together and

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that we approach this from a place of trying to have some trust in each other to bring forward ideas and to present them to the House.

Would the member not agree, at the very least, given that and given what she said, that she does support the Speech from the Throne, notwithstanding the fact that she might have reservations about voting for it based on her interpretation of what happened over the last four years?

Mrs. Jenica Atwin: Madam Speaker, I thought that this is the Canada of which I want to be a part. This is the government I would like to support. However, holding the government accountable for its actions over the last four years is certainly a part of this process. I cannot just take the Liberals' words for it anymore.

My colleague from Saanich—Gulf Islands read some pieces from the 2015 Speech from the Throne. We cannot be kind of duped into believing that this is the time to believe.

As much as I want to be supportive, as much as I think the speech was great and well-intentioned and believe that even steps forward on reconciliation and on climate change are well-intentioned, the government is still missing the mark. I need the government to start hitting that mark because time is of the essence. I have two little children who need a future they can live in, breathe clean air and have clean water.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, I can remember visiting Fredericton in 2016 when I substituted on the special committee on electoral reform. It was great to see strong support from the residents there. I know the member is disappointed in the previous comments, as I am.

I met some renewable energy contractors who were specializing in tidal energy. I would like the member to talk about some of the energy projects in the Bay of Fundy. I remember operators telling me that the tides were so strong there that their first prototype broke. I wonder if the member could talk more about those renewable energy projects.

Mrs. Jenica Atwin: Madam Speaker, that turbine remains at the bottom of the ocean on our coastline. We were prepared with the technology to harness that amazing power we would have with tidal. I would like to see our technology catch up.

There are also great opportunities for offshore wind, but we need our provinces and some regulations to change as well. We need a willingness on the part of government to support some of these changes. There are so many exciting things that are so possible and are ready to be deployed. However, we continue to invest in old, outdated infrastructure that holds us back as Canadians.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Kenora.

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Rising now as a member of the 43rd Parliament, I appreciate the opportunity to address the government's agenda and at the same time present my vision and priorities for this Parliament.

I represent Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, located in Alberta on Treaty 6 territory, the traditional meeting grounds and a travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene and Nakota Sioux.

Fort Saskatchewan's history as a community goes back to the 19th century, when it started as a fort for mounted police. It was put on the transcontinental rail line in 1905. Fort Saskatchewan is proud of its past and its present.

Sherwood Park and Strathcona County, where I live, have grown out of Edmonton as a politically and culturally distinct suburban community. The greater municipality of Strathcona County includes the large urban community of Sherwood Park and various small hamlets, acreages and farms. Whether one likes urban or rural, Strathcona County is a great place to live, work and raise a family.

The whole of my riding depends heavily on the energy sector and, in particular, on the downstream refining and upgrading activities that turn extracted products into everyday household items.

Opponents of our energy sector should remember that it is not just airplane fuel and diesel that come from oil, but also toothbrushes, election signs and many things in between.

I recall seeing Coroplast signs in the background when the candidacy of the Minister of Canadian Heritage was announced. He is a well-known opponent of the energy sector, but I still presume, although I cannot say for sure, that he uses a plastic toothbrush from time to time. Therefore, as the MP for Canada's industrial heartland, I would like to thank him and others for keeping at least some energy workers on the job as we fuel the fight against halitosis.

Although I come here from Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, I am conscious as I take my seat of the immortal words of Edmund Burke, who told the electors of Bristol:

Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests...parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole; where, not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not member of Bristol...he is a member of parliament.

Therefore, as the deliberative assembly of one nation, we confront what I suspect will be the greatest challenge of the 43rd Parliament: the question of national unity. I see the question of national unity as broad in scope. Yes, it is a question of how we reconcile divisions between different regions of this country, but it is also about reconciliation of, and solidarity across, other divides.

We must be a country where people of all faiths, of all cultures and of all linguistic backgrounds see themselves as belonging to one nation. We are a community of communities, where the particular attachments that unite particular communities are good and right, but must also be transcended in the creation of a greater national community of shared commitments, of intertwining histories and of unifying solidarity.

I recently finished reading the beautiful novel *Sybil*, written by former British prime minister Benjamin Disraeli. I have never read a book before that so combines sublime romantic narrative with weighty, provocative political theory and would recommend it to all members. Since I know the member for Spadina—Fort York will ask, the book is also available with pictures.

In the 1840s, while writing this book, Disraeli observed a society divided along lines of class. Class divisions did not primarily arise from differences in economic productivity but rather from moments of conquest, such as the Norman invasion and the quasi-conquest of the English reformation, in which the vast church land previously available for common uses was reallocated to the well-connected and wealthy friends of the new religious regime.

This process of redistribution, effectively from the people to the wealthy and well-connected, invested the newly enriched in the success of the new system and created a new oligarchy that could both oppose the monarch and oppress the people.

This appears to have been Disraeli's view of his country's past, but it is also deeply relevant to our own country's present. Taking from the people and giving to well-connected elites in the name of progress is central to the big-government agenda of our current cabinet.

The disproportionate privileges of the wealthy and well connected and the sufferings of ordinary people are often falsely blamed on free markets, when the real culprit is government expropriation from the middle class and government subsidy to the well connected. The unequal application of the carbon tax and so-called super-cluster subsidies are particular examples of this phenomenon in our day.

Disraeli's novel *Sybil* is the story of a romance between Charles Egremont, whose family was enriched through the disbursement of church property after the English reformation, and Sybil Gerard, a working-class Catholic woman who intends to become a nun.

● (1625)

In the midst of overarching social injustice, there are well-intentioned and ill-intentioned people on both sides of the sharp class divide. Disraeli shows how understanding and solidarity between the classes, as opposed to class warfare, is the harder path, but is the only desirable way forward.

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Friedrich Engels' famous book *The Condition of the Working Class in England* was published in the same year that *Sybil* was published. Marx and Engels recognized the same class divisions that Disraeli did, but instead of intercommunal harmony, they argued for the inevitability of heightened division and therefore the justness of class warfare. They said that the privilege hierarchy would be inverted through a dictatorship of working people.

Disraeli's ideas were in many ways more radical than those of Marx and Engels. Marx and Engels proposed to change who was at the top of the social hierarchy, but Disraeli sought to challenge the moral condition and the lack of understanding, solidarity and community that led to injustice in the first place.

Similarly, the problem with today's social justice warriors is that they are not radical enough. They seek to invert structures of privilege while still singling people out for bad or good treatment based on characteristics that they cannot control.

The prevailing SJW norms of call-out culture, wokeness and privilege inversion do not emphasize the truly radical and much more elevated messages of unity, universal solidarity and shared progress.

Disraeli's philosophy was called one-nation conservatism. He sought to re-establish the bonds of community and solidarity among different social classes and to engage all classes in the enactment of meaningful reforms to the conditions of working people.

He was part of a long and proud tradition of reform-minded conservative leaders. In particular, many of the great reforms of 19th-century Britain, most notably the abolition of slavery, were a conservative legacy.

Disraeli played a crucial role in the passage of the Second Reform Act, which gave some working people in Britain the franchise for the first time. He showed how intercommunal solidarity, as opposed to intercommunal division, is ultimately the basis for the advancement of justice.

One-nation conservatism is not a term we use often, but it is a concept that I believe we particularly need in this country, in this time, in this 43rd Parliament.

Canada faces divides not just of economic position, but also of region, of ethnicity, of religion, of religiosity, of social values and more. As in Britain, the most powerful moments of national reconciliation in our history have always been achieved under the leadership of Conservative prime ministers.

These were people like Sir John A. Macdonald, who reconciled English and French Canadians and connected our country from coast to coast; like Brian Mulroney, who came the closest of any leader since Macdonald to achieving national constitutional reconciliation; and like Stephen Harper, who recognized the aspirations of Quebec and therefore presided over the political decimation of the Bloc Québécois while building pipelines expanding opportunity in every region of the country.

Conservatives have always believed in Canada as a community of communities, emphasizing both the legitimacy of particular local attachments and the necessity of shared common values.

Canada needs a one-nation vision today, but this throne speech fails to advance that one-nation vision. It fails to even discuss the critical issues facing many regions and communities within Canada. It completely ignores the challenges of our natural resource sector, not only in Alberta but across the country. It fails to discuss the vital issue of economic development for indigenous communities, for whom hope and opportunity are key elements of reconciliation.

It has nothing to say about the badly needed reforms to our immigration system, such as the urgent need for reform to our system of refugee sponsorship so that private organizations can sponsor vulnerable refugees without facing massive wait times, arbitrary caps and unjustifiable red tape.

New Canadians are waiting for an immigration system that is fair to those who follow the rules. With this throne speech, they will have to wait a little longer.

The throne speech notes the ambition of the government to join the UN Security Council, but makes no mention of the ambitions of people around the world to be out from under the thumb of oppression, to live as we live, with freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The throne speech marks the continuation of a foreign policy that puts the Security Council ambitions of the government ahead of our nation's fundamental values.

Unsurprisingly, the throne speech makes no mention of the threats to the fundamental freedoms of many Canadians such as freedom of speech, association, religion and conscience.

Our sense of national solidarity should include goodwill towards the indigenous energy worker in Alberta and the francophone petroleum product manufacturer in Ontario, the Sikh public servant in Montreal and the Catholic palliative care nurse in Delta.

It should include concern for the well-being, the traditions and the rights of all Canadians. It should not seek, in the first instance, to decide whose rights or whose sufferings are more important but rather seek a national reconciliation of interests and concerns.

This is what a country does when it truly sees itself as one nation to which all belong. This is the work of the 43rd Parliament, the deliberative assembly of one nation.

• (1630)

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member to think about his home territory and the petroleum sector. He refers to it as the energy sector, and in that there is a problem, because when we use petroleum for energy we burn it, and when we burn it, we contribute to climate change, at least a lot of people believe that.

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I would be interested to know what the member hears at home from that industry about its innovations in the non-energy side and the sorts of things that will continue, like the toothbrush that the hon. member mentioned, which have a need and a place in our economy.

• (1635)

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, in response to the hon. member, it is an important point to make that many of the policies we have seen from the government have put all sorts of barriers in front of the extractive sector in general, which obviously greatly impacts the petroleum manufacturing sector that is important in my riding as well as the use of energy in other contexts.

There are all kinds of innovations happening in our energy sector, and I think the member knows that. However, on this side of the House, our view is that we should have responsible policies that incentivize the development of new technology in the context of that sector, which is why in the last election we proposed a business tax rate reduced to 5% for those directly earning revenue from a green patent.

Development is already happening, but this green patent incentive would have encouraged further, more rapid development in terms of technological improvements. I think the path forward is to encourage development and innovation at the same time.

Policies like the carbon tax advanced by the Liberal government unfortunately will push investment out of the country to less environmentally friendly jurisdictions. They will not help us as a global community in our response to our environmental challenges. They will just hurt Canada's economy. However, we can incentivize the development of green technology while encouraging development. That would be the policy we would recommend on this side of the House.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I enjoyed listening to the remarks from my colleague, in particular some of the more jestful ones, such as the notion that perhaps Stephen Harper decimated the Bloc Québécois. I would argue that the only thing Stephen Harper decimated was the former Progressive Conservative Party that he hijacked the branding for and turned into what we now see as the former Reform Alliance Party of Canada.

Nonetheless, what we have here is obviously a difference of opinion from the member in terms of the throne speech. There are so many initiatives that have had huge success over the last four years and those are looked to continue on in the throne speech and through this government.

The member spoke a lot about the international relations that exist, but I wonder if he could pick up on just one thing in the throne speech that perhaps he is supportive of. Even though he will vote against it, I am curious if there is just one thing that he liked in there.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Madam Speaker, first of all, I know it is a well-worn line, but one is entitled to one's own opinion but not to one's own facts. It is an objective reality, with all due respect to my friends in the Bloc Québécois, that after a majority term of the current Prime Minister we have had a resurgence of the Bloc

Québécois and we have had an unprecedented resurgence of separatist sentiment in western Canada. That is not Stephen Harper's fault.

We had a period during which the fortunes of separatism in all parts of the country were waning dramatically and then, all of a sudden, as a result of four years of Liberal government, of lack of respect for different parts of the country, a failure to build national unity, we have had the return of separatist sentiment in not one but multiple parts of this country. I certainly would invite the member across to visit my riding and observe the frustration that exists there in terms of what is going on.

In terms of whether there are one or two things in the throne speech that I like, it is a throne speech that sets out the program for the government, what it will do and will not do, and I think that the direction is fundamentally wrong.

I highlighted during my speech the fact that the government is really not identifying and responding to the key problems that we face, but that does not mean that there will not be things from time to time that the government does that we agree with.

However, the frustration is that the government is not attentive to, and does not really seem to care about, the biggest problems and challenges that are facing many Canadians, and many of those things are not even mentioned.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): 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 Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Foreign Affairs; the hon. member for Langley—Aldergrove, Natural Resources; the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith, The Environment.

• (1640)

[*English*]

Mr. Eric Melillo (Kenora, CPC): Madam Speaker, as this is my maiden speech, I would like to congratulate all of my colleagues on their new or returning roles. I take the opportunity to thank the people of the Kenora riding for placing their trust in me to serve. I thank all of my volunteers and campaign team who worked so hard to make this possible, with a special mention of my good friends and family for supporting me along the way. To my parents, Joe and Charlene, who have always been there to help, and to my partner, Danaka, who has shown tremendous strength in adjusting to the challenges that public life presents, I express my thanks for their support.

