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(HANSARD)

Thursday, May 3, 2018

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, May 3, 2018

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[*English*]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 42 petitions.

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COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on International Trade. It is a very hard-working committee. We are working hard not only for key stakeholders on trade around the world but for Canadians. I am very proud of our team.

Our report today is called “Multiculturalism: its Contribution to Canada's International Trade and Investment Activities”.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 45th report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, entitled “Oral Health Programs for First Nations and Inuit—Health Canada, of the Fall 2017 Reports of the Auditor General of Canada”.

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this report.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, several hundred witnesses later, and 50-plus amendments, 76 briefs, and over 70 hours worth of testimony, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 19th report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security in relation to Bill

C-59, an act respecting national security matters. The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments. This was a classic demonstration of how a parliamentary committee should operate.

* * *

TRANSPORTATION MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussion among the parties, and if you seek it I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion.

I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, when no Member rises to speak on the motion relating to Senate amendments to Bill C-49, An Act to amend the Canada Transportation Act and other Acts respecting transportation and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, or at 1pm this day, whichever comes first, every question necessary to dispose of the said stage of the said Bill shall be deemed put, and a recorded division deemed requested and that the division not be deferred.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

PETITIONS

CRIMINAL CODE

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Niagara Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am presenting, I am sure, one of the largest petitions you perhaps have seen in this House. It is related to the government's attempt to repeal section 176 of the Criminal Code in Bill C-51. That is the section that protects members of the clergy and religious services. When the government decided that it was going to remove that completely from the Criminal Code, it caused a considerable amount of discomfort and outrage across this country.

Routine Proceedings

I have a petition signed by over 8,000 people. They are petitioning the government to leave that section alone so that religious services and members who officiate at religious services have specific protections. I am proud to present this. The petition has been duly certified by the clerk of petitions.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to present three petitions to the House today.

The first petition is on an important issue in my riding, and that is plastics. It is in support of Motion No. 151 on how we are going to address plastics. It is about regulations aimed at reducing plastic debris discharged from stormwater outfalls; industrial use of microplastics, including but not limited to microbeads, nurdles, fibrous microplastics, and fragments; and consumer and industrial use of single-use plastics, including but not limited to plastic bags, bottles, straws, tableware, etc.

This is an important issue in our riding. We live on the coast, and the petitioners want to make sure that we see a clean shoreline.

• (1010)

CANADA POST

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is on another important issue in my riding, which is making sure that Canada Post services are kept.

The petitioners ask that Canada Post make sure that the workers do not lose their jobs. Five million households will lose their door-to-door delivery over the next five years. The petitioners want to make sure that this does not happen, because the cuts will hurt seniors and disabled Canadians in particular.

Canada Post barely held any consultations, and the petitioners are very concerned about that as well. This petition has a lot of signatures from my riding. This is a big concern. We hope to see it addressed soon.

PORNOGRAPHY

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the third and last petition I will be presenting today is largely from citizens in Campbell River. The petitioners are asking the Minister of Public Safety to look at the harmful impact of pornography on the human mind and on public safety. They are asking the minister to remove all pornographic entertainment, including premium movie TV packages, from all Canadian federal penitentiaries.

CATALONIA

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present e-petition 1335. This is an issue I have not heard raised in this place as a petition.

The petitioners are very concerned about the ongoing issue of independence for the state Catalonia. Millions of Catalans have been peacefully demonstrating. There was a vote, as we all know, by Catalans. The petitioners are concerned about the brutal repression of demonstrators and call on the House of Commons to condemn violent acts of police against defenceless and peaceful civilians who are demonstrating to support how they cast their own ballots for a

democratically elected Catalan government, independent of the State of Spain.

VIA RAIL

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present today.

The first petition is from Canadians who believe that VIA Rail should have a management strategy. It does not have a long-term plan and direction approved by government, thus it can unilaterally end service on any given route that affects thousands of Canadians. If we have a management strategy, VIA can increase rail travel and reduce environmental and financial costs.

The petitioners are asking the Government of Canada to support my bill, Bill C-370, to establish a clear mandate for VIA Rail.

BANKING SERVICES

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from Canadians in support of postal banking.

Nearly two million Canadians desperately need an alternative to payday lenders, whose crippling lending rates affect poor, marginalized, rural, and indigenous communities most. There are 3,800 Canada Post outlets already in rural areas, where there are few or no banks or credit unions.

Canada Post has the infrastructure and the ability to make rapid transactions, including postal banking. Therefore, the petitioners are asking the government to enact my Motion No. 166 to create a committee to study and propose a plan for postal banking under the Canada Post Corporation.

PHARMACARE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I table today another petition from constituents of Winnipeg North.

The petitioners want to bring to the attention of the Prime Minister and all members of this House how important it is that we have a national pharmacare program. They want to see changes made so that all Canadians have accessible, free prescribed medicines.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

*Routine Proceedings***VACANCY**

LEEDS—GRENVILLE—THOUSAND ISLANDS—AND RIDEAU LAKES

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that a vacancy has occurred in the representation in the House of Commons for the electoral district of Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes in the province of Ontario by reason of the passing of Gord Brown.

Pursuant to subsection 28(1) of the Parliament of Canada Act, the Speaker has addressed a warrant to the Acting Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a writ for the election of a member to fill this vacancy.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS*[English]***TRANSPORTATION MODERNIZATION ACT****Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.)** moved:

That a message be sent to the Senate to acquaint their Honours that, in relation to Bill C-49, An Act to amend the Canada Transportation Act and other Acts respecting transportation and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, the House:

agrees with amendments 2, 7(a) and 10(b) made by the Senate;

respectfully disagrees with amendments 1(a)(i), 1(b), 5(a)(i), 5(b) because the issues raised by the amendments are addressed in the bill or by existing legislation;

respectfully disagrees with amendment 1(a)(ii) because this would affect the Minister's ability to issue a decision on an application for a joint venture within the timelines set forth in the bill;

respectfully disagrees with amendments 3 and 4 because the passenger rights will be established in regulation by the Canada Transportation Agency, as opposed to the airlines, and will automatically be incorporated into an airline tariff for the benefit of the passenger, and furthermore, Bill C-49 does not preclude third party advocates from filing complaints on the content of terms and conditions of tariffs they find unreasonable;

respectfully disagrees with amendment 5(a)(ii) because Bill C-49 mandates new regulations that would specify carriers' obligations or standards of treatment of passengers for any delays, including a tarmac delay, as well as specific obligations for tarmac delays of more than three hours;

respectfully disagrees with amendment 5(a)(iii) because further study and consultation with concerned parties, including the federal agencies responsible for official languages, the Official Languages Commissioner and the industry stakeholders are required to better understand the economic implications and competitiveness on the Canadian air sector;

proposes that amendment 6 be amended by replacing the text of subsection (1.01) and (1.1) with the following "(1.1) For the purpose of an investigation conducted under subsection (1), the Agency shall allow a company at least 20 days to file an answer and at least 10 days for a complainant to file a reply. (1.11) The Agency may, with the authorization of the Minister and subject to any terms and conditions that the Minister considers appropriate, of its own motion, conduct an investigation to determine whether a railway company is fulfilling its service obligations. The Agency shall conduct the investigation as expeditiously as possible and make its determination within 90 days after the investigation begins.";

proposes that amendment 7(b) be amended by replacing the text with the following text "in Canada that is in the reasonable direction of the shipper's traffic and its destination";

in order to keep the intent of the Senate amendment 7(b), proposes to add the following amendment to Clause 95, subsection (5), page 64, by replacing line 8 with the following "km of an interchange in Canada that is in the reasonable direction of the shipper's traffic and its destination";

respectfully disagrees with amendment 7(c) because shippers in the Maritimes will continue to have access to other shipper remedies in the Act;

respectfully disagrees with amendment 8 because the final offer arbitration is not intended to be a cost-based remedy but rather a commercially-based process to settle a dispute during a negotiation of a confidential commercial contract;

proposes that amendment 9 be amended by replacing the text of the amendment with the following text "59.1 (1) Schedule II to the Act is amended by replacing "Bean (except soybean) derivatives (flour, protein, isolates, fibre)" with "Bean (including soybean) derivatives (flour, protein, isolates, fibre)". (2) Schedule II to the Act is amended by replacing "Beans (except soybeans), including faba beans, splits and screenings" with "Beans, including soybeans, faba beans, splits and screenings". (3) Schedule II to the Act is amended by adding, in alphabetical order, "Meal, soybean", "Meal, oil cake, soybean", "Oil, soybean" and "Oil cake, soybean".";

respectfully disagrees with amendment 10(a) because it would significantly impact the ability of railways to ensure the safety of railway operations.

● (1020)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would ask for leave to return to questions on the Order Paper.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS*[English]***QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the government's responses to Questions Nos. 1561 to 1567 could be made orders for return, these returns would be tabled immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the aforementioned questions be made orders for return and that they be tabled immediately?

Some hon. member: Agreed.

*[Text]*Question No. 1561— **Mr. David Sweet:**

With regard to employee assignments at the Canada Revenue Agency, as of March 1, 2018: (a) how many full-time equivalents are assigned to investigate tax avoidance by high-income individuals; and (b) how many full-time equivalents are assigned to investigate tax avoidance in relation to individuals earning tips or gratuities?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1562— **Mr. John Brassard:**

With regard to the provision on page 72 of Budget 2018 about the sharing of Canadians' tax data with foreign countries: what is the complete list of countries with which the government is prepared to share Canadians' tax information?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1563— **Mr. Bob Saroya:**

With regard to the invitation sent to Jaspal Atwal to a reception in New Delhi in February 2018: since the event, what specific changes has the government made to the way in which guests are invited and screened prior to attending events with the Prime Minister?