Many people in my riding have shared concerns about the throne speech and how it will impact northwestern Ontario. My riding is rather unique. It is the largest in Ontario by land mass and it is the smallest by population. It is home to many first nations and municipalities, each with very different localized concerns. There are many challenges that we face in this region, from access to health and social services to broadband Internet, and a way of life that has been under attack by the Liberal government.

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However, there are also many opportunities in this region. For example, people from all around the globe choose the Kenora riding as a tourist destination each year. I happen to know that my good friend, the member for York—Simcoe, is often one of them. Across all sectors there is untapped economic potential and resilient citizens who are working hard to see our region grow.

When we talk about growth and economic potential, residents in my riding want to see a responsible government spending plan that is focused on attracting investment and lowering the deficit. However, the government is unfortunately continuing with its high tax and reckless spending plan, which has Canada lagging behind others in the G7. We in the Kenora riding feel those effects, with many businesses struggling to get off the ground or closing up shop and a dwindling industry that has resulted in jobs and opportunities leaving the riding.

With that in mind, I was particularly concerned to see that there is very little support for the natural resource sector in the Speech from the Throne. There is no hope provided to miners in Red Lake and across my region, and there is absolutely no mention of softwood lumber or our forestry industry. In fact, there is actually a plan that will restrict forest access even further. Conservatives understand that sustainable forest management and, more broadly, resource management play a pivotal role in growing our economy, protecting our environment and providing a more prosperous future for the next generation.

I spoke very briefly earlier about our way of life. I must mention that firearms are important tools for people's way of life in my riding. Whether for law-abiding sport shooters belonging to a gun club, or hunters that rely on their firearms to feed their families, this is an issue that unites people from all walks of life in my riding. I have even heard from many people who do not own firearms, but who are concerned that this overreach, the government's proposed blanket ban and confiscation of firearms from everyday Canadians, will not be beneficial. The experts all agree that this ban will not do anything to combat the very important issue of gun crime and gang violence in our cities. In fact, in my riding, it may make rural and remote Canadians feel less safe.

I was recently in Fort Severn First Nation. This is the most northern community in Ontario and sits right along the edge of Hudson Bay. This community is only accessible by plane, by barge or by an ice road when the proper weather conditions permit. The people of this community rely on their firearms to provide for their families, especially given the disproportionately higher cost of living that they face. They also rely on these firearms to protect themselves from the threats of bears and other dangerous wild animals that live near, but more often within, the community.

I have spoken with these residents directly and they are worried that the ambiguous term "military-style firearm" may lead to them losing their guns and actually jeopardize their way of life and their safety. The Liberals have yet to provide us with their definition of what "military-style" means. I believe that Canadians deserve to know exactly what that is so we can know what the government's intentions are and have a thoughtful, fact-based debate about how we can best combat gun violence. To put it simply, we must focus on criminals and not law-abiding hunters and sport shooters.

Rural and remote communities also face unique challenges when it comes to Internet access. A lack of reliable high-speed Internet hinders the ability of rural Canadians to access information, receive services and compete in the Canadian economy. Rural broadband access must be prioritized so that our students, workers and business owners can participate equally in society.

• (1645)

I was disappointed, as were many in the Kenora riding, that the throne speech made no mention of rural connectivity. Many of my constituents felt ignored by the throne speech. I believe I have made that very clear in my remarks so far.

However, I was very glad to hear that reconciliation will be a priority for the government. First nations and northern communities in my riding are underfunded and under-resourced. The people in these communities need access to health and social services. They need infrastructure investments to fix water systems and mould-infested homes. They need access to medical and mental health care and addiction treatments.

I hope to be able to work productively with the government to secure real results for these communities in my riding. This is, unfortunately, one of the files on which the government has been all talk with very little action. I do believe that in this minority Parliament we have a tremendous opportunity to work collaboratively and deliver meaningful supports.

I would like to take this opportunity to tell the Minister of Indigenous Services that I look forward to working together to achieve practical results. I appreciate his advocacy and collaboration on issues important to my riding. I hope we will continue this positive working relationship into the future.

This speech also makes mention of one important thing to me, and that is ambitious infrastructure investments. I will be urging the government to ensure that the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway from the Manitoba border through my riding of Kenora will be a top priority. This is not only a local issue for us, but it is also a national issue. When there is a crash on the Trans-Canada Highway in my riding, our entire economy shuts down. Our country is literally split into two. These highway conditions are notoriously dangerous. This project is tremendously important for the safety of all travellers.

The construction would also reduce barriers to economic activity in the region, and allow for further future development. We must ensure that we have funding from all levels of government in order to get this project done.

The Address

I will conclude my remarks there, but before I yield my time, I would like to thank the Speaker for the opportunity to share with this House some of my thoughts and some of my constituents' concerns with the Speech from the Throne. I believe that the priorities of northwestern Ontario can and should be much better represented in the throne speech and in the government's agenda. My riding and my region have great potential, but this Parliament must be able to work constructively to deliver the necessary support and investment to get the region moving again.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, BQ): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my hon. colleague's speech. I agree with him on many points.

However, he surprised me when he spoke about the forestry industry's problem. He said that the government was being stingy with forestry companies and with this sector that is very important to his native northern Ontario.

I remember during the 2008 crisis, when the Conservative government rightly decided to invest \$10 billion in the auto sector. These loans were never repaid. For example, Chrysler received a \$4-billion loan, and this debt is still on the books. The government bought shares in General Motors, which it sold at a loss.

During the same period, the forestry industry was also going through a crisis. However, the Conservative government invested just \$75 million in this sector, even though it employed 600,000 workers, compared to the 400,000 employed by the auto sector.

Does my colleague not think that the Liberal Party is carrying on the Conservative Party's policy?

[*English*]

Mr. Eric Melillo: Madam Speaker, in regard to 2008, I will not speak to that specifically. I was only 10 years old in 2008. However, what I do know is that the government's plan to restrict forestry access even further is going to make it much more difficult for the forestry workers in the industry in my region.

Over on this side of the House, Conservatives understand that responsible forestry management would actually help us reduce carbon emissions by planting new trees and sequestering more carbon. It would provide good jobs for people in my riding and across the country. I hope to be able to work with all parties in the House to support the forestry sector.

• (1650)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his maiden speech in the House.

The member spent some time talking about firearms and the government's plan with respect to firearms. What we have been talking about is the banning of military assault weapons. The reality of the situation is that people do not need to be walking around with or have the ability to own firearms that are designed to kill people. A lot of people say these firearms are already banned, but a lot of them have not been banned; they are just restricted, and there is a difference between being banned and being restricted.

The bottom line is we are saying that people do not need to have these weapons. A lot of hunters will say the same thing. My father-in-law and my uncles are hunters. They will say the exact same thing, that they do not need a military-style weapon to hunt for sport.

Would the member agree that the vast majority of law-abiding citizens who use firearms in a law-abiding way for sport or recreational purposes would agree that this style of weapon is not required?

Mr. Eric Melillo: Madam Speaker, I wish I could answer my colleague's question. The Liberal government has refused to tell us what it means when it refers to military-style assault weapons. It is a very ambiguous term and it is creating a lot of unease in people across Canada, from sport shooters to people that rely on these firearms to provide for their families.

The Conservative Party will always stand on the side of law-abiding firearm owners. We understand that creating more laws for people that already follow the rules would do nothing to combat this important issue.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate my hon. colleague on his great first speech in the House.

I am wondering if he could outline how the carbon tax is affecting people where he lives.

Mr. Eric Melillo: Madam Speaker, there is no debate that the carbon tax has hit northwestern Ontario and my riding of Kenora particularly hard. The cost of living has increased all across the region. Fort Severn is a community where the cost of everything has inflated even more drastically.

We are going to continue to fight for a more affordable life for all Canadians.

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to let you know that I am splitting my time with the hon. member for Milton.

It is an honour to rise in this chamber on behalf of the people of Whitby to speak to the government's Speech from the Throne.

In the throne speech, it was mentioned how young our country is. While in the context of world history this may be true, our predecessors have left very big shoes to fill indeed. It was on these grounds that nation-shaping events took place and decisions were made in the past: the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2005, the implementation of universal health care in 1966, declarations of war in some of the world's greatest conflicts, the Canadian Bill of Rights in 1960 and the original NAFTA in 1994.

The Address

We, as Canadians, have accomplished so much throughout our history. These decisions should guide us along the way as we make the most of our time here in this 43rd Parliament. As Pierre Trudeau once said, “The past is to be respected and acknowledged, but not worshipped; it is our future in which we will find our greatness.” Building a better future, and a sustainable future I might add, for our country is not only our job, but it is our obligation as the temporary agents of change in the seats of this chamber.

Today, the world is facing new challenges, not unlike the past, but staying focused and grounded on the people who sent us here will be key to success. Collaboration, no doubt, will be critical. The throne speech was clear. We are working hard to build a better future for our children and generations to come. We need to look far past the “short term-ism” that government is often criticized for and look to the long-term change process that will advance our collective vision for a sustainable future.

Over the last four years, our government has achieved bold progress on an ambitious agenda they were elected on in 2015. We worked hard to strengthen the middle class, grow the economy and protect our environment. That is not to mention the many other things that we have championed as a government, including reducing poverty and homelessness, and advancing women's equality. The last four years are a testament that environmental action does not come at the cost of economic growth. In fact, we have seen substantive progress on both fronts at the same time.

In the last Parliament, the Liberal government developed and delivered on one of Canada's most ambitious environmental and climate action plans in our history. Canadians spoke loud and clear about the need for climate action when we went to the polls in October. As the member for Whitby, I hear regularly from constituents about how concerned they are about climate change. Climate change is no longer an idea spoken about by scientists as some far-off event. It is a reality people face in their everyday lives. We have seen wetter, wilder and unpredictable weather become the norm. Extreme climatic events are regularly in the news, and action can no longer wait. Our historical apathy and inaction under previous governments on this issue has been our greatest challenge. I am proud to be part of a team that is serious about climate action.

Over the last few years, people in Whitby and along the shores of Lake Ontario and many of the Great Lakes have experienced unprecedented flooding. This has caused property damage and shoreline erosion. The cost of inaction is simply too great. I am happy to see that the Minister of Infrastructure will be working with other levels of government to help fund the building of climate-resilient infrastructure. The government is also committed to working toward the completion of all flood maps in Canada and introducing a new low-cost national flood insurance program. This will allow for better planning policies at the local level to help avoid significant damage from climate change-related disasters.

There are many progressive measures for addressing climate change from our platform and the Speech from the Throne that I know many Canadians will support. One such promise I am particularly excited about is the commitment to help Canadians make their homes more energy efficient through \$40,000 interest-free loans. This will enable many deep retrofits to homes that could achieve significant reduction in energy consumption. This will re-

duce costs for Canadians, putting more money in their pockets, and alleviate stress on electricity grids, which will prevent power outages in peak season.

• (1655)

The throne speech also mentioned that the government will work with businesses to make Canada the best place to start a clean-tech company. A 50% reduction in taxes for businesses that create net-zero products is no mediocre incentive. The riding of Whitby, and Durham region more broadly, is a hub of innovation. I look forward to working with the world-class entrepreneurs, business owners and education facilities like Durham College in the region to promote sustainable innovation and green jobs.

Our government is also committed to preserving 25% of our land and 25% of our oceans by 2025, and then working toward 30% by 2030. This is an ambitious and necessary goal. The numbers on declining biodiversity in our country are disheartening, to say the least. Six hundred species are at risk. Fifty per cent of the species monitored by the World Wildlife Fund are in decline. Humans have altered over 40% of the natural environment to the detriment of many species. Studies show that biodiversity is in more of a decline now than at any other time in human history.

Protecting natural areas is not only needed but is necessary for the sustainability of the environment. I am proud to be part of a government that, in the last Parliament, delivered the biggest investment in nature conservation and preservation in Canadian history. Thanks to the work of the former minister of environment and climate change, we invested \$1.3 billion in nature conservation in the budget of 2018. Protecting 25% of our land and oceans by 2025 will build on the work completed over the last four years. We have significantly increased the size of protected ocean and land areas in our country.

Building on this, I am thrilled that the government will partner with municipalities to help them expand and diversify urban forests as well as plant two billion trees. Canada accounts for around 30% of the world's forest coverage and this is an important part of the fight against climate change.

We will also work to ban single-use plastics.

The Address

Climate change is the challenge of our generation and it is a global challenge. Canada must continue to do its part and be an international leader.

Now I want to talk about the economy. People in Whitby are concerned about building a strong, vibrant local economy. This is not unlike many of the other ridings across the country. A strong local economy is the work of all levels of government and all stakeholders working in collaboration. I look forward to working with all members, the government and other levels of government to help support the growth of our local economy in Whitby and across Durham region as a whole.

In 2019, we were elected on an ambitious agenda of continued investments in Canadians to grow our economy. Canadians created over one million jobs in four years. We continue to have one of the fastest-growing economies in the G7. This strong record of economic growth under our government has allowed Canada to have the best balance sheet among G7 countries.

As the Speech from the Throne outlined, we will cut taxes for all but the wealthiest of Canadians. We will reduce the cost of cell-phone bills by 25%. We will make before and after school care more affordable and accessible for Canadian families. We will strengthen pensions for seniors and increase the federal minimum wage.

We believe that everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. Housing affordability has become a major concern for families in Whitby and across the country. Housing costs continue to rise and an affordable place to call home is out of reach for many. The government made housing affordability a priority from the beginning of the last Parliament. The government brought in the first-ever national housing strategy, a 10-year plan and \$55-billion investment to boost housing supply and give more Canadians a place to call home. This will set the direction of housing policy in this country for years to come, help reduce chronic homelessness by 50% and remove 530,000 families from housing need. It is clear that we are serious about ensuring that every Canadian has a place to call home.