(Return tabled)

*Government Orders*Question No. 1564— **Mr. Daniel Blaikie:**

With regard to federal expenditures over the last two years: (a) what is the total disbursement of net expenditures, broken down by (i) provinces and territories, (ii) provinces and territories, per capita, (iii) provinces and territories, by organization and program; (b) what is the total disbursement of transfers to persons, broken down by (i) provinces and territories, (ii) provinces and territories, per capita; (c) what is the total disbursement of transfers to provincial governments, broken down by (i) provinces and territories, (ii) provinces and territories, per capita; (d) what is the total disbursement of business subsidies, broken down by (i) provinces and territories, (ii) provinces and territories, per capita; and (e) what is the total disbursement of infrastructure spending, broken down by (i) provinces and territories, (ii) provinces and territories, per capita?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1565— **Mr. Ted Falk:**

With regard to Health Canada's decisions taken with respect to Mifegymiso: (a) is Health Canada capturing data on the safety and efficacy of Mifegymiso on Canadian patients; (b) if the answer to (a) is affirmative, (i) how is the data being obtained, (ii) what data is being obtained, (iii) will the data be made public; (c) will Health Canada conduct a Canadian post-market study independent of the drug manufacturer Linepharma on the safety of Mifegymiso; (d) if the answer to (c) is affirmative, (i) on what date will the study commence, (ii) on what date will the study end, (iii) what methodology will be used, (iv) where will the study be conducted; (e) will Health Canada ensure that the drug manufacturer Linepharma conducts a Phase IV Observational Study on the safety of Mifegymiso on Canadian women; and (f) if the answer (e) is affirmative, (i) on what date will the study commence, (ii) on what date will the study end, (iii) what methodology will be used, (iv) where will the study be conducted?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1566— **Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach:**

With regard to action on climate change: (a) what are the definition criteria for greenhouse gas; (b) in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change, the document entitled "Pathway to meeting Canada's 2030 target" sets out figures broken down into three sections (reductions of 89 Mt, 86 Mt and 44 Mt), (i) how were these figures calculated, (ii) how will greenhouse gas reductions be evaluated in light of these figures, (iii) how are they justified; (c) what concrete steps have been taken to achieve these greenhouse gas reduction targets, broken down by (i) program name, (ii) start and end date, (iii) department; (d) how will the government ensure it, Canadian businesses and Canadians meet the commitments in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change; and (e) does the federal government or an agency have an assistance program to support the purchase, development or commercialization of electric vehicles for individuals and businesses, broken down by (i) department, (ii) title of studies on this subject?

(Return tabled)

Question No. 1567— **Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach:**

With regard to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, since 2016: (a) how many inspectors are there in the fish and seafood products sector, broken down by fiscal year, and are they assigned to domestic or imported products; (b) what is the total number of inspections in the imported fish and seafood products sector, broken down by (i) month, (ii) the product's country of origin; (c) how many inspections in the imported fish and seafood products sector have resulted in recalls, broken down by (i) month, (ii) the product's country of origin, (iii) a description of the reasons for the recall; (d) how many inspections in the imported fish and seafood products sector have resulted in fines, broken down by (i) month, (ii) the product's country of origin, (iii) a description of the reasons for the fine; (e) what is the average number of inspections carried out by an inspector for the imported fish and seafood products sector; (f) what is the proportion of inspections carried out on the ground compared to administrative inspections, for all fish and seafood products; (g) what proportion of fish and seafood products imported from Vietnam are inspected by the Agency, broken down by (i) month, (ii) year; and (h) what effect will signing the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership have on the inspection of imported fish and seafood products?

(Return tabled)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS*[English]***TRANSPORTATION MODERNIZATION ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are here today to discuss Bill C-49, the transportation modernization act, which was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on March 29, 2018. I would like to thank the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications for its dedicated study and thorough review of the bill, which led to a total of 27 amendments being proposed, of which 18 were carried.

The committee heard important testimonials from over 70 witnesses during 23 hours of hearings. The committee also received valued submissions from many other stakeholders during its diligent study of the bill. While there have been some differences of opinion, we have also heard how important this bill, as a whole, is to our economy, to the transportation system, and to Canadians. The government wishes to thank all stakeholders who actively contributed to the study of Bill C-49 and helped to highlight its benefits and importance to the Canadian transportation system.

Many groups spoke in support of this legislation, including but not limited to the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada, which testified to how pleased it was with Bill C-49, including its transparency and fair access provisions; the Canadian Association of Railway Suppliers, which stated during its testimony that it believes Bill C-49 would encourage investment in the grain handling system; the Alberta Wheat Commission, which elaborated on the strong support Bill C-49 has among its 14,000 members; the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, which explained that the bill outlines clear and consistent standards of treatment and compensation for all air carriers; MetroInx, which explained, on the subject of LVVR, that the bill strikes a balance between privacy and safety; and others, such as Alberta Wheat, Alberta Barley, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Grain Growers of Canada, Cereals Canada, and Soy Canada. Views such as these contribute to making Bill C-49 a transformational piece of legislation that strengthens Canada's transportation system.

The Senate's amendments touch on the different areas of the bill, and the government has taken the time to carefully review each proposed amendment.

[Translation]

The government supports the following two amendments. The first has to do with loosening foreign ownership restrictions and the reference to interests owned directly or indirectly. One of the bill's main objectives is to clarify things for air carriers and passengers. That is why we support the Bill C-49 amendment about foreign ownership of air carriers. The proposed amendment clarifies restrictions on foreign ownership of Canadian air carriers by individuals or international air carriers.

Government Orders

The second amendment we support has to do with locomotive voice and video recorders and adding the notion of destruction. Although the notion of destruction of information is implicit in the notion of preservation as set out in this clause, the amendment would further clarify the regulatory authority. This will address any concerns about making sure the regulations provide for the destruction of information once companies are no longer required to preserve it. This amendment is acceptable as passed because it makes the clause clearer.

• (1025)

[*English*]

The government also supports, with amendments, three other amendments.

The first is called “own motion”. It is important to recognize that the freight rail measures in Bill C-49 currently strike a delicate balance between the needs of shippers and those of railways. Any changes must be carefully considered in order to ensure that this balance, and the long-term economic viability of the rail network, is maintained. That said, we have heard the calls from shippers of different commodities across the country about the need for the Canadian Transportation Agency to be able to conduct investigations into rail service issues on its own motion.

That is why we are proposing an amendment that would expand the agency's existing complaint-based authority to investigate rail service issues by providing it with a new authority to investigate systemic rail service issues without a formal complaint, subject to the authorization of the Minister of Transport. This would give the agency new powers to investigate and address service issues for multiple shippers at once, while retaining an appropriate level of oversight by the government.

The second Senate amendment we accept, with amendment, is the direction of traffic for long-haul interswitching. The government recognizes that the efficiency of shipments by rail is critical to bringing grains and all other commodities and goods to market. In recognition of the specific needs of captive shippers, such as those in the mining sector, Bill C-49 includes a new remedy, long-haul interswitching, which was designed specifically to provide them with competitive alternatives and better rates and service.

LHI, as we call it, would provide captive shippers with access to an alternative carrier, with the rate for the regulated movement, of up to 1,200 kilometres, being determined by the Canadian Transportation Agency, based on comparable traffic. This new remedy would be efficient and effective, with the agency conducting all the necessary work and analysis and issuing a decision within 30 business days. This remedy would help ensure that captive Canadian shippers continue to be globally competitive, with access to competitive rail services at the lowest freight rates in the world.

To further improve this remedy, the government is accepting the Senate amendment concerning the direction of traffic for long-haul interswitching movements, with minor changes. These amendments would help ensure that shippers located within 30 kilometres of an interchange or served by another railway are not excluded from accessing LHI if the railway or interchange is not in the reasonable direction of the movement of their traffic.

Not only is this bill supported by a wide array of stakeholders, but it would offer many benefits for all rail shippers, including those that are captive. We are committed to working with all shippers to ensure that these benefits are properly understood by all, and that they are used to the fullest extent possible in order to strengthen their negotiation leverage with the railways and hold them fully accountable for the quality of the service they provide.

Third, there is the addition of soybeans to the MRE, or maximum revenue entitlement. As another example of our government's continued support for Canadian farmers, and the agricultural sector more generally, we are accepting, with some modifications, the Senate's amendment of adding soybeans to the maximum revenue entitlement. The modifications would ensure that soybeans and their related by-products would benefit from the advantages of moving under the maximum revenue entitlement.

Recognizing the importance of ensuring that this bill strikes the right balance, the government is unable to support the remaining amendments proposed by the Senate.

In the area of freight rail, the first is long-haul interswitching in the Maritimes. While we understand the concerns of captive shippers in the Maritimes, we must also ensure the continued viability of the eastern rail network and fluidity through the Montreal area. While we do not intend to expand LHI to enable captive shippers in the Maritimes to access the remedy in Montreal, this bill would make significant improvements to existing remedies that would benefit these shippers.

In addition, Bill C-49 contains a number of other measures affecting marine transportation that should be particularly helpful for shippers in Atlantic Canada, including the liberalization of the rules regarding the repositioning of empty shipping containers, as well as amendments to the Canada Marine Act to permit port authorities and their wholly owned subsidiaries to receive loans and loan guarantees from the Canada Infrastructure Bank.

As well, we could not accept final offer arbitration based on cost. This bill seeks to strike a careful and effective balance between the interests of railways and those of shippers, and we believe it does just that. The existing Canada Transportation Act provides shippers with a commercially based final offer arbitration process to settle a dispute during a negotiation of a confidential commercial contract with a railway.

Government Orders

•(1030)

FOA is intended to establish a market-based rather than a cost-based rate. As part of this process, an arbitrator is already allowed to request technical assistance, including costing and legal assistance, from the Canadian Transportation Agency. There is nothing in the act that obligates the arbitrator to seek the consent of railways for such assistance. The arbitrator can hold any failure on the part of the railways to disclose information against the railway when making a final decision.

Bill C-49 benefits shippers in many ways, including enabling the minister to publicize aggregated freight rail information that will help shippers in their commercial negotiations with the railways, and lessening the need to access remedies such as the FOA. Through this bill, shippers, including captive shippers, are offered many alternative remedies such as LHI, reciprocal financial penalties, shortened timelines for agency decisions, and access to improved informal dispute resolution mechanisms. All of these will respond to shipper needs and concerns for greater access, more transparency, and increased accountability.

[*Translation*]

In the airline sector, with respect to the amendments relating to the provisions of the bill on air transportation, we do not agree with the amendment to the provision relating to people affected and air passenger rights.

The government does not support the amendments proposed to the provision relating to passengers likely to file a complaint if they feel that an airline has not properly taken their rights into account. These passengers are designated by the expression “person affected” in the bill. Although Bill C-49 refers to the fact that only a person affected may file a complaint, I would like to point out that this does not prevent the passenger from asking for assistance from third party advocates to support his or her complaint.

Furthermore, organizations that represent Canadians or promote improved air service on their behalf will still be able to play that role, by challenging the contents of tariffs they find unreasonable.

On issues relating to the transportation of human remains, the government does not support the amendment aimed at developing airline policies concerning the transportation of human remains. Given that this information is already included in an airline's tariff, such a provision would be redundant.

industryThe government developed a proposal to address tarmac delays that takes into account international best practices and the industry's operational realities. By “industry”, I mean airports and air carriers. Our approach not only sets clear, standardized requirements for all air carriers, but it will also apply specific standards of treatment to tarmac delays, regardless of the length of delay, and will require that passengers be disembarked following a three-hour delay.