I am proud to be part of a government that takes investing in Canadians seriously. From trade to poverty reduction, housing affordability to national pharmacare, economic growth and real climate action, this government under this Prime Minister has stepped up to the plate. This throne speech is a blueprint for where we will go in the new Parliament. I am honoured to stand in this House and I look forward to working with all members to continue the path forward.

• (1700)

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Madam Speaker, it was very interesting. I heard the member talk about the fact that he is from Whitby in the Durham region. I know that in Durham one of the fastest-growing economies is agriculture.

Just last week, as I was sitting at a kitchen table with one of the farmers, his \$7,000 gas bill for drying his corn had a \$1,200 carbon tax. What are the farmers in the member's area saying about the carbon tax? The farmers in Elgin—Middlesex—London are against it.

Could the member explain how \$1,200 is good for the economy when it is going to the carbon tax, out of the pockets of farmers?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Madam Speaker, what I see in the food system is that our government actually developed the first-ever national food policy to support agriculture in this country. Never before, since the emergency war provisions of World War II, have we had a national food policy.

Farmers are a part of the food system, and are clearly benefiting from policies that are designed to increase their economic growth.

The carbon tax is actually designed to target industry players and disincentivize pollution. That is exactly what we are doing.

• (1705)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on a great speech addressing the Speech from the Throne.

The member hit on a very important point, and that was that we have seen unprecedented results in the last four years that the government was in power. We have the lowest unemployment rate since we started recording unemployment. We have one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, as he mentioned. The member mentioned our balance sheet. We have the best debt-to-GDP ratio amongst the G7 countries.

Would the member comment on how he sees this Speech from the Throne lining up with the previous one, and if he sees that continuing to push forward on progressive ideas and investing in Canadians is going to continue to produce the results we have been seeing over the last four years?

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Madam Speaker, I have seen nothing but economic progress since the last election in 2015. We have seen almost every sector grow, and incredible numbers of jobs being created.

For me to hear the Prime Minister's words in the Speech from the Throne read out loud was clearly inspiring. We are building a sustainable economy in this country. That is what my whole life has been about. The only reason I ran in the election was because of the significant progress that I saw the government making. Here I am in this honourable House as a result and as a true testament to the great work that was done in the last four years.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, BQ): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to the speech by the new member for a beautiful region in Ontario. He spoke about the environment, but does he not think that his government is talking out of both sides of its mouth? It is investing billions of dollars in developing pipelines, while at the same time it is talking about meeting the Paris targets. That seems a bit contradictory.

The Address

I have one last question. During the election campaign, the Bloc spoke about introducing a bill that would enshrine the government's Paris commitments in legislation. If this bill is introduced, will the member commit to supporting it?

[*English*]

Mr. Ryan Turnbull: Madam Speaker, building the economy and fighting climate change are complex issues and no extreme position, one side or the other, will really do justice to the issue. Building a sustainable economy and transitioning off fossil fuels is going to be challenging, to say the least.

With regard to the member's question about the legislation, or bill that he is planning to propose, I believe there are important tracking and metrics that need to be tracked towards building a green economy. I would fully support that.

Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth and to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Sport), Lib.): Madam Speaker, a few days ago I was on Twitter and uncharacteristically came across a story that warmed my heart. It was the story of a young third grade boy who came to Newfoundland as a refugee from Syria with his family. I learned that this young boy knew that some of his classmates played hockey and he wanted to play too, but there were a few barriers in his way. He did not know how to play, he did not have anyone to teach him and he did not have any equipment. However, he did know the most important lesson of hockey. Wayne Gretzky said it himself, "Hockey is a unique sport in the sense that you need each and every guy helping each other and pulling in the same direction to be successful." It sounds like another sport with which I am familiar.

After some of his classmates told their parents about this young boy who wanted to play hockey, that is exactly what the town did. Residents came together working toward the same goal, to help get him on the ice. The whole community got together to make sure that nothing got in the way of him playing hockey. Before anyone knew it, there was no shortage of hockey gear, people willing to coach him and after this viral tweet, fans from across Canada and the world.

This heartwarming story is a good reminder of two very important things.

The first is that being Canadian is about the kindness that we strive for every day, our commitment to making everyone feel welcome and respected and the things we can accomplish when we come together.

The second is the reminder that issues affecting Canadians do not exist in vacuums. Nor are they unrelated. Being able to participate in sports is not a question of desire or ambition. There are barriers in front of our youth who wish to participate.

For some, it is a question of affordability. For those living in rural areas with little or no public transportation, it can be a question of access. The barrier can also be an absence of spaces that are culturally appropriate for some Canadians.

Sport is not just play. Sport is health and mental health. Sport is peace and community building, it is personally empowering and a

connection to our natural environment. Sport is educational, employs thousands of Canadians, drives our economy and helps define us as a nation. Sport has a place in every kid's life and a place in every portfolio in this government.

As Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth as well as for Sport, this story emphasizes the intersection of my portfolios. For me, being raised by a single mother in co-op housing, I was very fortunate to have found the sport of kayaking. It quite literally changed my life. However, what if certain barriers had gotten in the way of that? What if the fees at the kayak club were just too high and made it impossible for my mother to pay? I took public transit to and from the canoe club every day. What if the town I grew up in did not have public transit? These barriers to participation are exactly the sorts of things I hope to be able to identify and dismantle in the coming years.

Given the opportunity that I have with this role, I am ready to listen, learn and find solutions so all Canadians can access sport, recreation and physical activity. This includes examining the barriers that women in leadership roles face inside and outside the sport industry, working on expanding Canada's anti-racism strategy and ensuring easier access to sports and community activities for newcomers to Canada.

One of the reasons I find the Speech from the Throne to be such an ambitious action plan for the government's vision for Canada is because it understands this very thing, that no issue exists in a vacuum. The government has put forward goals and targets that are well balanced, interconnected and complementary. No ministry is working alone, but rather, working as a team toward the same goal of a better future for all Canadians. It is incumbent on every member in the House to collaborate and work together to that end.

Next let us talk about the government's plan on climate change.

The implications of climate change are being reminded to us every day. The Australian wildfires have destroyed the natural habitats of almost 100 species. The polar ice caps are melting and sea levels are rising. Youth are looking at us and demanding action. We must not ignore them.

Climate change is hurting the economy and when the economy suffers, it is the marginalized who suffer the most. This an urgent matter of public and global safety. Health concerns that we have never anticipated before are popping up worldwide because of bad air quality and toxins in our food.

The Address

Our government understands that climate change is a multi-faceted issue and we have set ambitious goals to meet the challenge. We are committing to protecting 25% of our land and 25% of our oceans by 2025. We are also committing to reduce plastic pollution to zero to help keep our oceans and lakes clean. Our government is launching a program to plant two billion trees, a program that will support 3,500 seasonal jobs, help conserve and restore our forests, as well as help cities expand and diversify their urban forests.

We have a responsibility to tackle climate change and we have put a plan together that gets us to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The government is setting targets that are not only ambitious, but achievable as well. We need to do a better job for all Canadians, but especially for the youth and the most vulnerable. The impacts of climate change disproportionately affect the most marginalized people in our society, such as indigenous, racialized and economically disadvantaged populations.

• (1710)

A big part of doing better means strengthening our middle class and helping more Canadians join it. Working toward a poverty-free Canada is a priority that this government has taken on, and as a cop kid myself, it is one I feel very strongly about.

During its last mandate, this government made historic gains in lifting families and children over the poverty line, and the Speech from the Throne only reaffirms this commitment to do more.

The government will continue its vital investments in affordable housing, exactly the sort of housing I grew up in with my family. Without access to safe and affordable housing, my mother would have had to choose between paying rent and buying healthy groceries or enrolling my brother and me in sports and after-school activities. Building affordable housing gives Canadians across the country the opportunity to succeed, and co-ops should be included in that plan. Our goal as a government is not just to help our citizens get by; our goal is to help them thrive.

With initiatives like the Canada child benefit, the government has made life easier for parents and families trying to get ahead. In my own riding of Milton, in a typical month the government gave an average of \$550 to 15,000 families from 2016 to 2018. I have heard that Milton is the youngest riding in Canada with the most kids, so it is possible it will receive the most, but in the last four years that is an average of \$180 million. It is historic.

This opens countless doors for so many families and their children. To a family just getting by, \$500 makes a huge difference. It means that one parent might not have to give up his or her career or perhaps can stay in college because the family can now afford child care. The Canada child benefit makes this possible.

Studies show that growing up in poverty hurts children very early on and the effects of poverty will follow them into adulthood. No child should have to face food insecurity. No child should think that access to adequate and culturally appropriate health care is a privilege. In the Speech from the Throne, the government makes it clear that it is taking the steps to ensure these facts become realities in Canada.

The government is aware of the challenges that many Canadians are currently facing in accessing quality health care. All Canadians, regardless of where they live, should be able to access a primary care family doctor.

When we talk about the intersection of issues, mental health is one that is so deeply intertwined with every aspect of our lives. With Bell Let's Talk Day coming up this Wednesday, we need to celebrate all the work that has been done to decrease the stigma around mental health. However, a lot of work still remains and cannot slow down now.

We need to ensure that workplaces across Canada have mental health standards in place. People who want to access mental health services should not have to wait months on end before they get the help they need. These are exactly the sorts of problems our government will tackle, by working to introduce relevant workplace mental health standards and ensuring Canadians can access services when they need them.

We are living in an uncertain time. Many Canadians across the nation are worried about their future. We acknowledge those valid anxieties Canadians might have and we promise to work tirelessly toward a safer Canada.

This government has already taken historic action against gun crime and organized gang activity. We must not wait until the next tragedy to ban military-style assault rifles, a top priority for this government. It will also work with municipalities to empower those that want to ban handguns. We need to take actions that keep Canadians safe. We must also do what is possible to help the rest of the world become a safer place as well.

I now want to take a few moments to talk about the events of the past few weeks. Our country is still mourning the death of the people we lost on Flight PS752. This devastating national tragedy is heavy on the hearts of Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Over the past few weeks, I have seen communities come together to support the families and friends of the victims through this most difficult time. I attended a vigil in Oakville with my colleagues and neighbours to light a candle and remember, and it was a sad but important moment.

Tragedies like this one should never happen again. Our responsibility extends beyond our borders to the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world. The government's commitments to providing international development aid and assistance, such as investing in education and gender equality, will create pathways to opportunities, better futures for people worldwide and a more peaceful world. Together, with the help of our allies, we will work together to champion human rights and achieve peace in areas affected by war, poverty and disease.

The Address

As we look toward the future, we must ask ourselves what our vision is for Canada. I want to go back to the story of the young boy in Newfoundland whom I talked about at the beginning of this response. As a rookie MP, I often find myself asking two questions.

The first one is, “Who am I here to represent?” The answer to that question is easy; it is the people of Milton. As long as the people in the riding of Milton elect me to be their representative, I will be a fierce advocate for them in Ottawa.

The second question is, “Why am I here?” This one is a little trickier, but the story of this young boy made me realize that at the heart of it what we are here to do is work toward a Canada where every young boy and girl, and every Canadian for that matter, can succeed no matter where they come from. When I look at the vision of our government and the goals we have been set, I see us working toward this Canada together.

• (1715)

As I have said throughout my campaign and throughout my time here, I believe there are good ideas on the right and there are good ideas on the left, and we are much stronger when we work together as team Canada.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague from Milton on both his election and his maiden speech, which I thought was very well done.

The member talked about a lot of things that were important to him, such as the child benefit and co-op housing. However, what he did not talk about was the balanced equation of a government needing to have the revenue in order to do the things it wants to do for the citizens of the country. He left out one side of the equation.

Does the member believe that when we support the children of today, it is fair that the grandchildren of tomorrow will ultimately have to bear the burden of that debt or is it important to look at that balanced side of the equation and perhaps look at having something in the Speech from the Throne that actually supports revenue generation in the country?

• (1720)

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, that question came up often at the doors: What about the deficit?

I will talk about the deficit and the debt-to-GDP ratio, which is more important than a raw number.

We can talk about the price of gas all we want. We can talk about the price of one thing, which is just one direction. However, what we have to focus on is the relationship between the debt and the amount of money the country makes. The truth is that the debt to GDP ratio is more sound than it has ever been. It is the strongest in the G7, and it will continue to be. The debt of this nation is under control. We are gold star rated, and we will continue to be under this government.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, there was reference in the throne speech to a national pharmacare plan, but the words that were left out were “universal”, “comprehensive” and “public”. The NDP, through our leader, the member for Burnaby South, has put forward as its first

bill a framework much in the same vein as the Canada Health Act, which would allow us to implement this system and set up a road map for provinces to join it.

Will the member follow us on our plan and go beyond the Liberal promise of just a national pharmacare plan and make one that is universal, public and comprehensive, so we fully fund this very key missing link in our health care system?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, this is an important topic in my riding as well.

I attended a forum on universal health care and universal pharmacare. Indeed, we are the only country in the world with universal health care that does not have a comprehensive universal pharmacare. We have promised to pursue just that.

We are going to sit on committees together and we are going to work together. I am excited to collaborate in the effort to make Canada a better, stronger, healthier place, but it is going to take effort, collaboration and the spirit of team work from all of us to keep working for team Canada.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we talk about deficits and how we have to think of future generations, and of course that is important. However, when I was growing up, before I even got to school, the Quebec government was investing massively in schools and roads, which meant that when I got to be a certain age to go to school, there was a school for me to go to. Therefore, that deficit, that financing, that spending actually benefited me as a future generation.