Furthermore, there is no need to provide for a review of the passenger rights in this bill after three years. The bill already includes provisions requiring that the Canadian Transportation Agency produce an annual report on the number of complaints received, as well as performance indicators to assess how air carriers are complying with the passenger rights regime.

The Official Languages Act regulates compliance with official language obligations, and this act is the responsibility of Canadian Heritage and the Treasury Board Secretariat.

Naturally, Transport Canada continues to support Canada's two official languages, and this includes requiring that the regulations of Bill C-49 and all announcements regarding aircraft safety be in both official languages, but the scope of the proposed amendment exceeds the scope of the authorities in this act.

•(1035)

With regard to joint ventures, we think that Bill C-49's approach to the voluntary joint venture approval process strikes a fair balance between competitiveness and the public interest. I would like to remind my colleagues in the House that we agreed to an amendment proposed by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities following its in-depth study of the bill. That amendment deals with the publication of the transport minister's decisions regarding implementation. The amendment already guarantees that the process will be transparent. Similarly, the Senate amendment providing that a review of joint ventures must be conducted every two years, creates an overlap because the minister already has the authority to review joint ventures as he or she sees fit. Moreover, it is not necessary to define the concept of public interest because, under Bill C-49, guidelines that set out the factors to be considered must be developed jointly with the Competition Bureau.

With regard to voice and video recorders on locomotives, the government does not support the proposed amendment to prevent companies from proactively using the data from these recorders. The central purpose of the recorder regime is safety. The amendment in question would considerably reduce the safety benefits of recorders. A 2016 report from the Transportation Safety Board showed the benefits of using data from recorders to proactively identify and mitigate risks.

[*English*]

Finally, while the government cannot support these amendments, we recognize the thoroughness of the review of the bill conducted by the Senate, and the special care that senators took in proposing these amendments. I would like to thank the Senate and the many witnesses who took the time to prepare submissions or to appear before the Senate committee for their valuable contribution to the legislative process.

The performance of Canada's transportation system is critical to the overall well-being of Canadians and our trade-dependent economy. We need to help to ensure that the system is best positioned to meet the demands of the economy so we can keep Canada's travellers and trade moving efficiently and safely today and in the future. This is precisely what we are proposing to do with Bill C-49.

Government Orders

To further strengthen this bill, the government is proposing to accept five well-articulated Senate amendments which would significantly reinforce the objectives of this bill. I mentioned that this is in addition to the nine very good amendments that came to us from the House Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. The robust due diligence and hard work of senators and members of Parliament will help to ensure the continued viability, efficiency, and safety of the Canadian transportation system.

Most important, as requested by a large number of Canadian shippers, the passage of this legislation would establish new “own motion” powers for the Canadian Transportation Agency, ensuring that shippers will be able to benefit from a stronger, more accountable freight rail transportation legislative framework. In terms of rail freight, the swift passage of this bill would enable much needed contingency planning, more comprehensive data, and new powerful remedies for the sector, helping to avoid a repeat of the issues experienced this year.

This bill would also increase the safety of the transportation system, as well as ensure the security of all those who utilize it. This bill would additionally ensure the implementation of world-leading passenger rights for air travellers, bringing Canadian transportation into the 21st century.

The resulting legislative package has been carefully crafted to achieve a fair, balanced, and safe transportation system that will establish the conditions for the success of the many players involved, while supporting a strong and prosperous economy.

• (1040)

The testimony heard from witnesses from all over Canada made one thing very clear, that the passage of this legislation must be a top priority for the government.

I am seeking the support of the House to vote in favour of this government motion. This will, in turn, expedite the passage of the bill to the Senate once again for its consideration and approval.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister's presentation highlights a lot of the frustration that we have heard from our stakeholders.

A lot of questions are around the inaction from the minister on this file, especially when it comes to grain transportation. The minister is now standing up and saying that the government is going to be supporting a lot of these amendments, amendments that were brought up at the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities almost a year ago, when the government turned those same amendments down.

Our producers have had to suffer this grain backlog for months, and the question they have is why the government would not support these amendments months ago rather than making them go through this.

The minister mentioned that the Canadian Transportation Agency will now have “own motion” powers to investigate any issues that may arise. However, as part of that amendment, the authority to allow that investigation to happen is strictly at the feet of the

minister. The minister can make that decision if an investigation is going to happen and he sets the parameters.

The minister took no action when the grain backlog was at its worst, from October right through to February. He did nothing. How can our stakeholders trust that he will take action next time when a complaint or an issue is brought forward by the Canadian Transportation Agency?

Hon. Marc Garneau: Mr. Speaker, what I could do is quote a comment about Bill C-49, which we worked very hard to put in place.

President Todd Lewis of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan said:

Producers often feel that we are very distant from decision-makers in Ottawa and that our concerns often go unheard. With C-49, we believe that the Minister, MPs and Senators have all paid attention, and worked hard to address long standing problems in grain transportation. We look forward to quick passage of this legislation to ensure that we can plan for moving the crop that we are seeding this spring.

I could not be more delighted. I have many other quotes.

We are approaching the end, I hope, and the bill will soon have royal assent so that our farmers can properly plan the coming year with many more tools at their disposal than they have had in the past.

• (1045)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listen carefully every time the Minister of Transport speaks, even though, unfortunately, I often disagree with him about Bill C-49's approach, among other things. We know that it is an omnibus bill on transportation and that the minister has bitten off more than he can chew. We have had clear proof of that since we began working on this bill.

I would like to come back and try to clarify one aspect of the passenger's bill of rights, which is not included in Bill C-49. We really wish it was included. I would like the minister to explain why he rejected the Senate's amendment that would reduce the wait time on the tarmac from three hours to 90 minutes.

Is it because he basically does not agree with the amendment, or is it because this issue will be dealt with later through regulations? We know that the passage of Bill C-49 will signal the beginning of a new process, not the implementation of a bill of rights.

Hon. Marc Garneau: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments.

First, on what the hon. member refers to as the “omnibus” nature of the bill, I would remind him that 90% of what is being proposed in this bill pertains to one piece of legislation, the Canada Transportation Act. It is not an omnibus bill. It is a complex bill with which we are seeking to make a lot of changes.

On the issue of wait times on the tarmac, I would like my colleague to know that in the United States, for instance, they are three hours for domestic flights and four hours for international flights. We scrutinized this issue of time and anyone with any understanding of airport operations knows that making decisions on wait times at a very busy airport is a complicated matter. I am sure that we made the right decision.

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The hon. member should also note an important fact: during a potential three-hour wait on the tarmac, airlines have to provide food, refreshments, access to washrooms, and updated information as the situation unfolds. They are required to disembark all passengers only after three hours.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the minister for putting together this important legislation to improve the efficiency of our transportation system in Canada.

Having spent dozens upon dozens of hours at the transport committee studying the legislation, I found one issue very difficult, and that was improving safety using locomotive voice and video recorders without compromising the privacy of the workers.

The minister will be accepting one of the amendments, amendment 10(b), from the Senate, which will provide greater clarity on the destruction of records. How will this amendment ensure that the safety outcomes will still exist, while ensuring railways are not permitted to spy on the day-to-day happenings in their yards and on their employees?

Hon. Marc Garneau: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on his hard work in the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, which reviewed this complex legislation.

Right from the beginning we were concerned about certain important aspects that had been brought to our attention with respect to the use of LVVR data, which is fundamental to improving safety. Those were the issues of privacy, respecting privacy, and that this did not become a tool to assess or punish any of the employees in any way.

We will now go through a regulatory process to ensure this is fully respected, including the destruction of information when it is no longer required. Therefore, important data that is private in nature will not be left to possibly be accessed illegally by others. We felt it was a good thing to very specifically address the question of distraction. All of the parameters will be worked out during the regulatory exercise that will happen as soon as royal assent is given.

● (1050)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. minister for the report back of this bill. I would have liked some more of the Senate amendments to have been acceptable to the government. However, I want to focus on the bigger question while we have the chance with the minister in this chamber.

I am very concerned that our current freight rail service, being in private hands, is not meeting the needs of the Canadian economy. We do not have rail service to Churchill right now. We do not have reliable rail service for prairie farmers to get their grain to ports. As he will know, that results in the backing up of large container ships into the Gulf Islands where they basically use the waters off my riding as a free parking space while they wait to get into Vancouver Harbour, hoping the grain will arrive.

In big picture thinking, is there anything coming up from Transport Canada, short of nationalizing our freight again, which we

used to have a nationalized freight rail service, to get the private sector to deliver goods that Canadians need, and on time?

Hon. Marc Garneau: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague brought up some very valid points. There is no question about the fact that our railways need to do better. I have been in touch with them on a regular basis and told them they need to do better.

Canadian National will be investing over \$3 billion. It has the message. Yesterday, it announced a contract to buy 350 transportation wagons to bring lumber. It is investing massively in new hopper cars. It is buying over 100 new locomotives. It is building siding for more efficient travel, so we can precisely eliminate the problems that have been brought to our attention by my hon. colleague.

The railways understand now that they have to do better. This is particularly acute when the economy is working well. That is when we have the highest pressure. There is a lot of potash to move. There is a lot of grain to move. There is a lot of lumber to move. There is a lot of minerals to move. That is when the railways are tested at their most.

I believe the railways have the message that they now need to increase the number of resources they have at their disposal. They are hiring new staff to take care of this rolling stock.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the government's response to the Senate's amended version of Bill C-49, the transportation modernization act.

The Conservatives know that the rail transportation system is vital to the economic well-being of our country's economy. The Prime Minister and his Minister of Transport have been dragging their heels on addressing the serious needs of our transportation systems and the impact on our economy.

By way of background, in 2014, then minister of transport, the member for Milton, launched the statutory review of the Canada Transportation Act a whole year early. After the Emerson report was presented to the Minister of Transport in December 2015, he then spent over a year consulting on the consultations before finally introducing Bill C-49 in May of 2017.

Despite the year delay between the Emerson report and the introduction of Bill C-49, the bill was seen as so important that the transportation committee came back a week early at the start of the fall session to hear from as many stakeholders as possible. The committee heard over 40 hours of testimony on the bill. It was necessary to hear that many hours of testimony on the bill because, despite the Liberals' claim otherwise, it was an omnibus bill.

The bill deals with airlines, air travel, ocean shipping, rail safety, and the railway and rail shipper relationship. It would make dramatic changes to the acts and regulations of each of these modes of transportation. The minister has continually spoken about the need to pass the bill as quickly as possible in response to the difficult situation shippers face due to the government's choice to allow the Fair Rail for Grain Farmers Act to lapse.