The money that we are investing today in the labs in the universities, those labs will be there for my kids if they decide to pursue a career in science.

Could the member comment on how investments made today, even if sometimes a deficit is incurred, can actually benefit future generations?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden: Madam Speaker, indeed, there are different types of debt and different types of deficits. We know there is good debt and bad debt. When this government took over from the previous government, there was a huge structural deficit. The previous Conservative government was not building things, but now we are. The country is on the right track, and we are determined to not leave our next generation with an environmental debt. We are working extremely hard to ensure our economy and infrastructure are sound.

As I said, while there are different types of debt and deficits, it is also important to recognize who owns most of our debt. In Canada, most of our debt is owned by Canadians in the form of bonds. We certainly want to ensure that it remains low, but at the end of the day, we are truly investing in ourselves.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Dufferin—Caledon.

The Address

As this is the first time I have had the opportunity in the 43rd Parliament to stand and speak, I would like to thank the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo for giving me the honour of representing them again.

Everyone in the House owes so much gratitude to the people who volunteer for their campaign, the people who donate money, the people who do so much to ensure that democracy is strong and vibrant and that their goals and values are heard as we go through the election process.

A new parliamentary session is always opened with a Speech from the Throne. People watching on TV might be wondering about the purpose of the Speech from the Throne. The throne speech outlines the government's agenda for the upcoming session. In actual fact, in the 42nd Parliament, it outlined the government's agenda for the entire four years. The throne speech is a really important document in terms of the government's plans and where it is going to take this country.

On December 18, many of us in the House either went over to the Senate chamber to hear the speech or listened to it on TV, and in preparation for our comments about the Speech from the Throne, we had an opportunity to reread it.

On reading it again in the new year, I saw a number of statements that struck me as significant, not only in terms of what was said but more importantly in what was not said. We had some real concerns about what was not mentioned. If we partner that with ministers' mandate letters, which state how they are going to implement their plans, we realize that what was not said was not just a miss in a document that by nature has to be somewhat limited, but that there were really some big gaps in terms of what the government was going to do moving forward.

I want to first talk about fiscal discipline. The Liberal government is spending money that it cannot afford to spend. In many cases that money will not be spent in important areas like student loans, but rather will be wasted in many other areas.

The Liberals talk about a debt-to-GDP ratio, but they are using old figures. They have not looked at the more recent trends and the more recent numbers. They are on a very concerning path. The Liberals are talking about the debt-to-GDP ratio and saying Canada is in great shape, but they are also projecting significant deficits. Interest rates will not stay at historically low levels. We are spending more per capita adjusted than we ever have in the history of this country.

The Liberals not only lack fiscal discipline; they do not understand where that money comes from. They are moving forward on a position that over time will erode the revenue base that we in this country count on for paying for the important programs that my colleague from Milton talked about. We all care about having important programs such as support for students and seniors and support for health care, but we cannot do that if we destroy what drives our economy.

I want to start by talking a bit about the natural resource development sector, which is the portfolio I am delighted and honoured to focus on.

Out of the thousands of words about how the Liberals are going to support Canadians, about how they are going to spend money, about how they are going to do many things, natural resources came up in only one sentence. In the entire Speech from the Throne, there is only one sentence about natural resources, and that sentence is basically just lip service to the importance of natural resource development to this country. That sentence is not about the opportunities for our natural resource sector but rather an acknowledgement by the government of the hardships that our natural resource sector has experienced and a claim that it cares about those hardships.

● (1725)

It was not about opportunity. It was not about creating wealth. It was that people have had a hard time and we do need to care about that issue.

It is a huge problem if Liberals do not understand the importance of our natural resource sector to the economy of our country. I am going to be giving some more examples specifically as they relate to forestry and mining.

In 2017, the Prime Minister said that he was going to get a new softwood lumber agreement with President Obama. He did not get the job done. I do not question that we have a more challenging environment for arriving at a softwood lumber agreement, but there has been no effort to get it done. With the NAFTA agreement, the biggest trade irritant for the last 20-plus years in this country has been softwood. Did the Liberals attach this issue to the negotiations for NAFTA? The answer is no.

When the U.S. wanted to talk about having an agreement around minerals, did they say they would be willing to talk about minerals but that they also wanted to talk about the softwood lumber agreement? Did they do that? No. Are those issues in the minister's mandate letter? No.

We have 10,000-plus jobs there in British Columbia. New Brunswick is having its challenges as well, and this is adding approximately 20% to the cost of our products going over the border. Workers are hurting and suffering, but the government has not even put solving this issue in the mandate letter. Quite frankly, that is absolutely shameful.

I saw a presentation last week, and in terms of the lumber agreement, British Columbia is now the highest-cost producer in the world. It is not about labour or the cost of machinery and equipment. It is about the cost of doing business. It is about carbon taxes. It is about the eight pieces of legislation and the thousands of regulations, both federal and provincial, that are adding to the cost. B.C. is the highest-cost producer in the world in terms of its product. No wonder that its businesses are moving to the U.S. and fleeing the country.

The Address

I had another conversation with someone who wanted to add value to his products. He builds a very good product and has two factories where he does value added. When he hits the U.S. border, it is on the value added. He is not even paying 20%; he is paying significantly more in terms of the tariffs at the U.S. border. The Liberal government did not care, so what was his ultimate decision? He set up a factory in Everett, Washington, because he could not afford to do business anymore in Canada. He moved the jobs down to Everett, Washington. This softwood lumber agreement needs to be done, and it is shameful that the government has not made it a priority.

Mining is an increasingly non-competitive place to do business. We talk about the carbon tax. We talk about the clean fuel standards that will be added. We talk about all those additions.

I was at presentation where I learned Alaska exploration is going through the roof. What is happening in the Yukon and British Columbia is that they are worried about exploration. Why are they worried about exploration? The reason is the government has created a situation that makes it not competitive or appropriate for them to do business anymore.

The Liberals had a very unusual line in the Speech from the Throne about our being inextricably bound to the space-time continuum and the same planetary spaceship. I would like to suggest that maybe they have left energy workers off that spaceship. They are not on the same spaceship. Liberals have given areas like forestry and mining the lower berth and continue to support their favourite industries.

I am very worried about a blind spot of the government. I am very worried about our competitiveness and the generation of revenue, and I am certainly very worried about the Speech from the Throne and the direction it is going to take our country.

• (1730)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about deficit spending and debt spending. If it is such a deeply rooted principle within Conservatives not to run debt, could she explain why both Brian Mulroney and Stephen Harper ran debts? Of the 19 budgets they brought in, 16 ran deficits. Could the member explain why Doug Ford continues to run debts in Ontario, and in fact is paying more to service that debt than Kathleen Wynne was previously? Why do Conservatives run debt?

In case the member does not know, I have the answer: It is because they understand the principle that as long as the economy is growing faster than debt is being taken on, it is being done in a responsible way.

Could the member at least acknowledge that every Conservative government in this House over the last 30 years has run deficits in almost every single budget?

• (1735)

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the issue. From 2006 to 2008, Conservatives paid down approximately \$30 billion of the debt that was owed.

There was something called a global recession. At the time, the former minister of finance presented a five-year plan. He presented it and said that in the global recession, we were going to have to spend a specific amount of money. Then he brought us back to a balanced budget within five years. Conservatives did exactly what we presented to Canadians.

I would like to contrast that with the Liberals, who, when they ran for office in 2015, said they were going to have a little deficit for a short period of time and that in 2019 the budget would be balanced. What happened?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague mentioned that between 2006 and 2008, Conservatives paid down some of the debt, and that is true. The reason they were able to do so was that massive surpluses were given to them as a result of the responsible government that preceded them under Prime Minister Martin.

Nevertheless, between 2006 and when the Conservatives finally lost in 2015, they managed to grow the debt by \$150 billion in that period of time. Could my colleague please tell us how that jibes with the fact that the Conservatives say they are horrified by the idea of any debt?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, we built on the debt reduction that Prime Minister Martin took on because he was forced to, as a result of things getting so out of control.

However, this is not the Liberal government of Prime Minister Martin, which actually focused on getting fiscal responsibility on the table; this is a government that committed in 2015 to returning to balanced budgets, but the Liberals are not there. The interest on the debt will pretty soon be more than what we transfer to the provinces for health care. To be frank, that is shameful.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just as a matter of correction, the Harper government had to pay \$230 billion in interest for the years of the previous governments of Chrétien and Martin. Along with that, we left with a \$30-billion surplus, so we were paying on the interest, more or less. We were cleaning up the mess of the previous Liberal governments. This has been our destiny in the history of running this country.

Could my hon. colleague comment on that?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, we could sit and talk about debt and deficits, but I think we can all agree that we are at the point where it is not like paying a mortgage on a house. The government is at the point where it is going into debt for operating costs, and that is absolutely unsustainable in the long term.

What we have is a government that cannot control its spending. More importantly, the Liberal government has enjoyed significant revenues over the last couple of years because of the policies of the previous government. What is happening with its new policies is that capital is fleeing the country, and we are going to be in a really challenging situation.

The Address

● (1740)

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is an old phrase, absence makes the heart grow fonder. I can say that my absence from this place has only made my fondness for it grow stronger over the last four years. It is great to be back here representing the great riding of Dufferin—Caledon. I want to quickly do a shout-out to our former member of Parliament, David Tilson, who retired and represented this riding so well from 2005 to 2019.

Unfortunately, I am going to say that this throne speech does not represent the riding of Dufferin—Caledon nearly as well as David Tilson did or how I hope to represent it. I am going to talk about three things that the throne speech either ignores or really gives short shrift to. These three things are infrastructure, rural broadband and agriculture.

When we talk about infrastructure, there is no mention in the throne speech of investing in transit for rural and small communities in this country. Let me say that these communities desperately need investments in infrastructure and in transit.

Let me give an example. Orangeville, one of the municipalities in my riding, is trying to buy new buses to expand bus routes. The current government is one that allegedly cares about climate change. Why would the Liberals not be investing in transit?

The project is \$2.1 million. The provincial government has stepped up with \$667,000, its one-third share. It is in the bank. Where is the answer from the federal government? As of January of this year, the Orangeville transit task force has told me it has heard crickets from the current government. It is disrespectful and it is neglecting small communities.

One of the things my constituents talk about is exactly that: the need for transit and the need for investments. The government seems to be able to invest in all kinds of things, allegedly. The deficit is \$20 billion or \$25 billion a year, but there is absolutely nothing for rural Canada and small-town Canada when we talk about transit. In addition to that, the Liberal government cancelled the transit tax credit, which was always a benefit.

In the riding of Dufferin—Caledon, there are critical infrastructure deficits for small municipalities. I held a town hall meeting in Shelburne, another small municipality in my riding, last week. In Shelburne, people are talking about the urgent need for investments in bridges and roads in their communities.

The Township of Melancthon is an agriculture-based municipality. It has 248 kilometres of roads as well as 51 bridges and other structures. The municipality had an engineering report come out in 2019 dealing with roads, bridges and culverts that desperately need repair. Many of them are at the absolute end of their lifespan. It will take \$6 million just to deal with that problem. When they deal with all of their infrastructure needs, including roads, bridges and culverts, it is another \$6.6 million over 10 years.

This is a township that has an annual budget of \$4 million. How is it going to repair these bridges? Where was the mention in the throne speech, the Liberals' document to outline the priorities for this country over the next four years? There was not a single mention.

In the Township of Amaranth, eight bridges have to be replaced in the next year alone, which is \$5.3 million. Its annual budget is also approximately \$4 million.

Are these types of critically needed investments mentioned by the government in its throne speech? They are absolutely not there, yet the government will talk about what the Liberals would call a buyback of guns as part of their program.

They are not buying back. They would require law-abiding Canadians to sell their guns to the government with estimated costs of \$250 million to \$1 billion to buy these things back, force people to sell them back to the government, which will add nothing to public safety because these are law-abiding citizens. However, the Liberals do not have any money for small and rural municipalities. That is disgraceful, and they should be doing better.

At my town hall meeting, the frustration and the anger from small-town Canada and rural Canada are palpable. Those people are not being heard by the government. They are not mentioned in the throne speech and they know they are not a priority.

● (1745)

What people do know is that the priority of the government is to buy votes in the larger urban centres. That is all it cares about. In the rest of Canada, it is too bad, so sad.

With respect to rural broadband, I used to represent a riding in Brampton. Someone can drive 15 minutes north from Brampton into Caledon and guess what. There is almost no broadband. Cellular service is awful and rural broadband is awful. Again, was this mentioned in the throne speech? This is a critical infrastructure investment across this country and it does not even get a mention, not even a small little blurb.

I talked to the farmers in my riding. They have to drive into town to Tim Hortons to download software upgrades for their machinery and equipment. That is a wonderful solution, is it not?

They have to do the same thing if they want their children to get access to homework and other online tools that all school districts now provide. They have to leave their house and drive to Tim Hortons where they can get reliable Wi-Fi. Where was that again in the throne speech? It was just completely ignored.

The Address

The lack of service is killing small businesses in my riding and in ridings similar to it all across this country, and the response from the government is absolutely nothing. After winning an election a party is supposed to govern for all the people in the country, not just the people who gave it votes. I would ask my friends across the aisle to please rethink the strategy toward rural and small-town Canada, because it is suffering under the government.

Again, the Province of Ontario is stepping up to help with this. It is investing \$315 million over five years for unserved and underserved areas. This is expected to generate up to \$1 billion of total investments when it is matched by the private sector. These are the kinds of investments that the government should be making, not spending \$250 million to \$1 billion forcing law-abiding gun owners to sell their legally purchased guns back to the government.