Government Orders

There have been several opportunities that would have facilitated the faster passage of the rail portion of the bill. For example, I introduced a motion to split the rail section out of Bill C-49, which would have allowed a more speedy review and passage of that section. Unfortunately, this suggestion was dismissed out of hand as the minister preferred to leave the bill in its omnibus form, despite the warnings that doing so would result in a slower process.

Over the course of the testimony at committee, witnesses told us they had numerous amendments they wanted to see made to the bill. However, they recognized that the government would not likely be open to hundreds of amendments, so most of the stakeholders focused their energy on just three or four key amendments they felt were absolutely necessary for the bill to be workable.

At the transport committee, my Conservative colleagues and I, along with our friend, the member for Trois-Rivières, put forward many of the focused, reasonable amendments suggested as a minimum by the witnesses. Sadly, the Liberals were tone deaf to these suggestions and rejected all but a few of our amendments. Further, of the few amendments that were accepted, in most cases a Liberal member had already proposed the same or a similar amendment.

Therefore, for the Liberals to say they accepted many of the amendments put forward by the opposition members at committee would be a stretch. It is not surprising to me that many of the amendments we proposed, and which the Liberals rejected, were picked up by our hon. colleagues in the other place.

This brings me to the Senate amendments and the Liberals' response to them. The Liberals are accepting one amendment and tweaking another, and both deal with the proposed new long-haul interswitching regime.

By way of background, the previous Conservative government had introduced extended interswitching to help grain farmers get their world-class products to the coast by encouraging competition in the rail service industry. Most, if not all, of the shipper and grain industry stakeholders I have met with over the past few years appreciate the extended interswitching remedy. They are disappointed that the extended interswitching was replaced in the bill with the complicated long-haul interswitching system.

• (1055)

Stakeholders fear that the new LHI system will not create the competitive environment that extended interswitching did. A major problem with LHI, raised by multiple witnesses, was that the shipper would be forced to use the nearest interchange point even if it were in the opposite direction of the product's final destination.

Essentially, this would mean that many shippers would have to send their products in the wrong direction in order to connect with a competing railway. Multiple stakeholders suggested a simple, common-sense fix for this problem, which was adding the line "in the reasonable direction" to the clause, ensuring that no shipper would have to send his or her product potentially hundreds of kilometres in the wrong direction to use the LHI remedy.

This change was so clearly reasonable and necessary that the member for Trois-Rivières and I introduced the same amendment to that line completely separate from one another. Unfortunately, the

Liberal members on the committee voted against this simple fix. However, and this should not come as a shock, this small reasonable amendment was introduced and adopted by the members of the other place. Now the government is accepting the amendment. Why did it not accept our suggestion last October? Is the Senate amendment more acceptable because it did not come from opposition members? I certainly hope such partisanship is not the reason for this decision.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my speech, an efficient and well-functioning transportation system is critical to the Canadian economy. Many industries rely on rail to get their product to market, including Canada's mining, forestry, and manufacturing industries. In this motion, the Liberals are rejecting vital amendments that would help address systemic problems in our rail transportation system that would hamper the national and international competitiveness of the industries I just mentioned. The Liberals continue to ignore the good faith work of the opposition, the opinions of the other place, and a multitude of expert witnesses.

The Mining Association of Canada, representing shippers that account for 19% of all exported goods, released a statement delineating its concern and frustration regarding the minister's refusal to accept amendments to the final offer arbitration, or the FOA process. This process is one of the only remedies that captive shippers, meaning shippers who have access to only one railway, have when they are faced with uncompetitive rates.

This is what it had to say:

The amendment on FOA, introduced by... a member of the Independent Senator's Group—and supported by all but one member of the Senate Transport and Communications Committee, was also supported by a coalition of eight captive shipper industry associations.

The amendment would have increased data transparency in the FOA process, which is the only remedy available to captive shippers to seek rates more like those that might prevail under conditions of effective competition, to address its erosion by CN and CP. [The minister's] response in a motion sent to the House of Commons erodes FOA even further, strengthening CN and CP, and leaving captive shippers at their mercy. In his motion to Parliament, [the minister] does not provide a rationale for rejecting the amendment. Instead, he repeats arguments regularly made by CN and CP and ignores or defies the state of the law regarding the purpose of FOA, undermining the ability of the most captive shippers to obtain competitive rates and levels of service.

• (1100)

François Tougas, a lawyer with McMillan LLP and a transportation expert, who also spoke at our transportation committee hearings on Bill C-49, gave this analysis of the minister's motion that we are debating today:

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The motion tabled by the Minister of Transport not only rejects the Senate amendment, but further enhances railway market power over captive shippers. Rather than retaining the status quo, the motion asks the House to give credibility to an interpretation that (a) contradicts what Canadian courts have said about the FOA remedy and (b) further tilts the current imbalance in the FOA remedy in favour of the railways. The Minister's support for Class I railways inflicts additional harm on those few shippers who are permitted to access final offer arbitration (FOA). The Senate amendment would have entitled a shipper to obtain a determination of the railway's cost of transporting its goods to assist an arbitrator in FOA to determine whether to select the offer of the carrier or the shipper. Now, the Minister has publicly declared that FOA is not a cost-based remedy but "rather a commercially-based process to settle a dispute during a negotiation of a confidential commercial contract". There are at least four things wrong with this statement:

First, the Federal Court of Appeal (and the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench) declared FOA to be a form of rate regulation and an arbitrator appointed under FOA to be a regulatory authority. Ignoring the courts, the Minister has adopted the losing position of the railways before the courts.

Second, railways can now quote the Minister in support of their position, that costs have nothing to do with rates. While the average businessperson will understand this statement to be incorrect, arbitrators will be asked to take it into account. Shippers who already are exposed to daunting odds in the use of FOA, will face yet another hurdle.

Third, nothing in the FOA remedy requires the outcome to be a negotiated confidential commercial contract. Whether a railway accepts a contract on the terms set out in an FOA award is 100% up to that railway. Because it can transport the goods under tariff, a railway does not have to enter into a contract.

Fourth, by failing to accept the Senate amendment, the Minister is condoning the railways' efforts to undermine the viability of the FOA remedy as a means of challenging rates and conditions of service that railways can impose unilaterally. The Senate amendment would have allowed a shipper to compare rates offered by the railway to rates that would prevail under conditions of effective competition. Instead the government motion will entrench the railways' market power or dominance over shippers who must use the railway to which they are captive for all or part of their shipments to domestic markets.

I know that these sections of Bill C-49 are very technical and, while they may never make the headlines, these small changes can mean success or failure for entire industries. The minister's rejection of this reasonable Senate amendment will have serious repercussions for the entire transportation system.

After weakening final offer arbitration, the Liberals have utterly eliminated the efficacy of the Senate's amendments regarding the Canadian Transportation Agency's "own motion" power. The other place amended Bill C-49 to give what is called "own motion" power to the Canadian Transportation Agency. With this power, the CTA would have been able to investigate broader breaches of a railway service's obligations rather than being limited to investigating only a specific complaint. This power would allow the agency to investigate systemic issues, for example, the recent failure of the railways to provide adequate service for grain shippers. However, the minister all but rejected this amendment.

• (1105)

This government motion makes the term "own motion" a farce. By definition, if the agency must seek political approval before beginning an investigation, it does not possess "own motion". Further, the motion additionally erodes the term "own motion power" by stating that the minister can set any terms and conditions he or she deems appropriate.

François Tougas commented on this change as well. He stated:

The Minister's motion refers to a desire for appropriate government oversight but the Minister's proposed amendment contains no provision to ensure accountability in relation to this discretion to interfere in the work of an independent tribunal. Under the Minister's amendment, the government does not have to respond to an Agency request for authorization at all, or to do so within a reasonable time period, does not

need to make its the decision to grant or withhold authorization public, does not need to disclose terms and conditions imposed on the Agency and does not need to provide a rationale for any decision to interfere with the Agency's exercise of its mandate.

The Minister already has the ability to direct an Agency inquiry at any time. The shipping community is facing repeated and prolonged service failures, and the extended failures over these past many months have not prompted the Minister to exercise that ability. The fact of these failures and the impact of these failures was regularly communicated, sometimes on a weekly or daily basis, and resulted in no action by the Minister. If the Minister was not willing to exercise that ability in this crisis, what would it take to authorize an Agency investigation?"

This amendment by the Liberals to the Senate's amendment is yet another blow to our shippers and its repercussions will be felt throughout the Canadian economy.

I will move on to locomotive video and voice recorders, or LVVRs, as we refer to them, and what the government is doing with the Senate's amendment on LVVRs.

While in committee, we heard from witnesses regarding the introduction of LVVRs. They voiced concerns with who would have access to this data and what it would be used for. The minister assured the committee that Transport Canada would protect the information and only allow it to be used in certain circumstances, including the term "proactive safety management". The Liberals voted down an amendment brought forward by my NDP colleague and supported by the Conservatives to limit the accessibility of this data to only the CTA and only after an accident to be used for investigative purposes.

The Senate passed its own amendment, which also limited the accessibility of LVVR data to incident investigations. The minister has chosen to ignore this amendment as well. Let us be clear. This is a serious issue, so serious that the Privacy Commissioner took the unusual step of writing to the transport committee during its study to raise his concerns. I have quoted him in the past, but considering the obstinate refusal of the minister to accept any amendments in this area, it bears repeating. He stated:

Our underlying concern is that proactive safety management is a purpose that could be broadly interpreted in practice, potentially encompassing employee output measurement or other performance-related objectives. Train operators have pointed out that certain rail routes are extensive and could result in drivers being recorded continuously over 60-70 hours while operating the locomotive. In our view, allowing rail companies to have broad access to audio and video data for non-investigatory purposes has a greater impact on privacy, and could open the door to potential misuse of the data or function creep.

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• (1110)

Further, Teamsters Canada, the union representing the employees who will be affected by LVVR, feels betrayed by the government. Don Ashley of Teamsters Canada put it this way: “Teamsters Canada Rail Conference are extremely disappointed in the Minister’s continued callousness toward the rights of working Canadians and the erosion of privacy rights afforded to every other Canadian. This began with the disregard of the thoughtful amendments of the opposition parties in the House along with the opinion of the Privacy Commissioner and continued with his latest dismissal of the Senate’s amendment regarding LVVR.”

It is not only rail where the minister has ignored expert witnesses. The highly publicized and so-called air passenger bill of rights was sent to the other place as more or less a blank slate. The minister intended for Transport Canada to govern by regulation, giving the government cover for any issues that may arise. This led air passenger rights advocates to call the section nothing more than some sort of sham. The Senate’s amendments gave the air passenger bill of rights some degree of form. However, all the changes brought forward by the other place are opposed by the minister.