The final point I want to raise is with respect to agriculture and farmers. Again, farming was almost completely neglected in the throne speech. Farmers are facing huge challenges, not just in my riding but all across the country. I would love it if members of the government would come and sit down in my community and hear what the farmers have to say.

These are hard-working people, hard-working families who are suffering as a result of a lack of access to markets for soy and canola. They are suffering as a result of a carbon tax to dry their corn and dry their wheat. This was a very wet year in Ontario. If one wanted to get corn processed one had to dry it, and the carbon tax that is being charged to farmers to dry their corn and grain is highway robbery. They cannot afford it. They are struggling and they do not even merit a mention in the throne speech.

The U.S. government is stepping up for its soy and canola farmers. It has a \$28-billion market facilitation program. I asked the minister about this back in December. She said they were going to talk, meet, do this and do that. Now we are at the end of January and there has still been no substantive action taken on this.

In Ontario, we lost processing capacity for the beef industry. This is critical. In talking with some of the farming families in my riding, I can tell my colleagues that when they looked for an alternate place to have their cattle processed, they were told in November that it would be handled in April.

Those families have to pay to feed their cattle for the next five months at cost. Also, the cattle are going to be oversized and the families are going to have to pay more in penalties to have the cattle processed. What is the response from the government? What has it done? Was it mentioned in the throne speech? These are hard-working Canadian families who are suffering and they do not even deem a mention in the throne speech. It is having a devastating effect.

I have to say that I will be voting against this throne speech as there is absolutely nothing in it for the residents of my riding and for residents across this country in small towns and rural communities.

• (1750)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, coming from a rural community myself in Nova Scotia, and given that the member for Dufferin—Caledon mentioned agriculture, I want him

to rest assured that there are members on this side who are focused on those issues. I look forward to working collaboratively with him in the days ahead.

The crux of his speech was about infrastructure. I do not know if this member was paying attention for the last four years, but there have been historic investments on this side of the aisle in terms of investments in Canada.

Four times the amount of infrastructure projects have been approved in the last four years alone, versus the Harper government from 2011 to 2015. We have doubled the gas tax infrastructure. I assume his municipality would be a part of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities; we have put more money into that.

While the member may suggest that we are not investing, I ask him to look at the investments we have made in the last four years, investments that he and his opposition voted against.

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, for Melancthon county the gas tax is \$91,000 this year. That is \$91,000 for six million dollars' worth of infrastructure that is desperately needed.

Maybe all this infrastructure money is flowing into ridings like his and Liberal-held ridings in Toronto, but I will say that after meeting with the reeves and councillors and wardens in the rural municipalities that I represent, I learned the money is not flowing to them. That is the issue, and that is what I am here for, to fight for them and to make sure that they get some fair share of the giant deficit that the Liberal government is running.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his speech.

I am from a rural riding too. I wonder if my colleague would be prepared to vote with the Bloc Québécois in defence of supply management, or at least what is left of it, in order to protect our agricultural sector.

[*English*]

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, in the riding of Dufferin—Caledon, we have a large dairy industry and I am absolutely fully supportive of supply management. We will always vote in favour of it.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am really glad to hear my colleague represent the topic of agriculture, because it was sadly lacking in the throne speech. I have now had the opportunity to serve as our party's agriculture critic for the last two years.

The Address

I too represent a rural riding that has a very long and storied history in agriculture that goes back beyond Confederation. One thing that we heard from farmers is that they are very much on the front lines of climate change. That happened repeatedly at the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

The wet weather that we have seen, which has resulted in the high cost of drying grain, is going to continue in the future. We are going to see more adverse weather affecting farmers who will see their crops be affected by climate change. There are tools available, like business risk-management programs, that can take care of the high costs.

I am wondering, given the fact that farmers are facing this challenge head on, what his answer is to his constituents in fighting climate change. What policies does he think can actually help them weather these storms?

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, farmers are always great stewards of the land and they are always very interested in making sure that we have an environment that allows them to farm both sustainably and responsibly. One thing I am not in favour of is a carbon tax, because it is going to do absolutely nothing to affect climate change.

What we have to realize, in this House and in this country, is that climate change is global. We can reduce our emissions to zero in this country and all that CO₂ space will be used up by China with its growing emissions in six months.

If there is not concerted international action with respect to the big emitters around the world, nothing we do in this country is going to prevent the harmful effects of climate change, and that is where the Liberal government needs to start working.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member said there was nothing in the throne speech about agriculture, but the throne speech and the election platform include a commitment to create a Canadian water agency. I would suspect that a great focus of that agency will be on water and agriculture. We know that water is the lifeblood of agriculture, so if we can solve irrigation challenges, we can give a boost to agriculture.

Does the member not agree that this is one element of a strategy for addressing agricultural concerns?

• (1755)

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, a broken clock is right twice a day. Coming up with one program that might address one small thing actually does not address any of the needs of the farming community in my riding and ridings all across this country. There is nothing on soy and canola. There is nothing to help farmers in the beef industry in Ontario. These are the critical things that are going on in my riding right now. While that might be a great program, that and a \$1.50 will get the farmers in my riding a double-double and nothing else.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time this evening with the hon. member for Pickering—Uxbridge.

[*Translation*]

This is my second opportunity to speak in response to the throne speech. I appreciate this opportunity to explain why I think all MPs should vote in favour this evening.

[*English*]

I want to begin this speech talking about climate change, which was a predominant theme in the Speech from the Throne, and rightfully so, given its importance to all of us, not only here in Canada but across the world.

This past weekend, I held pre-budget consultations in my riding of Kings—Hants. The consensus was clear. People are expecting their government to do more as part of a global effort. This is key. Not only does Canada need to continue along its path of transition, we need to build an international framework to put pressure on countries that have not yet taken this issue seriously.

I also believe it is important that we recognize the important role the private sector will play in ensuring we meet our international targets. Incentives, like the 50% corporate tax cut for companies focused on zero-emissions technologies, will help to ensure Canadian ingenuity and technology is at the forefront of the necessary work ahead. I suspect this should resonate with many of my opposition colleagues, particularly Her Majesty's loyal opposition, who highlighted this point last month.

In Kings—Hants, we are home to the highest tides in the world in the Bay of Fundy. We are very fortunate to be able to call this place home and are well positioned to bring tourists from around the world to Nova Scotia. However, the highest tides in the world are also a stark reminder that, with rising sea levels, our coastal communities are vulnerable. For me, this is a reminder every day of the important work that needs to continue.

Canada is a trading nation and the export of our products and services around the world is important to maintaining quality jobs and ensuring a high standard of living for our people. The Speech from the Throne outlined the importance of CUSMA. This week, I know debate will begin on the ratification of this important piece of legislation.

I want the House to understand the importance of international trade for Kings—Hants. The Annapolis Valley is known for our delicious apples, particularly the Honeycrisp variety, which our farmers and processors ship around the world, particularly to the United States. We are home to a Michelin plant that produces tires, many of which are sent to the United States as part of an integrated supply chain. Our sawmills export lumber for residential home building and construction. I could go on, but simply put, whether we are discussing Kings—Hants or any other of the 337 ridings in this country, CUSMA represents a crucial trade deal with our largest partner.

The Address

To those who would criticize our work on this important file, I remind them that the former interim leader of the Conservative Party has openly said that this is the best deal that could have been struck. I expect all parliamentarians to ensure Canadian jobs and our economy are not put at risk unnecessarily by delaying the ratification of this legislation.

Canadians expect their government to be focused on growing the economy and creating the conditions for the private sector to create jobs. Over the last four years, this government, in partnership with Canadians from coast to coast to coast, has created over one million jobs, including 35,000 in December and 340,000 for 2019 alone, many of which were full-time work.

[*Translation*]

I was pleased to see that an emphasis was put on the economy in the Speech from the Throne, and I want to focus on two topics that I believe will be important in the days to come.

The commitment to cut red tape for business owners is excellent. It is an initiative that was launched by my predecessor during the last Parliament, when he was the president of the Treasury Board.

I think it is a good thing for us to take every chance we get to make it easier for business owners and entrepreneurs to interact with our government.

• (1800)

[*English*]

In Kings—Hants, the seasonal agricultural worker program is an important federal tool to ensure our farmers have access to the labour they need to grow their businesses and ensure our Canadian agricultural products reach markets both domestically and around the world. While this program is absolutely crucial, I believe there are ways we can streamline the process to make it even easier for our farmers and applicants in our communities.

That leads me to my second point. One of the priority issues I hear about in Kings—Hants is access to labour and having the workforce to fill the jobs required to grow our economy in rural Nova Scotia. In order to ensure we have vibrant rural communities and a workforce that will ensure they remain viable, we need to continue to focus on bringing immigrants from around the world to Canada, who will bring their energy and talents to not only drive our economy forward but also make our communities even better places to live.

I want to highlight a specific example of a couple in my riding of Kings—Hants, Chris and Melissa Velden, who immigrated from Germany to Summerville, a small community located on the Bay of Fundy in Hants County. They brought a work ethic and vision second to none and in the process, have started the Flying Apron Inn & Cookery. One key feature of their business is the ability to dine on the ocean floor at the highest tides in the world at Burntcoat Head Park in East Hants. Every year, in under one minute, 120 couples from around the world reserve their right to have this unique opportunity. In fact, their business was recently highlighted in the weekend edition of *The Globe and Mail's* must-do tourist experiences. This is but one small example of the benefit of ensuring Canada

continues to attract talented people from across the globe to our shores.

[*Translation*]

Health care is a priority for Canadians across the country, especially in rural communities in Atlantic Canada.

In the region I represent, there was a coordination effort between the local government, provincial authorities and the chamber of commerce to ensure a coordinated recruitment process to attract and retain family doctors.

[*English*]

While, of course, the administration of health care is a provincial responsibility, the federal government plays an important role in partnering with the provinces. This government has contributed more money to Nova Scotia than ever before to support health care, but we know there remain challenges. I know our government will continue to do more to ensure the health and safety of Canadians across the country.

[*Translation*]

I want to highlight other important points in the Speech from the Throne. With respect to working with indigenous peoples, no other government in Canada's history has taken this relationship more seriously, and we know that the work will continue in the days to come.

[*English*]

On the natural resources sector, our primary industries across the country provide important jobs and revenue to support public spending on areas such as health care, infrastructure and education. In Nova Scotia, it is the forestry sector that faces uncertainty at the moment and I am happy to know that our government is focusing on ensuring a sustainable industry moving forward.

[*Translation*]

Investing in the middle class has been a priority for the government since 2015. The results are indisputable: almost one million people have been lifted out of poverty and more than one million jobs have been created. The unemployment rate is proof of the government's economic stewardship.

I am pleased to see that our government will continue to focus its efforts in this area.

[*English*]

The Speech from the Throne contains important priorities for Canadians from coast to coast to coast. It speaks to the needs of Canadians, regardless of where they call home, and I hope all members will be supporting this speech at tonight's vote.

• (1805)

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for his first speech in the House of Commons and welcome him here.

The Address

I noted one thing he said. He talked about taking this debate on climate change to other countries so they would take it more seriously. I am wondering what the member thinks that leaders of billions of people around the world are not understanding about the climate crisis at this point in time. I wonder if it could perhaps be because getting people out of poverty is one of the most important items on their agenda at this point in time. The access to inexpensive power and environmental fuel is probably a much more important step than virtue signalling about what fuel we are producing.

In that vein, would the member and his province commit to getting Canadian resources, such as natural gas and other environmentally friendly hydrocarbons, to markets in areas around the world where we would drastically reduce the impact of CO₂ in a closed environmental system?

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, it really has to be both. We need to continue to move forward on the transition, and I hope the member opposite recognizes this needs to happen, but we also have to balance this against affordability.

I live in a riding that is quite rural. When I was on the doorsteps, affordability remained a challenge for Canadians. The right hon. Prime Minister talks about balancing the economy and climate change and fighting it, but we need to do both.

The price on pollution allows us to establish a framework, one which could be coordinated around the world within our international community. Letting the market decide who pays for this is inherently a Conservative idea. Why would Conservatives not believe in something that allows the market to decide instead of trying to get government to force its way into solving this problem?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's well-thought-out comments. We hear a great deal about the fact that virtually from day one this government has given very special attention to Canada's middle class. We have seen tax breaks. In 2015, the first legislation introduced dealt with tax breaks. Additional tax breaks are going to be coming up in this budget. We have seen the enhancement of social programs, such as the Canada child benefit and so forth.

Could the member reflect on the importance of the middle class and give us his thoughts on that from his constituency perspective?

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, my colleague hits on something that is really important for me. I grew up in what could be best described as a working-class family. My father was a truck driver. My mom was an administrative assistant at the local school. There were times when I was younger when we would go to the grocery store and if my father had made a purchase that day and had not told my mother, there was not enough money to pay for the groceries.

When I look at my ideology and why I sit on this side of the chamber, in 2015 we were a government that was focused on supporting middle income people who needed help the most.

In Kings—Hants, many people talk about the Canada child benefit, but one mother in particular in a small community in Canning was moved to tears by the Canada child benefit. It meant she could pay for groceries for her two young girls and ensure they had op-

portunities to be involved in recreation. That has been the mandate of this government and it will continue to be. I am proud to be part of it.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has many beautiful parts and Kings—Hants is one of those. I visited that riding a number of times even before the member was born. However, it is an agricultural area and one of the things in the throne speech that was missed was agriculture. Agriculture is critically important to the member's riding as it is to mine. My constituents were aggravated and upset by the lack of commitment to agriculture in the throne speech.