There is so much more I could say about the bill, for example, the shocking decision to remove transparency from the airline joint venture application process. However, in the interests of time, I will leave my comments there, and will state in closing that it seems, despite urging the quick passage of the bill, the minister and the party opposite have slowed progress in almost every way, resulting directly in the problems facing grain farmers over the last number of months.

As I already mentioned, the government allowed the fair rail for grain farmers act to sunset. It refused to split Bill C-49 into two bills to speed up its passage. It blocked many reasonable technical amendments, thereby forcing the other place to pass them and send the bill back to the House, and now it is refusing to accept many of the Senate’s amendments. This refusal will only serve to slow down passage of the bill even further. If the House votes in favour of the minister’s motion, Bill C-49 will then be returned to the Senate once again.

Shippers, especially farmers, need the government to pass legislation to help them now. They do not need the minister to play legislative ping-pong because he refuses to listen to stakeholders.

In conclusion, I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after the word “That” and substituting the following:

“the amendments made by the Senate to Bill C-49, An Act to amend the Canada Transportation Act and other Acts respecting transportation and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts, be now read a second time and concurred in.

• (1115)

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to congratulate my colleague from the transport committee. We put in a very solid week of work listening to a lot of people, and despite the fact that we ended up on different pages on some issues, there was a great deal of effort to make sure this moved forward.

I want to test the member’s memory on one issue, final offer arbitration. There are also provisions in the bill that require railroads to provide information about what they are actually charging to move similar products over similar distances. I am wondering if that is the kind of information that could help inform an arbitrator as they go through the FOA process.

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Speaker, we certainly did spend a very long week hearing testimony from many witnesses before everybody else arrived back at this place. As my hon. colleague would have noted, the process we undertook was a very collaborative one. Although we arrived on different pages, as he said, I would concur that we did good work.

However, what we have in front of us today would appear to be yet another delay. When he asks about the final offer arbitration process, absolutely, any information the railways would provide would be useful. However, the ability of our captive shippers to do this has been greatly curtailed by the response of the minister.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek for her hard work on the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, on which I have the pleasure of serving with her. Each time we meet, I am impressed by her competence and open-mindedness.

My question this morning relates to form rather than content, since we agree on much of the content. When the time comes to vote on her motion, I will be happy to vote yes.

When we are chosen to be opposition MPs by Canadians, our mission is not to systematically oppose bills, but to improve them. That is what we are trying to do with the amendments we are presenting. However, the member herself once belonged to a government that was not inclined to accept amendments.

The Liberal government is reusing the exact same strategy, even though the opposition members represent 61% of the population.

My question is quite simple: how does the member explain this closed-minded attitude to proposals that are intended not to diminish the bill, but to improve it?

• (1120)

[*English*]

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Speaker, if I understand the question, I agree with him that it is the duty of members of Her Majesty’s Loyal Opposition and other opposition parties to take a look at legislation, bills, that are introduced by the government with a view to ensuring we are bringing amendments to the table that we truly believe would improve a bill.

The last time we were debating Bill C-49, I think I asked if a bill could ever be perfect without having objective third groups taking a look at it and perhaps seeing things that were not caught in its original drafting, and certainly as it goes to the other place.

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We came to the process around Bill C-49 in good faith, understanding the importance of this bill to our transportation systems and the economy as a whole. I believe the amendments we brought forward in the House committee are amendments we thought were absolutely necessary to improve the bill and address the concerns raised to us by witnesses.

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too have been sitting on the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities with the member, and I thank her for the fine work she and the rest of the members have done to bring this bill forward. Coming back to the House a week early in September was a priority for the minister, and therefore a priority for the committee, as was coming forward with this legislation. This measure has become an enabler that aligns with our trade quota strategy and numerous trade deals to bring product expeditiously across country lines and out to the global market.

My question is with respect to a comment made by the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan. Todd Lewis, APAS president, stated:

Producers often feel we are very distant from the decision-makers in Ottawa, and that our concerns often go unheard.

He further stated:

With C-49, we believe that the minister, MPs, and senators have all paid attention and worked hard to address long-standing problems in grain transportation.

We look forward to quick passage of this legislation to ensure that we can plan for moving the crop that we are seeding this spring.

With that said, is the Conservative Party of Canada prepared to vote in support of Bill C-49 for its quick passage once we finish debate here today?

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question and recognize that we have been serving on the committee together since just after the election. We have done a lot of good work, I believe.

Stakeholders do want to see the bill passed, but what I have been hearing is that they want to see the bill passed as amended by the Senate. In a news release, the Grain Growers of Canada say, "We urge parliament to pass it now", referring to Bill C-49. Again, I believe it wants to see an amended version of Bill C-49 passed.

In regard to the member's question about addressing the desire of stakeholders to see the bill passed, I have just introduced an amendment to the minister's motion that would see the bill go directly for royal assent. I cannot see any quicker route than the one that I have proposed.

• (1125)

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her work as shadow minister for transportation.

One of the major issues within Bill C-49 is the passenger bill of rights. Of course, the Minister of Transport stood in the House and said that there were going to be stricter rules placed on airlines with respect to a passenger bill of rights. He appeared before the Senate committee and said, in fact, that he never said that there would be stricter rules, and we have the Senate now coming back with proposed amendments that would see stricter rules with respect to a passenger bill of rights. Based on the thousands of petitions that have

been received and the signatures that are on those petitions, I would suggest that there is a very real appetite within this country to see a strict passenger bill of rights.

I would ask my hon. colleague to comment on that issue and on why the government is not accepting the proposed amendments from the Senate.

Mrs. Kelly Block: Mr. Speaker, simply put, I think the bill was sold, long before it was studied at committee, on the basis that one of the centrepieces of the bill would be an air passenger bill of rights. I even heard the minister say that again this morning in his comments, yet we know that the bill would do nothing of the sort. It would not create an air passenger bill of rights. In fact, as I quoted in my remarks, the air passenger rights advocates are calling this section "...nothing more than some sort of sham." It does not provide any specifics on what compensation levels for passengers under this bill of rights would be.

The Senate's amendments would basically give some degree of form to a passenger bill of rights by starting to put in place something that consumers can take a look at and say that these are some of the things they can expect to see in an air passenger bill of rights. However, we have none of that in the minister's motion before us.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as I rise to speak to Bill C-49, I cannot look past the magnificent bouquet of flowers and the hockey jersey that I see in front me, a painful reminder that a member of our family has left us far too soon. I would personally like to extend my heartfelt condolences to his wife and their entire family. I take solace in knowing that their Conservative family will rally around them to provide comfort and support.

On another topic, it goes without saying that yesterday's sad news eclipsed an event that is a little more positive. Yesterday was the seventh anniversary of all the members elected to the House for the first time on May 2, 2011. I wish each and every one of them a happy anniversary. I would once again like to thank the people of Trois-Rivières who have placed their trust in me since then. I want them to know that in everything I do, and not just here in the House, I am always thinking about how I can do them proud and live up to their expectations.

Government Orders

I will now turn to the subject at hand, the debate on Bill C-49 that got off to a very strange start. The minister said it is not an omnibus bill because, for the most part, it is about just one act. However, there is so much going on in this bill that it is not at all clear how any of this can be rushed through. I do not think the word “rush” even applies in this case because we have been working on it and waiting on some of this legislation for two years now. For example, what of the air passengers' bill of rights that the NDP introduced in the previous Parliament? It was not a bill to study ways to create or implement regulations that could someday be included in a bill of rights. The NDP introduced a bill that contained a bill of rights with answers to all of the usual questions on the subject. At the time, the Liberals voted in favour of the NDP bill, even acknowledging the relevance of what we had done. Why reinvent the wheel when the MP became Minister of Transport in this government? That makes no sense. As I said earlier, there is an expression about biting off more than one can chew that seems very fitting in this case. What we are seeing here is an excellent example of that.

We have made tremendous efforts to speed up the process, because we know that there are many stakeholders in the various sectors affected by Bill C-49 who are waiting for a problematic situation to be resolved or a new procedure to be recommended.

To speed things up, the Standing Committee on Transport agreed to hold an intensive series of meetings in early September, a full week before the House of Commons reconvened. This morning, we agreed to cut our debate short so that we can proceed to a vote as quickly as possible at noon and give Bill C-49 the best possible chance of getting off the ground and solving some problems.

We could have done a much better job in a much shorter timeframe had the bill been split from the outset, when all the parties agreed on the grain transport measures. We could have dealt with that side of things quickly, taken appropriate measures, and prevented a great many farmers from being adversely affected by long, legislative delays.

However, the government's bills have a habit of favouring big corporations' bottom lines over workers' rights and consumers' best interests. Bill C-49 is no exception, hence the lack of meaningful protections for air passengers, its dubious worker surveillance measures, and the powers it grants the Commissioner of Competition.

Those are the main thrusts of my presentation; they are a clear indication of how we will be voting. Members will have no doubt understood. It goes without saying that the NDP has always fought for the interests of consumers and workers and that any bill that fails to defend those interests may not meet with its approval.

• (1130)

I am going to discuss Bill C-49 by putting its various elements into four main groups because I only have about twenty minutes to go over this bill, and a couple of them have already gone by.

With regard to grain transportation by rail, as I was saying, although the measures are late in coming, we should not reject everything outright, far from it. I am referring to the main measures concerning grain transportation.

Grain producers following the debate have experienced economic uncertainty since August 1, 2017, upon the expiry of measures meant to help producers and shippers negotiate better shipping rates.

We had already proposed not only that the bill be split, but also that we bring back the temporary measures created by the previous government while waiting for Bill C-49 to cross the finish line. That was rejected.

In the absence of safeguards to improve competition, producers must accept the rates imposed by two railway companies, Canadian National and Canadian Pacific. Some might think that with two railroads there would be competition, everything would be going well, and that producers could find the best deal for the services they want. However, everyone knows very well that we are dealing with a duopoly. That is why the NDP twice proposed that the bill be split. I will move on because I have already spoken enough about that and time is flying by.

Although we voted against omnibus Bill C-49, we have always supported measures that affect the rail transportation of grain. We support the Senate's amendments on this issue and many others. We do so for the sake of consistency. Strangely enough, many of the amendments proposed in the Senate were almost exactly the same, give or take a comma, as those proposed by the Conservatives and the NDP when this bill was examined in committee. The party in power did not accept those amendments. It agreed to a few of them, after similar amendments were proposed by the Senate, but it rejected most of them.

As I said earlier, members of the opposition are not mandated by the public to systematically oppose everything the government does. The role of the opposition, which does not control the legislative agenda, is to point out that the party in power may not know everything about the bill it has introduced on a certain subject and that perhaps we could find ways to improve it if we worked together. That is why the opposition is trying to find solutions. Need I remind the government that 61% of voters voted for opposition members from various parties in the last election? I believe that those voices must be heard. Unfortunately, our democratic system falls a bit short in that regard. The sooner we implement the electoral reform proposed by a number of parties during the last election campaign the better. Unfortunately, the Liberals did not keep their promise in that regard.