Maybe the member could respond to that.

• (1810)

Mr. Kody Blois: Mr. Speaker, it is always nice to find members in the House who come from a rural community and know the importance of agriculture to the entire Canadian economy.

The member was spot on. Kings—Hants is a region that is heavily reliant on agriculture. We have to remember that the Speech from the Throne is a high-level document that outlines high-level priorities. Agriculture was mentioned.

I know the Minister of Agriculture is committed and is working hard on this front. I look forward to working with the member opposite to ensure that both our communities and their respective agricultural sectors can have a prosperous future in the days ahead.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to speak to the Speech from the Throne, the road map that will be guiding the government.

However, first, as I am rising for the first time in our 43rd Parliament, I would like to take a moment to thank my constituents of Pickering—Uxbridge for re-electing me as their member of Parliament. I am incredibly honoured to be here, and I will continue to work hard to make my community and this country a better place to live. I would also like to thank the countless volunteers who helped with my campaign. Their strong desire and ambition to improve our beautiful country was inspiring, and it is something I will remember and carry with me throughout my time here.

No campaign can be done without family, so I want to highlight in particular my mother Doreen, who has been by my side knocking on doors since my first election in 2006. It is with her help that I am here today, and I am forever grateful.

During these past months, I had the pleasure of meeting constituents across my riding to hear about the issues that mattered most to them. Thanks to their support, I am here today to speak about our government's priorities and how we will deliver for them.

The Address

The concern I heard the most while knocking on doors was clearly climate change. From children to seniors, students to parents, the current state and future of our environment is of grave concern. Natural disasters are on the rise, the earth is warming and animals are becoming endangered. The days of inaction are over. I am glad to see in the Speech from the Throne that our government has concrete, tangible goals to combat climate change.

What I am most proud to see, though, is that our government's strong plan to fight climate change does so in a manner that also grows the economy and improves affordability for Canadians.

We are currently at a point in time where Canada has the opportunity to become a leader in the low-carbon economy and to spur green economic growth at home and help develop it abroad, making a difference not only here in our country but also around the world.

This past September, during the climate action strike that took place in Uxbridge, I heard calls from members of my community to reduce greenhouse emissions and plastic pollution. These are two main contributors to climate change and need to be addressed in a smart and efficient manner.

At the climate action strike, I was proud to share that in the previous Parliament our government put a price on pollution. Through this effective pricing mechanism, we are reducing greenhouse emissions and encouraging innovation, overall creating an environment that is cleaner and healthier and an economy that is more diverse and robust.

This measure also puts more money in the pockets of Canadians through the climate action incentive by holding the large emitters accountable for their pollution. It is estimated that a family of four in Ontario is receiving \$307 a year as a result of this rebate, which is more than the average family of that size is paying. As a result, the price mechanism and rebate are encouraging Canadians and businesses to make decisions that reduce their carbon footprint, such as investing in greener infrastructure and technologies.

Over the coming term I look forward to working with my colleagues to strengthen our price inclusion plan, a measure that one of the 2018 winners of the Nobel Prize for economics wrote about and continues to support, as it leads to economic growth.

My community was also glad to hear that we plan on taking action to further reduce plastic pollution. Single-use plastics are currently being found in overwhelming amounts in our landfills, shorelines and oceans, threatening the health of our wildlife and environment. I plan to work hard with our government to further strengthen our legislation to reduce plastic pollution and support the industries that are finding innovative solutions to address this issue.

The Speech from the Throne also set out a goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. This ambitious but necessary target will see our government implementing measures that help Canadians make their homes more energy efficient and therefore more cost-effective. It will help Canada to be the best place to start and grow clean-tech companies.

Climate change may be our generation's greatest challenge, but it can also be our economy's greatest opportunity. I am proud to see

our government acknowledging and embracing the situation. By continuing to invest in Canadians, our country will become a leader and innovator in the low-carbon industry.

● (1815)

Over the past four years, we have seen an incredible amount of growth in our economy. In 2019 alone, we saw the lowest unemployment rate on record, and since the Liberals took office, over one million jobs have been created. It is because of our smart investments and meaningful legislation that more Canadians are working, businesses are growing and our economy is diversifying.

In the last Parliament, our government introduced the Canada child benefit. This generous, tax-free benefit is giving more money to the families who need it most and has been credited with lifting almost 300,000 children out of poverty.

During my time back home, I heard the stories and saw the real success of these developments in my community. For example, families in Pickering—Uxbridge have been receiving payments of \$550 on average every month, which is benefiting 10,180 families and 17,820 children. Thanks to this tax-free benefit, families are able to put this money toward the things they need most, from nutritional food, to winter clothing, to paying bills, to enrolling in extracurricular activities. Putting money directly in the hands of parents allows them to use it in ways that better suit their needs.

However, I know there is still more work for us to do, and I am proud that this government is continuing to support Canadians in all walks of life. By further strengthening the Canada child benefit, our government will continue to support Canadian families by helping them worry less about finances and focus more on spending valuable time together.

The rising cost of living is a major concern for the residents of Pickering—Uxbridge, and I am proud to share with them that in our first week back, we tabled legislation to amend the Income Tax Act to lower taxes for the middle class while ensuring that the wealthiest Canadians do not benefit. Once this is fully rolled out, nearly 20 million Canadians will benefit, saving a single person close to \$300 a year in taxes and a couple or family close to \$600. This tax cut would help Canadians put more money toward groceries, schooling or retirement.

The Address

I am also aware that there is a strong need for affordable housing in the Durham region. During the last Parliament, the region saw a great investment, with over \$78.6 million in funding, which is being put toward building and repairing 2,535 units. Even with this investment, there continues to be a strong demand for affordable housing.

The Speech from the Throne states that the government plans to continue its critical investments in affordable housing. Ensuring Canadians have a safe and secure place to call home is how we help Canadians realize their full potential, and when that happens, we all benefit. The value of having a home is far greater than just financial. These are the kinds of measures and investments that will truly make a difference in my community, and they will help grow our middle class and help hard-working Canadians keep more of their hard-earned money.

Actions speak louder than words, and our government has clearly demonstrated its commitment to Canadians, as this speech outlines a plan that addresses their concerns and will make our country a better place to call home. By addressing climate change and investing in Canadians, we are innovating, driving the economy, creating jobs and improving our environment for future generations. This is a win-win solution and a direction I am glad to see our government continuing to take.

I was re-elected to be the member of Parliament for Pickering—Uxbridge because my constituents know I will continue to voice the changes we would like to see in our country and communities. I am proud that the Speech from the Throne has laid out an ambitious plan for our government and it is one that I am proud to support. It will bring about meaningful change not only for our generation but for generations to come.

• (1820)

Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I applaud the member for her support of the Speech from the Throne. I latched on to two things she said very clearly: actions speak louder than words and we are looking for a win-win scenario here. I love these platitudes, but actions do speak louder than words.

Could the member across the way demonstrate what happened, for instance, when New Zealand committed to carbon reductions? They were finalized at the beginning of 2020 and how far along did they get? New Zealand recommitted to 2050 because it is further down the road.

Where is the win-win scenario from holding up infrastructure for resource delivery to markets with an opaque regulatory regime that reduces the amount we receive for resources at ports to a level far below the world price for those resources? That is a failure of government and is obviously a failure for our economy and country going forward.

Could the member comment on how all that spells win-win as far as the government's agenda goes?

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Mr. Speaker, let me talk about a few actions from the Conservative Party. Let us go back to a time when the Conservatives had the lowest growth since the Great Depression. They had no plan for climate change in 10 years in office and

they continue to have no plan for climate change, hence one of the main reasons they continue to remain on that side of the House.

The Conservatives continue to remain out of touch with Canadians, while on this side of the House we are growing the economy, with over one million jobs created, while tackling climate change. We are ensuring that we are going to reduce emissions and that generations to come will be proud of us.

It is time for the Conservatives to get with the program and care about what Canadians are talking about, and that is addressing climate change while growing the economy.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the last two speeches, which were given by the member for Kings—Hants and the member for Pickering—Uxbridge. They both spoke a lot about the environment. They were bragging about all the green investments they are making. However, the report submitted to the UN on December 31 indicates that Canada will not meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Does the member know how Canada will turn things around and meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets?

[*English*]

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Mr. Speaker, it is refreshing to actually get a question about climate change and on taking more action on this critical issue.

One of the most effective ways to address emissions is by putting a price on pollution, which is precisely what we did in this government, but there is no question that we have to do more. I encourage all parties on all sides of the House to come together to come up with innovative ideas on how we can reduce emissions, but we have to make sure that we are keeping in touch with average Canadian families and ensure that we do this in a meaningful way that also focuses on affordability while growing the economy.

We have a unique opportunity, and I encourage all members to help us move forward and deliver on what Canadians expect.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the member just said that we need new ideas and that all parties need to participate in the fight against climate change. During the election campaign, the Bloc Québécois promised to introduce a bill in the House of Commons that would enshrine the Canadian government's Paris commitments in law, thereby forcing the government to keep its commitments and meet the targets.

Is the member willing to vote in favour of such a bill?

• (1825)

[English]

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Mr. Speaker, I think anyone in the House would have to see a bill before agreeing to support it. However, if the member looks at our platform in the last election, not only did we talk about supporting the UN declaration on emissions and ensuring that we meet the targets by 2050, but we also talked about ensuring that governments and future parliaments also hold true to these targets.

This is going to be a multi-generational change, one that future governments are going to have to tackle, but we are going to be leaders. We are going to continue to lead on this file and continue to grow the economy as we have done during the last four years.

Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Yellowhead.

It is of course an honour to be speaking today with my distinguished colleagues surrounding me, and making my maiden speech in the House of Commons. I am especially pleased to be responding to this throne speech.

I must begin where it all starts and ends, and that is with the hard-working, very welcoming and completely engaged people who make up the many amazing communities of Parry Sound—Muskoka. I want to thank them for their support and their trust and for giving me what is really the opportunity of a lifetime to serve in this chamber. I promise to not let them down.

I am also blessed to have multiple families, including the Koop family and the Schaal family. I want to thank my brother Mike Koop and his tireless wife Kirsty for all their help in my campaign. I want to thank Susan and Dr. Peter Schaal for their endless support and love as well.

Like all the members in this chamber, I had a lot of help getting here and I owe a debt of gratitude to so many outstanding people. I give my thanks to Myke Malone and Kirsten Baker, my outstanding campaign managers. I give a special thanks as well to my campaign chair, Holly Thompson, and to Liam Broad, who helped staff our Parry Sound office under the guidance of my campaign mom, Bev LeDrew.

In Huntsville, Laurie Davison managed our office while her husband Rick worked on signs with the help of so many volunteers like Ned Joiner, who has been there for every one of my municipal campaigns. I thank them all for putting in so many hours on my behalf.

I also want to thank the Lubbelinkhof family, Paul, Greg, Krista and Dick. I might add that Dick, at the age of 80, put up 100 signs the day the writ dropped.

I also met cousins I never knew I had, like my cousin Art Aitchison in McKellar. Who knew he was an election sign guru, but he was.

Bruce Hemphill in Gravenhurst put up so many signs his wrist had to go into a cast at the end of the campaign.

The Address

Of course, I send huge thanks to my Muskoka dream team of Kim Sasson, Tami Mattice and Kelly Draper, door knockers extraordinaire.

All of these folks, along with Gord Haugh, Gail Finnon, Keith Montgomery, Landon French, Kirby Hall, Michelle Fraser, Jeff Watson, Gordie Merton and so many others, I thank from the very bottom of my heart.

Our nation is seized with challenges, including national unity, pipelines and infrastructure. There are immense pressures on health care and education. There is the declining state of our economy. Internationally, we are at odds with China and most certainly Iran. If ever there were a time for strong, principled leadership, it would be now.

We came out of the last election a divided nation: east and west, rural and urban, young and old. We are divided on the environment, on energy, on social issues and on our place in the world. If ever there were a time for inspired leadership, it would be now. If ever there were a time to start bringing Canadians together, it would have been in the government's throne speech.

I was not expecting miracles, not from the current government. However, I was expecting at least some acknowledgement of the problems and some understanding of the great need to bring Canadians together. Instead, we got business as usual. We got a lot of words and very little action.

I got into public life to change that kind of thinking. I am here to bring people together, not divide them. I am here to find real solutions to real problems and not to score cheap political points. My family and friends did not work so hard for me, and the people of Parry Sound—Muskoka certainly did not vote for me, for just more business as usual. I believe Canadians deserve much better than that, and I believe we members of Parliament can do better than that.

I do not pretend to have all the answers, but I have learned a few things after 25 years in public life. First, I have learned that communication is, first and foremost, about listening. Second, there are always more than two sides to every issue. Third, there is nothing we Canadians cannot achieve if we reject the divisive politics of region against region, urban versus rural, and rally to those great nation-building values upon which we have built the greatest nation on earth: freedom, opportunity, support for those in need and our devotion to fairness and justice in this tumultuous world.

• (1830)

That is the kind of can-do attitude that has always served my constituency well, whether it was the outstanding work by my predecessors, such as the legendary Stan Darling and more recently Tony Clement, or whether it was rolling up my sleeves with my fellow mayors, such as Graydon Smith in Bracebridge or John Klink, the district chair, to build Muskoka's health and transportation infrastructure.

The Address

Parry Sound—Muskoka has always succeeded when we work as a team. We must do this for Canada. Let us put aside the petty partisanship and rally behind real leadership that is willing, able and ready to bring this country together. I am not convinced the government's throne speech does that and yet I know that Canadians deserve better.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member on his first speech in the House. He mentioned his predecessor Tony Clement. I hope the member is benefiting from the great infrastructure, the gazebo, that Tony Clement built in his riding.