I want to come back to the Senate amendments. We welcome the amendment that gives the Canadian Transportation Agency the authority to conduct proactive investigations into rail transportation of grain. I almost feel like applauding but I will restrain myself, and hon. members will quickly see why. In fact, we are at the same time disappointed in the government's position to make this Canadian Transportation Agency initiative conditional on the minister's approval.

Government Orders

Once again we are seeing the centralization of powers into the hands of a single person who holds the title of Minister of Transport. Imagine how independent a Canadian Transportation Agency investigation will be if the agency has to first justify the ins and outs of that investigation to the minister. There is a good chance that the agency will be told “no” or “yes, on condition that... by focusing the investigation on...”. This inconsistency and ministerial intrusion is totally unacceptable. This completely changes the nature of the proposed amendment.

● (1135)

Next, I would like to talk briefly about voice and video recorders. Bill C-49 requires railway companies to install voice and video recorders in locomotives. We strongly oppose this provision, unless these recorders provide for better safety systems and prevent potential rail accidents by providing information. We had said that we would agree to installing these recorders if the recordings were used exclusively by the Transportation Safety Board to analyze a situation and look at all potential findings, which would help us improve how things are done. We refused to allow these recorders to be used to provide information on workers, even randomly. We initially thought this would be appropriate. However, this change could violate section 8 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Furthermore, as I was saying, companies could end up using these recordings to monitor employees or take disciplinary action, which we believe is completely unacceptable.

Often a train conductor spends more than 12 hours in his cabin. Can you imagine being in front of the cameras for 12 hours? That is our reality here in the House, but rarely for 12 hours in a row. What is more, we are not alone and we do parliamentary work. When a conductor is alone in a locomotive, he might end up talking to himself. If he gets a text message that puts him in a bad mood, he might make an inappropriate comment that could be used against him later. That is unacceptable to us. A bipartisan committee made up of representatives from Transport Canada and the major unions found that this was not the solution and that it was intrusive. The proposed installation of these voice and video recorders is therefore problematic.

I would also like to talk about the passenger bill of rights because it is truly hogwash. Everyone is talking about it, including the media. This is a critical topic that affects the vast majority of people watching us, since most of them travel by air for business or pleasure, for vacation or recreation. At some point, we have all had an unpleasant experience that made us wonder what recourse we had.

Bill C-49 almost entirely overlooks this very important matter. What it does say is that once the bill receives royal assent, extensive consultations will be held to establish regulations, which will be approved, amended or rejected by the Minister of Finance and that will lead to the creation of a passenger bill of rights. Even if Bill C-49 were to receive royal assent before we rise for the summer, we would still be without the long awaited passengers' bill of rights.

I gave the minister the benefit of the doubt. I said to myself that he believes the consultation is necessary because he does not yet know what position to take on some of the elements of this bill of rights and because he wants as much information as possible. He already

has all the information he will get. I am familiar with the minister's reading and comprehension skills, and I know that he has the file well in hand.

● (1140)

This morning, I asked a question about a specific amendment the Senate proposed to reduce tarmac delays from three hours to 90 minutes before disembarking passengers. I am sure we all remember what happened to those Air Transat passengers just a few months ago. I think examples like that show that the Senate's amendment makes sense.

I asked the minister if he was rejecting the amendment because he is fundamentally opposed to it for clear, compelling, obscure reasons, or if he was rejecting it because it would be the subject of future consultations and regulations that will be proposed at some point. The minister rose and gave me a very eloquent explanation of why he was fundamentally opposed to the 90 minutes and in favour of the three hours. That made it abundantly clear to me that the minister has already made up his mind about what the Canadian Transportation Agency is going to suggest in terms of regulations. How many months are we going to have to wait for those suggestions? That is another unanswered question.

If his mind is already made up, why not put the bill of rights directly into Bill C-49? That would give us a chance to vote on a bill of rights, rather than on a process that will lead to a consultation that may eventually, by the next election, allow him to again campaign on the promise of a passenger bill of rights. People have been waiting far too long. They want answers.

For example, the bill of rights that the NDP proposed in the last Parliament was largely based on the European charter. According to many of the witnesses who testified during our studies, the European model is the gold standard. With regard to flights that are subject to the European regulations, the regulations need to be invoked in 0.4% of cases because of excessive wait times. However, that figure is four times higher for flights subject to Canadian regulations, for this metric alone.

I would like to quickly move on to my fourth point, namely measures concerning joint ventures. I think they provide a crystal clear demonstration of a slippery slope. If memory serves, Air Canada and Delta Air Lines have proposed a joint venture. Essentially, a joint venture proposal should be favourable. Two companies decide to pool their equipment, airlines, and services in order to offer passengers the best service at the lowest price. However, if a joint venture between two industry giants creates fierce or unfair competition for smaller industry partners, there is a fundamental problem that may completely undermine the level playing field we are aiming for.

Government Orders

Thank goodness for the competition commissioner, who used to be able to reject a proposed joint venture on the grounds that it did not foster healthy competition. However, Bill C-49 takes that authority away from the competition commissioner and gives it to the minister. For the sake of national interest, a very broad and often abused concept, the minister alone will be able to approve joint ventures, even if they go against the competition commissioner's recommendations, because making recommendations is all the commissioner will have the power to do from now on. I think that is completely unacceptable. It goes against the initial goal, which is to provide Canadians with better services and better fares.

• (1145)

I am out of time, so I will stop there. Perhaps I will have the opportunity to elaborate on some aspects of my speech when answering my colleagues' questions.

[*English*]

Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for sharing the committee work with me.

I have two questions with respect to his comments under the passenger bill of rights and the proposed amendment that would limit the timeline to 90 minutes as opposed to three hours.

First, will he acknowledge that there is no legal obligation on air carriers today to compensate passengers for delays beyond that, that any measures that exist are purely voluntary, and that the law is therefore a step in the right direction?

Second, if we limit the amount of time at issue in this law to 90 minutes, does the member see risk that air carriers will respond by avoiding departure altogether and returning to the gate early when they see they could be facing a penalty, thereby further compromising the ability of air travellers to get to their destination altogether or in a timely way?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

Although we often disagree, I must say that I really enjoy working with all members of the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. The simple answer to his question is no.

I must once again point out the irony of the fact that, although my Liberal colleagues seem to have very specific opinions on what the passengers' bill of rights should contain and why, they are refusing to include those measures in Bill C-49. It seems to me that they are talking out of both sides of their mouths if they refuse to budge on their proposal. Once again, we can compare this to the bills of rights in other countries and on other continents in order to compare apples to apples and ensure that a concrete plan is proposed rather than conducting yet another study.

• (1150)

[*English*]

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-49 is an important piece of legislation, important enough that amendments were put forward by both the official opposition and the NDP at committee. These amendments were rejected by the Liberal

majority on committee. The bill went back to the Senate, and the Senate came back with almost exactly the same amendments. I think that is a reflection of what Canadians would like to see in this legislation.

My hon. colleague spoke about these amendments. Why does he think that the Liberal government is not accepting the amendments that were made not just by the opposition and the NDP but by the chamber of sober second thought, the Senate?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

It is often said that two heads are better than one. Sometimes many heads have the same ideas. It should signify a pretty broad consensus when the amendments proposed by opposition members from all parties at the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and the amendments brought forward by the Senate were so similar. It means that we are on the same page.

Why do the Liberals not agree with us when, as I said earlier, we represent 61% of the population and we are proposing the same amendments? There is really no need for this political posturing. However, that seems to be what is happening over there, since these amendments are being refused for reasons that I am at a loss to explain.

[*English*]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I sit on the agriculture committee, and back in January it held an emergency session to look at service delivery and problems that western grain farmers were facing.

With regard to service delivery, the CTA would now have the ability to investigate service problems on its own without having to wait for complaints. There would be new reporting requirements on rates, service, and performance to try and enhance transparency, as well as competitive access through captive shippers and the second carrier through the new long-haul switching remedy. Would the hon. member not agree that we have addressed service issues that were critical to move grain in western Canada and that really we are on the right track here?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, I would qualify that by saying that Bill C-49 will ultimately address a number of issues that have been facing farmers for months now. I would like to add that we are extremely sensitive to that and remind my hon. colleague that we proposed taking action much sooner to prevent these problems from happening in the first place, to ensure that the measures set out by the previous government would be extended beyond August 1, 2017, and finally, to ensure that the measures dealing with transporting western grain would be separated out of Bill C-49 so that they could be incorporated into the rest of the procedures as quickly as possible. I realize that we both share the same concern. I would advise my colleague to initiate a serious discussion within his own caucus to ask why they refused to fast-track that process.

Government Orders

[English]

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking my hon. colleague for all his work on this issue. The work was done in a very collaborative way, and we appreciate that.

I want to reassure him that the approach we have undertaken with respect to the passenger bill of rights is in alignment with the European approach, in that Bill C-49 is the legislative framework for the passenger bill of rights and is equal to the European treaty article 79(2), which is the European legislative framework. Out of that flows the regulatory work, which in the European model is derived into flight compensation regulation 261/2004. Right now this is the legislative piece, and the regulatory piece will follow.

• (1155)

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her kind words. I agree that the work in committee was collaborative. Why can this collaboration not continue?

My second issue is with her comment that their approach to the passenger bill of rights or the proposal is in alignment with the European model, which, as I said earlier, serves as a model for a number of legislative measures. We all agree. Why not include it, then? Why prolong the suspense, why drag things out, when hundreds of thousands of passengers are waiting for clear rules across the board? The government could have drawn upon these rules, or even amended them to reflect the Canadian reality. We are stuck in a vacuum with Bill C-49. The government wants to start consultations when everyone seems to agree that the European model is the one to follow.

Could the government pick up the pace and introduce an actual bill of rights?

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for years I sat on the opposition benches in hopes that we would see legislation of this nature. Many different stakeholders, from prairie grain farmers to people who travel via airlines, have waited a long time for this legislation. The Prime Minister has always said that there is always room to make things better, but I believe this is a giant step forward in advancing the important industry of travel and transportation.

I would hope to see support as we deal with the finalization of the legislation, so I would like to get a clear indication from my colleague from across the way if it is the NDP's position to support the legislation at this stage.

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, I do indeed remember, perhaps not all, but many of the years during which my colleague sat on the opposition benches because I was there too.

If memory serves, which I think it is this morning, I also remember that he voted in favour of an NDP motion to establish a passengers' bill of rights. I do not really see how a bill that contains nothing remotely like that can be considered progress. It seems more like a step back to me.

He asked for a clear indication. When I asked my Conservative colleague a question, I said I would support the Conservative motion calling on the government to be open-minded and accept all of the Senate's amendments. Many of them are amendments proposed by opposition parties of all stripes. If we are truly collaborating, then the government should give a little and I am sure we would find common ground.

[English]

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is pleasure to rise today and speak to Bill C-49 and the motion put forward by the government.

The message I want to get forward today is really about what brought us here and whether Canadian agriculture had to go through all this pain and suffering when we really did not achieve much at the end. What is disingenuous with the entire process is that over the last several months the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Agriculture were telling our producers, stakeholders, and shippers to hang on and be patient, that once Bill C-49 was passed it was going to resolve all of their problems and we would not have a grain backlog in the future.

I am going to speak more on the agriculture side than I will on some of the other elements of Bill C-49.

The inaction by the ministers and the government on this issue for almost a year has been mind-boggling. Last June my colleague, the shadow minister for transportation, put forward a list of amendments that would have addressed many of these problems we are facing, but they were turned down. Now we have them back on the table from the Senate. They went through the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and again through the Senate. Now they are here, and the Liberal government is saying it will be supporting a number of those amendments. I am not sure what changed over those 10 months; the Liberals could have supported those amendments last June, but they did not.

It was the start of time after time when the Liberals were given numerous options to get Bill C-49 through the process as quickly as possible, as well as to address many of the problems that our grain farmers across western Canada have been facing. Every time the Liberals were given an option to address the situation, which became a crisis in January and February, they did nothing.

Government Orders

Last summer, we encouraged the government to extend the provisions of Bill C-30, the Fair Rail for Grain Farmers Act, which extended interswitching and mandatory minimum volumes, a process that we had in place in 2013-14 when we went through the previous grain backlog. This addressed many of those problems. Our stakeholders, producers, grain terminals, and shippers were satisfied. They were quite pleased with that process. It gave the rail lines some accountability to ensure that they were able to move grain as well as other products, whether it was lumber, mining, or oil and gas. We want to make sure that all our producers have an opportunity to get their commodities to market.

In the fall, when Bill C-49 was first brought to the House, we saw that it was a massive document and that it was going to be extremely difficult to get any sort of consensus on a bill that dealt with everything from video recorders and locomotives to an air passenger bill of rights to interswitching. How were we possibly going to be able to find some sort of satisfaction among all stakeholders and within all the different points of view in our industries, let alone here in the House of Commons or in the Senate?

At that time we saw that this was going to be an issue. With the size and the scope that Bill C-49 entailed, we knew that getting it through that process with any sort of expediency was going to be nearly impossible. Once again we provided what I thought was a thoughtful resolution to the Liberal government, which was to split Bill C-49 into two bills. We would take many of the aspects of the bill that had to do with grain and grain transportation through the process as quickly as possible. Some of the other contentious issues that had to do with airline rights and other issues would take longer to go through the process, but we knew there was no time crunch or time sensitivity of the kind that there was on the grain side.

Last fall, with a larger-than-average harvest and the challenges CN and CP were facing in terms of meeting the contracts, we saw the rail line numbers dipping with each weekly report that was coming out.

● (1200)

We raised the alarm bells last fall that this was going to be a problem. We encouraged the government to split Bill C-49. I recall being in this House last October making almost the same argument that we were not going to get Bill C-49 through this process in a timely fashion to prevent another grain backlog. Again, it fell on deaf ears.

The result of that inaction last October, before we got to this point, was rail service that put us in a grain crisis. It is a crisis that still exists today. I do not think we can miss that point. Although we are here now, no problem has been resolved. We have road bans across the western provinces. We have more than 30 transport ships off the coast of British Columbia waiting for product. Those demurrage costs of \$10,000 a day and up are now being passed on to the producers. Who will pay those additional costs that are now being passed on to our farmers across western Canada?

We have to keep that in mind as we have this discussion and this debate today. The crisis our farmers have been facing since last fall is still there, and it is not going away anytime soon. It is going to impact their fall season. They cannot move grain right now. Many of them are finally in the fields seeding. Road bans are in place in many

of the western provinces, inhibiting their ability to actually transport grain to the terminal.

They are watching us today with a lot of focus on the decision we will be making in this House. How are we going to address the problems they are facing? The crisis has become so bad that our most recent report says that almost half a billion dollars' worth of grain is sitting in storage bins across western Canada. That is grain that our producers and our farmers cannot sell. They are unable to sell their product and get it to the terminal and then to the coast.

These same farmers who are unable to sell their product still have bills coming in. There are mortgage payments, lease payments on land, equipment purchases, and input costs as they try to get ready to start seeding. There are programs in place through Farm Credit Canada and the advanced payments program, essential programs that are in place to help in these times of extenuating circumstances.

I know that our producers do not want to have to rely on those assistance programs for a product they work hard all year to plant and harvest and are now trying to sell, but are unable to because of logistics.

As my colleague from Guelph said, we had an emergency meeting of the agriculture committee. I want to commend my colleagues on that committee for agreeing to have that emergency meeting with many of our stakeholders.

One of our witnesses at that meeting was a young farmer from Saskatchewan. I thought he put it quite well. He said, "We have to face so many uncertainties when we are in agriculture: uncertain weather, uncertain input costs, uncertainty when it comes to the commodity prices. The one thing we should be able to rely on is a reliable transportation system, which we do not have right now."

One of the key issues with Bill C-49 is that it does not resolve those problems. We have gone through this entire process. As I said earlier, the Liberal government, the Minister of Transport, and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, through this entire process, have said that we should be patient, because Bill C-49 would address all the problems. Then just a few weeks ago, we had both ministers admit publicly that Bill C-49, indeed, will not resolve a lot of the problems that have been raised.

The government is asking our producers to suffer through yet another grain backlog, which should never have happened. The government had all the tools in place to address this problem, yet it did nothing. I can understand the frustration of our producers across the western provinces. They are looking at us today to take action to ensure that they never have to face this sort of issue again.

Government Orders

• (1205)

We have had many of our grain, barley, and pulse growers here over the last couple of weeks as they have had their days on the Hill. They have raised some other points that I do not think we have talked enough about as we have gone through this process. Not only is this grain backlog causing them to suffer because they are not able to sell their product, it is tarnishing our reputation as a reliable trading partner around the world. A lot of our producers are not getting a premium price for their product, because for all intents and purposes, Canada does not have a reputation for being able to get their contracts out in a timely fashion. We cannot meet our commitments to other countries. When prices are high in the fall, in October, November, and December, we should be selling our crops. We are not getting them to market, to the terminals, and to the west coast until the spring, sometimes a year later, so we are missing out on those premium prices, because we have an inept logistical system and an inept transportation system, a transportation system that has very little to no accountability.

Earlier today, the Minister of Transport was talking about one of the amendments the Senate had brought forward, which I think is critical. It is on “own motion powers” for the Canadian Transportation Agency. That was an amendment brought forward at the standing committee for transportation. It was an amendment brought forward by many of our stakeholders. They want accountability for the rail lines. If there are issues, and our stakeholders see issues, the Canadian Transportation Agency, once it receives a complaint, or even if it does not receive a complaint, can take action to try to address some of those key issues. It is a key part of Bill C-49.

The Minister of Transport earlier today spoke very highly about this part of the bill when he said that we are giving the CTA its own motion powers, which will make such a critical difference for our producers. In fact, in the amendment the Liberal government has put forward, there are no own motion powers. It states in the amendment that the authorization goes to the Minister of Transport. He will be the one who decides if the CTA can take action and put forward some guidelines, a template, on what action can be taken.

Let us put that into a perspective that I think all of us in the House today can understand. That is like my parents saying, “You know what, son? You can do whatever you want with your life, as long as it's okay with mum and dad”. That is what the Liberal government's own motion powers are in Bill C-49. Who is going to give that any credence? There is supposed to be some accountability in Bill C-49 for our shippers. However, this only comes into effect if it is okay with the Minister of Transport. It is okay for people to make their own decisions, but they have to ask the minister first. That has nothing to do with own motion powers. It is really quite hollow hearing that this is going to be a critical part of the bill, because it is taking the arms of the CTA and tying them behind its back.

As we have gone through this process, every step of the way we have offered the Liberal government a solution. My colleague, the shadow minister for transportation, has offered another solution today. She has brought forward an amendment that will concur the Senate amendments to get this bill passed as quickly as possible.

We are not saying that we agree with every aspect of Bill C-49. In fact, I think we have heard in the debate today that there are still

some significant issues with the bill. We also listened to our stakeholders. They need something that will give them some piece of mind that there is going to be some sort of legislation in place to help them address some of the problems they are facing.

We have had stakeholders like the CFA. They represent 200,000 farm families. The Grain Growers represent 50,000 active producers, and they are asking for no further delays on Bill C-49. They want it passed immediately. That is what my colleague's motion today will do.

We want to ensure that we can get this bill passed as quickly as possible. Again, every time we have offered an option or a solution to get this bill through the process, the Liberals have put in yet another step and delay.

• (1210)

They are saying today that if they do not support our motion, and they want our support to pass their amendments and the minister's motion, this all of a sudden will be a quick process. That is simply not the case. If the Liberals do not accept our motion and they pass theirs, Bill C-49 will go back to the Senate, and the Senate will have to agree to the Liberals' amendments. It is yet another obstacle to keep Bill C-49 from passing. This is going to be a ping-pong ball that will go back and forth, or maybe not. Maybe the Senate will agree to the Liberal amendments, but we do not have any assurance of that.

There are amendments they could have passed almost a year ago. There have been opportunities put forward to pass Bill C-49, or, what preferably would have been the case last fall, to extend Bill C-30, and we would never have faced any of these issues.

I am really encouraging our colleagues across the floor to support our motion today, pass the Senate amendments, go right to royal assent, and give our stakeholders the assurances they are looking for to ensure that they can get their job done. What this comes down to is our stakeholders' inability to get their products to market. We have a great deal of concern that this will spill into the fall as farmers get ready for next year's harvest. That has been the disconcerting part of it all.

I think my colleague across the way can understand the comments we heard at our emergency meeting last month on the grain backlog. Many of those witnesses came forward and said that they have given up on it this year. They know that they are not going to get their grain to market and are hoping that this does not impact next year's harvest and next year's shipping season.

I want to highlight that this bill is certainly not perfect. There are lots of concerns about what is in Bill C-49. I want to read some comments from the Premier of Saskatchewan, who has been extremely vocal in his concern about Bill C-49 and the problems it has caused in Saskatchewan. We have seen that Nutrien has just announced that it has laid off or is laying off more than 600 employees, which is going to impact maybe up to 1,300 employees in rural Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Premier said, “This is a direct result of the federal government not taking action where there is a huge problem, and they have the clear authority to fix it.”