My question is related to the member's comments about coming together and trying to heal a nation that is divided in some areas. In my view, and I have been here for four years, that division has been stoked over and over by opposition members over issues like a price on pollution. They seem to come to the table with only one suggestion, which is to get rid of it, or they will keep stoking the fire.

The reality of the situation is I really take that member at his word in his desire and passion to do everything he is talking about when it comes to working together, but we have not seen that. Is he committing to a new approach by the opposition to genuinely work with the government to better that relationship and the relationship throughout the country?

Mr. Scott Aitchison: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to try to work together with people.

The challenge we have with a price on pollution in my mind is that it is an urban-rural divide issue. I come from a rural riding and the carbon tax is going to make life that much more difficult for the many people who live in my riding who struggle to make ends meet as it is, who struggle to pay the rent at the end of the month, who struggle to get to work. We do not have the option of hopping on the TTC subway. We have to drive.

There have to be better solutions than just taxing our way out of the problem. That is a Liberal way. That is certainly not a Conservative way. I do not agree with that. There have to be ways that we can work together to solve the problem and not just tax people.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was encouraged by the member across the way when he talked about that sense of co-operation. We had a great example today when the Deputy Prime Minister brought forward the agreement between Mexico, Canada and the United States, a trade agreement that would affect every Canadian in all regions of our country. Stakeholders, whether they are premiers or industry representatives, are coming onside. They say this agreement is a good thing and that we need to pass it.

I wonder if I could get my friend's thoughts on how important it is that we look at the opposition working with the government, and when I say opposition I am talking about more than just Conservative members. I am talking about New Democrats and Bloc members. This is a great piece of legislation. We have the details. Would the member not agree that this is a good example of how politics

can be put aside for the betterment of Canada and this legislation goes through?

• (1835)

Mr. Scott Aitchison: Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate that the Liberal government would just love to have us rubber-stamp whatever it puts in front of us, but the awkward thing here, of course, is that we have not seen anything yet. We would love to work together. We would love to try to find solutions to problems and support something, but it would be really nice if we could see a copy of the text. There may be members opposite who are willing to stand up and sing the praises of a deal they have not read, but Conservatives do not happen to operate that way.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on his inaugural speech in the House.

The member for Winnipeg North has just indicated that is the Liberal form of transparency. The document was tabled this morning and the government wants us to debate it, vote on it this week and then pass it without even seeing it. My colleague has said that we are not going to rubber-stamp these kinds of things until we get more determination on it, and that is similar to a lot of things that are in the throne speech. We have talked about infrastructure and other areas that are in great need as well, such as connection with the Internet. I assume my colleague's rural riding is the same as mine. There are deficits in those as well.

In spite of the government's best efforts to talk about these things, I wonder if the member could talk about what the government is really doing and how little it is improving our infrastructure.

Mr. Scott Aitchison: Mr. Speaker, there are certainly a lot of examples. One of the issues we have faced a great deal in Parry Sound—Muskoka is housing. The government has committed billions of dollars. However, we would like to see it go back to a program from the Chrétien era which was a capital subsidy to help get more affordable units built. That is not part of the Liberals' plan. They would rather have big government and big spending.

We would rather incentivize the private sector to get more units built faster. It is done more efficiently. It is cheaper for the taxpayer. At the end of the day, these private sector units pay property taxes to the poor old municipalities that do not have the revenue they need to provide the services the citizens living in those units demand.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we resume debate with the hon. member for Yellowhead, I will let him know there are only about three minutes remaining in the time for Government Orders before we will get into another bit of business. It is probably about two and a half minutes by this point. I will let him get started with his remarks and will give him the usual sign when I need to interrupt for this other business.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Yellowhead.

The Address

Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, this is my maiden speech, which is going to be cut incredibly short.

The Speech from the Throne is informative not because it outlines what exactly the government is going to do, but because it shows us where its priorities lie.

Equally notable are the topics the government avoids mentioning. The Speech from the Throne was notably silent on some of the most pressing concerns our country is facing today. As the people of Alberta and Saskatchewan are facing an economic crisis, all the government offered them was one throwaway line in the throne speech about getting resources to market. While the Liberal government has long said that the economy and the environment go hand in hand, the policies it implemented in the last session and those it pledged to implement going forward tell a different story. It sacrificed the economic prosperity of Alberta and the other provinces for merely the appearance of environmental protection.

As Canadians have pointed out time and again, Canada produces some of the cleanest and most ethical oil in the world. The Liberal government imposed Bill C-48 and Bill C-69, which prevented our oil and natural gas from getting to market. That demand not met by Canada is satisfied by other countries with lower environmental standards, many of which have a proven record of ignoring human rights. In the case of the no-more-pipelines bill, Bill C-69, it resulted in oil transportation by alternative methods, namely rail, which can cause significantly more pollution. The push behind these job-killing and environment-killing bills come from a surface-level understanding of an issue at hand and the misguided intolerance of domestic oil production. When it comes to policy, the choice comes down to doing good or feeling good. As Conservatives, we will always support legislation that does the former, even when there are no sound bites and selfie opportunities that go along with it.

Concerning the tanker ban bill, Bill C-48, the government has claimed the ban is necessary to protect the environment. If the government legitimately wanted to protect the environment against the remote possibility of oil spills, do members not think it would have implemented a tanker ban on the St. Lawrence River or the east coast? After all, the beluga whales that inhabit the area are on the endangered species list. The government did not implement any other tanker bans. Why not?

• (1840)

The Deputy Speaker: I certainly hope the hon. member for Yellowhead will have an opportunity to get another speaking time for the second part of his maiden speech and will be afforded the usual accommodation that members are given for their first speech in the House. I am sure the House will be more than happy to do that.

It being 6:39 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

[*Translation*]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

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

Some hon. members: Nay.

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

And five or more members having risen:

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1905)

[*English*]

Before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:

Mr. Mark Strahl: Mr. Speaker, I know we are just back in session for the first day today, but members who are not in the chamber when the motion is being read are not supposed to vote.

The member for Vimy entered well after the vote had started, and I am sure she would not want her vote to be counted.

The Speaker: Would the hon. member for Vimy like to reply to that?

Ms. Annie Koutrakis: Mr. Speaker, I did hear the question.

The Speaker: Let me clarify the rules for everyone.

Members have to be in the House when the question starts being read. Of course, the Speaker cannot be here keeping eyes on everybody. We do have honourable members, so I would leave it to the honour of the members to determine whether they are here or not. I will leave it in her hands.

Ms. Annie Koutrakis: I was here, Mr. Speaker.

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

(*Division No. 9*)

YEAS

Members

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Alghabra | Amos |
| Anand | Anandasangaree |
| Arseneault | Arya |
| Badawey | Bagnell |
| Bains | Baker |
| Barsalou-Duval | Battiste |
| Beaulieu | Beech |
| Bendayan | Bennett |
| Bergeron | Bérubé |
| Bessette | Bibeau |
| Bittle | Blair |
| Blanchet | Blois |
| Boudrias | Bratina |
| Brière | Brunelle-Duceppe |
| Casey | Chabot |
| Chagger | Champagne |

The Address

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| Champoux | Dabrusin | Zahid | Zann |
| Damoff | DeBellefeuille | Zuberi — 181 | |
| Desbiens | Desilets | | |
| Dhaliwal | Dhillon | | NAYS |
| Dong | Drouin | | Members |
| Dubourg | Duclos | | Aitchison |
| Duguid | Duncan (Etobicoke North) | Aboultaif | Alleslev |
| Dzerowicz | Easter | Albas | Angus |
| Ehsassi | El-Khoury | Allison | Atwin |
| Ellis | Erskine-Smith | Arnold | Baldinelli |
| Fergus | Fillmore | Bachrach | Barrett |
| Finnigan | Fisher | Barlow | Bergen |
| Fonseca | Fortier | Benzen | Bezan |
| Fragiskatos | Fraser | Berthold | Blaney (North Island—Powell River) |
| Freeland | Fry | Blaikie | Block |
| Garneau | Gaudreau | Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis) | Bragdon |
| Gerretsen | Gill | Boulerice | Calkins |
| Gould | Guilbeault | Brassard | Carrie |
| Hajdu | Hardie | Cannings | Chong |
| Holland | Housefather | Chiu | Cumming |
| Hussen | Hutchings | Cooper | Davidson |
| Iacono | Jaczek | Dancho | Deltell |
| Joly | Jones | Davies | Diotte |
| Jordan | Jowhari | d'Entremont | Dowdall |
| Kelloway | Khalid | Doherty | Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) |
| Khera | Koutrakis | Dreeshen | Epp |
| Kusmierczyk | Lalonde | Duvall | Fast |
| Lambropoulos | Lametti | Falk (Provencher) | Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk) |
| Lamoureux | Larouche | Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock) | Garrison |
| Lattanzio | Lauzon | Gallant | Généreux |
| LeBlanc | Lebouthillier | Gazan | Gladu |
| Lefebvre | Lemire | Genuis | Gray |
| Lightbound | Long | Gourde | Hallan |
| Longfield | Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga) | Green | Harris |
| MacAulay (Cardigan) | MacKinnon (Gatineau) | Harder | Hughes |
| Maloney | Marcil | Hoback | Jeneroux |
| Martinez Ferrada | May (Cambridge) | Jansen | Julian |
| McCrimmon | McDonald | Johns | Kent |
| McGuinty | McKay | Kelly | Kmiec |
| McKenna | McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam) | Kitchen | Kurek |
| McLeod (Northwest Territories) | Mendès | Kram | Kwan |
| Mendicino | Michaud | Kusie | Lawrence |
| Miller | Monsef | Lake | Lewis (Essex) |
| Morneau | Morrissey | Lehoux | Lloyd |
| Murray | Ng | Liepert | Lukiwski |
| Normandin | O'Connell | Lobb | MacKenzie |
| Oliphant | O'Regan | MacGregor | Manly |
| Pauzé | Perron | Maguire | Masse |
| Petitpas Taylor | Plamondon | Martel | May (Saaneich—Gulf Islands) |
| Powlowski | Qualtrough | Mathysen | McCaughey (Edmonton West) |
| Ratansi | Regan | Mazier | McLean |
| Robillard | Rodriguez | McColeman | McPherson |
| Rogers | Sahota (Brampton North) | McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo) | Moore |
| Saini | Sajjan | Melillo | Morrison |
| Samson | Sangha | Morantz | Nater |
| Sarai | Savard-Tremblay | Motz | Paul-Hus |
| Scarpaleggia | Schieffe | Patzer | Qaqqaq |
| Schulte | Serré | Poilievre | Redekopp |
| Sgro | Shanahan | Rayes | Rempel Garner |
| Sheehan | Sidhu (Brampton East) | Reid | Rood |
| Sidhu (Brampton South) | Sikand | Richards | Sahota (Calgary Skyview) |
| Simard | Simms | Ruff | Scheer |
| Sorbara | Spengemann | Saroya | Seeback |
| Ste-Marie | Tabbara | Schmale | Shin |
| Tassi | Thériault | Shields | Singh |
| Therrien | Trudeau | Shipley | Stanton |
| Trudel | Turnbull | Soroka | Strahl |
| Van Bynen | van Koeverden | Steinley | Sweet |
| Vandal | Vandenbeld | Stubbs | Uppal |
| Vaughan | Vignola | Tochor | Vecchio |
| Virani | Weiler | Van Popta | Viersen |
| Wilkinson | Wilson-Raybould | Vidal | Wagantall |
| Yip | Young | Vis | |

Warkentin
Webber
Yurdiga— 139

Waugh
Williamson

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.) moved:

That the address be engrossed and presented to Her Excellency the Governor General by the Speaker.

(Motion agreed to)

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

• (1910)

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier today we had moving tributes from all parties to the victims of Ukrainian International Airlines flight 752, which was shot down when leaving Tehran. It is important that, as members, we honour the victims, reflect on this terrible action and also call for accountability.

I asked a question back in December that dealt with the IRGC, which is the entity responsible for shooting down this aircraft. The question was about a motion that passed in this House a year and a half ago, which called for the listing of the IRGC as a terrorist entity under the Criminal Code. The opposition put forward that motion and the entire Liberal benches, all the members of the government, supported our motion regarding the IRGC, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, an agent of Iranian regime-backed terror inside of Iran and beyond. All members of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party voted in favour of that motion. Subsequent to that, the then minister of public safety, Ralph Goodale, said that the issue was being studied. It has been over a year and a half since that motion passed and we have not seen any action from the government in terms of actually following through on what Liberals voted to do.

I asked the Prime Minister in December whether he still intends to list the IRGC as a terrorist entity under the Criminal Code. Amazingly, the Prime Minister offered no response to that question. In fact, he talked about another country, Iraq, and the government's view of what was happening in Iraq. I accept there are two countries in the Middle East that start with the letters "Ira", but my question was about Iran. It was not a question about Iraq. In particular, it was a question about the listing of the IRGC as a terrorist entity. The government has refused to act despite Liberals voting to list the IRGC and they have also refused, more recently, to even respond to questions about whether it is their policy to list the IRGC.

Subsequent to that question being asked in December, we all know what happened. The IRGC was responsible and acknowledged responsibility for shooting down Ukraine International Air-

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lines flight 752 killing many Canadians and others who were en route to Canada and many Iranian nationals as well. This event was responded to by the Iranian regime saying it was an accident and it was trying to pass blame off on somebody else. What happened in this instance shows a capricious disregard for human life by that regime. It follows shortly after over 1,000 peaceful protestors were killed by the same IRGC. We see so many instances in Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen and elsewhere where IRGC terror is spreading throughout the region and is causing a significant loss of civilian life. We have seen the impact on many people and communities and we see now, in particular, how Canadians have not been immune from the impacts of this capricious disregard for human life that we have seen from the IRGC.

Canadians expect answers from their government, so I will ask the question again, a question that was not answered before and should be answered. Does the government intend to list the IRGC as a terrorist entity? Liberals voted to do it immediately a year and a half ago and they have not done it. If they have changed their minds, we should know that. If they are still studying it a year and a half later, we should know that, too.

It is time for the government to answer the question. Does it intend to list the IRGC as a terrorist entity? It should answer now, yes or no.

• (1915)

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak about this issue from the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

I would like to remind my hon. colleague that Canada has already put in place a series of strong measures to hold Iran accountable for its support of terrorism. To start, we continue to list the IRGC's Quds Force as a terrorist entity under the Criminal Code. The Quds Force is Iran's primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorist groups abroad. Its actions have destabilized countries across the Middle East and wreaked havoc throughout the region. Our government is also continuing to list a number of terrorist entities that have benefited from the force's patronage, including arms, funding and paramilitary training, and that help advance Iran's interests and foreign policy. These include Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the Taliban.

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In Canada, recommendations can be made to the Governor in Council for individuals or groups to be officially designated as terrorist entities, and last June our government added three new Iran-backed groups to the Criminal Code list. These three groups are aligned with Iran and their actions further Iranian interests. Iran provides them with substantial resources, including training and weapons to carry out terrorist acts that advance its goals in the region.

Canada has also imposed restrictive measures against entities and individuals within the IRGC that have a similar effect to a listing. The IRGC and its leadership continue to be sanctioned under the Special Economic Measures Act in response to Iran's nuclear and ballistic missiles program. This allows assets of individuals and entities associated with the group to be frozen. Regulations explicitly target the IRGC and several sub-organizations, including the IRGC air force and air force missile command, IRGC logistics and procurement, IRGC missile command, and the IRGC navy and several members of its senior leadership. Iran also continues to be designated as a state supporter of terrorism under Canada's State Immunity Act. Through our engagements in the Financial Action Task Force, Canada also contributes to international efforts to hold Iran accountable for its financing of terrorism.

The Government of Canada will continue to hold Iran accountable for its actions and support for terrorism. We remain committed to ensuring the safety and security of Canadians and Canadian interests against any and all threats.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, this is really disgusting. We have an important question after so many Canadians have lost their lives and the government does not even bother to send a member of the foreign affairs team. We have the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, which is an important file but a completely different file, coming to read prepared notes when the government should have actually sent someone from foreign affairs. Those prepared notes do not even include an answer to the basic question: Do the Liberals intend to list the IRGC as a terrorist entity in its entirety?

The member mentioned the Quds Force, which was listed by the previous Conservative government. Hezbollah and Hamas were already listed. The government has not done anything effective in response to the situation in Iran.

Next time, hopefully someone who actually is responsible for the file will show up and answer the question. Maybe this member is prepared to actually respond to what has been asked many times and still has not been answered: Is it the policy of the government to list all of the IRGC as a terrorist entity as the Liberals voted to do a year and a half ago? Is it their policy, yes or no?

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Mr. Speaker, I believe I did answer the question, but I will repeat some of what I said for my hon. colleague.

The listing of entities is an ongoing process. Government officials continue to assess all groups and monitor new developments regarding potential entities that could be listed.

With respect to Iran, Canada has already put in place a series of strong measures to hold it accountable for its actions and support of

terrorism. Listing the IRGC's Quds Force and aligned groups that I have mentioned will help advance this existing approach. Once again, last year we added three additional Iran-backed groups to the Criminal Code's list.

Finally, we remain unwavering in our commitment to keep Canadians safe, including by taking all appropriate action to counter terrorist threats in Canada and around the world.

● (1920)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my home province of British Columbia is in a unique position to make a significant contribution to the fight against global climate change by developing its liquid natural gas industry. The objective, of course, would be for clean, green, environmentally responsible and ethical Canadian energy to replace much dirtier coal that is being burned and used by much of the developing world.

Liquid natural gas, when it finally gets going, will create a lot of good jobs in my riding, in British Columbia, in western Canada and notably in northern indigenous communities. However, the investment community and the resource industry are losing confidence in Canada as a place to invest in liquid natural gas.

Chevron has recently decided to pull out of the Kitimat LNG project, a project that we thought was a go and one that people were counting on for jobs. They are losing confidence in Canada because it has been bogged down in the regulatory quicksand known as Bill C-69, the no-more-pipelines bill of the government.

I was recently talking to a constituent who operates an equipment manufacturing business that is ready, willing and able to offer good-paying jobs to people so they can service the liquid natural gas development and construction industry. Those jobs are waiting for final investment decisions to be made.

I was talking to another constituent, an engineer who runs an engineering firm specializing in servicing the construction industry. The firm has had the advantage of a couple of projects, preliminary design works for the LNG industry, yet it, too, is waiting to hire more people to do the work once it finally gets going.

In the meantime, Canada is sitting idly by, bogged down in regulation rising out of Bill C-69, while our competitors are taking the opportunity. Russia has recently built a natural gas pipeline to deliver natural gas to China to satisfy its ever-growing demand for cleaner energy.

The United States, as well, is fast-tracking a number of liquid natural gas projects, and it is far ahead of us now, even though we had a head start. We are bogged down in regulations, not going anywhere.

Australia, too, recognizes the opportunity. It is also jumping on the LNG bandwagon. In the meantime, Canada is sitting there, bogged down in Bill C-69.

Will the government finally make the amendments required in Bill C-69? Will it support and work with industry, indigenous communities and hard-working Canadians hoping for well-paying jobs in the liquid natural gas industry, or is it content to continue standing by idly while our competition runs with the opportunity?

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us look at recent investments in Canada's LNG industry. LNG Canada is making the single largest private sector investment in Canadian history. That is a \$40 billion investment in Canada's economy.

This project is expected to create up to 10,000 good, well-paying jobs at the height of its construction. That includes millions of dollars in construction contracts for indigenous business, all while building a new LNG facility with the lowest carbon intensity of its kind in the world.

What is more, once the project is up and running, Canadian LNG will replace the use of coal and power plants around the world, particularly in Asia, thereby reducing the global emissions that contribute to our warming planet.

The Impact Assessment Act is about ensuring good projects that will create jobs and grow our economy, moving forward in the right way.

Our government has a clear vision for clean growth in Canada, one that gets us to net-zero emissions by 2050, a vision that sees us meeting and exceeding our climate goals, that sees Canada using its natural advantage to drive economic growth, enhance environmental performance and advance indigenous partnerships.

That natural advantage is not just about the abundance of our resources, but the experience and expertise of Canadians to develop those resources competitively, sustainably and inclusively. The LNG Canada facility reflects all of this.

Unfortunately, the member's call for amendments to the Impact Assessment Act reminds us that there are still some in the House who do not think economic growth and environmental protection can go hand in hand, as equal components in a single engine to drive innovation and jobs from coast to coast to coast.

Having said all that, our government is open to suggestions for how we move forward with implementing the Impact Assessment Act. Having got the destination right, we welcome input and ideas on the best way to get there. After all, as the Minister of Natural Resources has said, the key to sustainable resource development is threefold: strong investments; regulatory stability; and meaningful relationships with our partners, including indigenous peoples.

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That is how we ensure that Canada continues to be the best place to create jobs and to do business. LNG Canada's project tells us that we are on the right track.

• (1925)

Mr. Tako Van Popta: Mr. Speaker, Article 6 of the Paris Agreement would create a mechanism whereby countries like Canada could accelerate development of natural resources like liquid natural gas that we are talking about, yet at the recent conference in Madrid, no headway was made.

Could the hon. member opposite give us any assurance at all that Article 6 will finally be implemented or that the government is working on bilateral agreements with countries that would be recipients of our clean, green and ethical liquid natural gas?

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Mr. Speaker, there is a familiar argument on that side of the floor and one that we have seen many times before. While I am heartened to hear the member supporting Canadian LNG, I know that it is a driver of the economy across the country, particularly in his region, so it is disappointing to hear him opposing sustainable resource development, the centrepiece of the Impact Assessment Act.

We do not have to pit economic prosperity against environmental stewardship. We can do both and we know it is possible because of LNG Canada's \$40-billion project under way on B.C.'s west coast, a project that represents the single largest private sector investment in Canadian history.

The only way to move forward with major projects in this country is by protecting the environment at the same time and by working in meaningful partnership with indigenous and local communities. That is exactly what we are doing.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Mr. Speaker, in December 2018, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights sent a letter to the government asking that the construction of the Site C dam be stopped until prior, informed consent was given to the project by first nations.

The Site C dam had large opposition from all the first nations in the region, but after it was approved by the provincial government, a number of first nations conceded. Conceding is not giving consent and there are two first nations that are fighting this in the courts right now.

The government promised it would implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 32 states:

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1. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.

2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.

The Speech from the Throne dedicated a section to “Walking the Road of Reconciliation”, highlighting that since 2015 the government “promised a new relationship with Indigenous Peoples”.

However, on December 13, 2019, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, through the high commissioner's office, published an early warning and urgent action procedure to the government, urging the government to suspend three projects that neglect the rights of indigenous peoples: the Site C dam, the Trans Mountain pipeline extension and the Coastal GasLink until these projects obtain free, prior and informed consent by all indigenous people affected.

I would like to remind the government of the Delgamuukw decision. Under section 35 of the Constitution, aboriginal rights and titles are affirmed. In the Delgamuukw, it was hereditary chiefs who were the plaintiffs in that case. It was not the elected band councillors who are part of the Indian Act system that was created through colonization.

The chiefs and band councillors have a role to play. They are a legitimate form of government, but it is the hereditary chiefs who are recognized in the Constitution and in the Supreme Court decision.

The Tsilhqot'in decision reaffirms that it must be the first nations that determine how aboriginal rights and titles are determined. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination calls upon Canada to:

...immediately cease construction of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion project and cancel all permits, until free, prior and informed consent is obtained by all the Secwepemc people....

...immediately suspend the construction of the Site C dam, until free, prior and informed consent is obtained from West Moberly and Prophet River Nations....

...immediately halt the construction and suspend all permits and approvals for the construction of the Coastal Gas Link pipeline in the traditional and unceded lands and territories of the Wet'suwet'en people, until they grant their free, prior and informed consent....

They proposed an alternate route for that pipeline.

They are also calling on the government to pull back the RCMP and to ensure that it does not use force against indigenous first nations, the hereditary chiefs and their decision to affirm their rights and sovereignty over their lands.

• (1930)

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the question by the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith regarding the Site C project.

In the fall of 2014, the former government approved the project and set legally binding conditions with which the proponent must comply.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada conducts inspection activities to verify that BC Hydro is in compliance with conditions included in the environmental assessment decision statement. When necessary, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada will undertake enforcement actions to bring BC Hydro back into compliance with these conditions.

The Impact Assessment Act creates a new, fairer and more balanced system for reviewing and approving major projects. This is vitally important for growing our economy, protecting the environment and improving the quality of life for all Canadians.

Our government is committed to building a renewed nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous peoples that is based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.

Our government notes the efforts of BC Hydro at Site C to mitigate potential impacts, including on-site housing and recreation for workers, mental health and addiction programming, and funding for child care and not-for-profits that focus on vulnerable populations, including indigenous women and girls.

We recognize that consultation with indigenous peoples is not simply a legal duty. It is the honourable way for us to build relationships and work towards reconciliation.

We continue to engage in discussions with indigenous leaders on how we can work together on issues related to consultation, environmental protection and natural resource development.

Our government is committed to ensuring indigenous peoples have the opportunity to express their views, and meaningfully participate and contribute to this ongoing dialogue.

In closing, I want to assure the House and my hon. colleague that we will honour our commitments to Canadians. We will work with Canada's indigenous peoples and other interested parties to achieve results for all Canadians and generations to come.

Mr. Paul Manly: Mr. Speaker, there were approvals by the prior government for the Site C project. However, the other parts of that approval were done by the Liberal government after meeting with the West Moberly and Prophet River first nations for a whole 20 minutes, and they had asked for this project to be stopped.

We also know right now that the RCMP has a detachment 30 kilometres off the beaten trail, where they are preparing to enforce an injunction for a pipeline that was given an alternative route by the hereditary chiefs. I am calling on the Liberal government and the government of British Columbia to come to the table to negotiate with first nations in good faith and to call off the RCMP.

This cannot be another black eye on Canada. The action that was taken by the RCMP last year was really a black eye on Canada, and it is a difficult position to put the RCMP in, enforcing an order for a political failure. Let us get to the table and deal with first nations.

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• (1935)

Mr. Peter Schiefke: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his dedication and his passion for this issue. It is evident in the way that he delivers his remarks in the House.

Our government is serious about changing the relationship Canada has with indigenous peoples, and I would like to reassure my colleague and all members of the House that the Crown will execute its consultation and accommodation obligations in accordance with its constitutional and international human rights obligations, including aboriginal and treaty rights.

We are committed to making sound decisions based on science and traditional knowledge. We understand that indigenous peoples

have unique knowledge about the local environment, traditional lands and resources. This knowledge is recognized as an important part of project planning, resource management and impact assessment.

[*Translation*]

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

(The House adjourned at 7:36 p.m.)

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