Government Orders

What have the Liberals done in response to that? They have done nothing. Once again, they want to put this bill back to the Senate, which would delay this process even further.

We have to highlight the financial impact these delays have had. Again, \$500 million in grain is sitting in storage bins across western Canada, not getting to market. We have now seen the job layoffs in Saskatchewan at Nutrien, and that is just one company, one potash company. Certainly there will be others that will be facing similar problems.

This is having implications for rural communities. If farmers cannot sell their grain, and they cannot get it to market, it means they do not have money in their pockets to spend in our small communities. That is grocery stores, gas stations, and little movie theatres. That is charities, ball teams, and fundraisers. Those are the things that are suffering because our farmers do not have money in their pockets. They cannot get their grain to market, and that is a direct result of the inaction of the Liberal government when it comes to this grain backlog.

The Liberals could have stopped it a year ago. They could have stopped it in the fall. They could have taken action with an order in council in January or February. Every single time, they have stuck up for the rail duopoly.

With Bill C-49, there is no accountability. Why have the Liberals made our grain farmers suffer through yet another grain backlog? When it comes down to it, they have really done nothing.

• (1215)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I consider my hon. colleague from across the way, the member for Foothills, a friend on the agriculture committee. We often disagree, but we generally are focused on our customers and constituents and how we can improve the agriculture industry in Canada.

Speaking of the industry, we are now shipping to order for the third straight week. Last week, 6,424 were spotted. The current demand is about 5,000 cars per week. Therefore, we are getting to the other side of the problem we were looking at in January.

However, working with the rail industry is working through legislation. Today, locomotives and cars are on order, and staff is being hired. I visited Winnipeg a few weeks ago and saw the training programs in place to get people on maintenance crews helping to refurbish locomotives. There are \$3.4 billion in the capital program on rail, and we are looking at \$400 million in track infrastructure as a part of that investment.

Looking at the transparency of the proposed legislation on what is adequate and suitable rail service and how the rail service providers will work with the shippers to determine the circumstances they are under with respect to adequate and suitable service, the shippers will have the ability to seek reciprocal financial penalties in their service agreement, which they did not have before. Therefore, the shippers would have a hammer to use in situations where they would not be getting service.

Does the member agree that we are getting better service through the rail companies largely as a result of the attention we are paying as a government and working with the opposition on this?

• (1220)

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, I enjoy the agriculture committee a great deal, and my colleague and I work well together on that committee. However, we talked about having this emergency meeting in March and it never should have come to that.

Again, the member talked about the railways adding locomotives and hiring people. Yes, certainly they have done that, but they have done that much too late. They should have started doing this in the fall. As they said at committee that day, it takes them six months to train a crew to get it up and running. They started doing this in April and May when they should have been doing it in September and October. The problem with the bill is that it does not hold those rail companies to any accountability when it comes to ensuring they are meeting their commitment.

For example, the member talked about some of the things in the bill that would do that. However, on the long-haul interswitching, there are so many lists of triggers in there to make it actually kick-in that it will rarely be used. With the extended interswitching, some of the things we had in Bill C-30 solved those issues. We are going backward.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is our agriculture critic and he is doing a great job in that capacity. He understands agriculture. He comes from Alberta, and rural constituents of his know that he gets it.

I am a farmer and a small business owner. The member touched on this in his speech as well, but as I talk to other farmers, one of the fears they have, now that we are beginning with this year's crop, is that in some cases they have not been able to haul their grain from last year, and there are still bills from last year on which they are waiting to sell grain. We understand that an efficient and well-functioning rail system is critically important to the rural economy, but it is critically important to the entire Canadian economy as well.

A couple of weeks ago, I was in Viking, Alberta waiting for a train. I have never seen a train so long. It was almost like trains were lined up going down the track. It had oil tank cars attached to it. Again, elevators are begging for cars and looking to move product.

If the government were to solve this right away, there is still the problem today of bans on the roads. The county puts bans on the roads so these heavy loads do not go down gravel roads when they are soft.

The member talked about needing the bill, but also about needing answers as well. It seems there is a lack of understanding on the other side.

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, there are few people in the House who are more knowledgeable of agriculture than the member is. He certainly lives it every day, and I respect his opinion.

Government Orders

The member is exactly right. I do not think the government understands the integration of our transportation system, whether it is rail, road, or other options. If we were able to approve some pipelines, that certainly would alleviate a lot of that problem.

For example, one of my friends is a farmer in Saskatchewan. Instead of having his fertilizer brought to him by train from Clavet, it is being trucked from Redwater, Alberta. Instead of a very short train trip to get that fertilizer, it is now 800 kilometres being hauled by truck.

All of these decisions being made have a trickle effect on every other part of our economy. We cannot just assume that fixing this one little thing is going to fix everything. The bill would not fix the major problem, which is holding a lot of these companies to account to ensure they meet their commitments.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reassure the member that Bill C-49 really is about a long-term, sustainable solution that will actually provide the kind of predictability needed for us to grow a more prosperous future. Getting that long-term solution did take a little longer, but I think it will pay off in the end.

The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, Alberta Wheat Commission, Alberta Barley, Grain Growers of Canada, and I have more pages, are happy with what Bill C-49 manages to accomplish. We just need to work together to get it passed.

• (1225)

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, this will be wait and see. I am going to challenge my colleague. If we have another larger than average harvest this fall, I would like to see if Bill C-49 does what she says it will do. I do not think it will. Our stakeholders have raised the alarm bells on that.

She spoke about some of the submissions. They were not saying that they were necessarily satisfied with Bill C-49. Their message is to get this through and let us move on. I think they understand, just as we do, that to say Bill C-49 will be the solution to everything is disingenuous.

She should really talk to her Minister of Transportation and Minister of Agriculture who admitted in the last two weeks that Bill C-49 would not address all of the issues that had been brought forward.

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for the very good work he has done in raising this issue and holding the minister's feet to the fire when it comes to addressing the issues our grain farmers have been facing.

We know that unreliable services cost. We know that inaction costs not only over the past number of months as we have been reflecting on what has been lost, but also there are things we need to look at going forward.

I wonder if the member could share with us what he is hearing with respect to concerns, perhaps on our ability to meet future contracts, on our reputation internationally when we have to deal with these sorts of issues right here with our own transportation system, and then on the cost of products sitting and having to shut down production.

Mr. John Barlow: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our shadow minister for transportation for all the incredible work she has done on what is an ominous and very difficult bill to try to wade through.

She is exactly right. We cannot underestimate the financial impact of inaction on Bill C-49. We went through this in 2013-14 and the impact on the Canadian economy was in excess of \$8 billion. That is why we put forward Bill C-30 to ensure we would never have those types of issues again.

We are certainly hearing from our stakeholders that this has not only impacted this year's harvest, but will very likely impact next year's harvest. They have nowhere to store their product. Their bins are full now. Until things start moving, there is not going to be anywhere to store their products.

Nutrien in Saskatchewan has shut down an entire potash mine because it cannot move product. There is no demand for those inputs because farmers are at a loss as to what to plant this year, or if they will be able to plant. They have full bins and road bans are in place. This has caused such stress among our agriculture sector. I really want to highlight the fact that the implication this has had is not simply a matter of frustration. It has really impacted people on the ground and their families.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what a privilege it is to stand in my place today to talk about a fantastic piece of legislation.

I thought the minister really paid tribute to a lot of the fine work that was done, from first reading of the legislation to second reading debate to the standing committee debate, listening to what had taken place in the standing committees, then coming back to the House and going to the Senate, which has proposed amendments. I highlight that for a couple of reasons.

First and foremost, let us acknowledge that when the legislation was brought in, it was long overdue. The minister has taken the approach of making fairly comprehensive changes to our transportation industry. He recognizes how valuable that industry is to our country. The fact that he invited and welcomed input and in many ways accepted many different changes speaks volumes with respect to the degree in which the minister, working with cabinet and all members of this chamber, has seen this legislation get to where it is today. This is positive legislation.

When I was on the opposition benches, we would talk about government legislation and how the Harper government was never really open to opposition ideas when the legislation came before a standing committee. In this case, the members of the standing committee worked exceptionally well together. They came together on a number of different ideas, some Conservative, some the Liberal, some New Democrat. These individuals were prepared to put their party politics aside to try to improve the legislation. As a direct result, many amendments were passed, virtually through a consensus that was quickly evolving. From what I understand, originators of some of those amendments crossed party lines.

Government Orders

It then went to the Senate. As the minister mentioned, the Senate scrutinized the bill quite extensively. The senators met with many different stakeholders and came up with a series of amendments. The minister and the department, after doing some further consultations with others, decided the government was prepared to accept some amendments in order to further advance Bill C-49. A very open and transparent process has led us to what we are debating today.

I was provided some quotes to reinforce what I just said. If we look to the Grain Growers of Canada, grain farmers from across Canada are praising the decision by the Minister of Transport to accept the recommendations and amendments put forward with respect to Bill C-49, the transportation modernization act announced on April 27. It says that the decision demonstrates the government is listening to farmers in their calls for a balanced and accountable rail transport system.

Mr. Nielsen of the Grain Growers of Canada said:

We need the legislation in place well in advance of August 1, 2018 to ensure hard working middle class farmers don't have to suffer through another grain shipping season with terrible rail service... "Accepting these amendments demonstrates that [the ministers of agriculture and transport] are working for the growth of the rural economy. Bill C-49 is key to the long term success of my industry and key to reaching the goal of \$75 billion in agri-food exports by 2025. We urge parliament to pass it now."

● (1230)

The fine work parliamentarians have done in both Houses has been recognized, but we are now being called upon to pass the legislation.

There are a number of things we have talked a great deal about. In listening to the debate today and at second reading, there is a very interesting and important point. I use this as an example. We hear a lot about air passengers and the grain industry, which I will provide comments on shortly. However, I always thought there was something quite interesting within the legislation that I have not really heard, and it was just recently pointed out to me. It comes from the Transportation Safety Board, where an idea has been talked about, a recommendation, for years now. I would have thought this was something that could and should have been acted on relatively quickly. The idea is to have cameras in locomotives. It is very much a safety issue. Even though we spend a lot of time listening to the debate and comments from across the way, whether it is now or at second reading, I cannot recall hearing that particular comment.

The bill is a fairly significant change from what we have had in the past. We would have to go many years before we would see the types of changes we have seen in this legislation. We have a minister, working with others, who has really advanced a major piece of legislation that is going to a profound positive impact on several sectors, on passengers, shippers, farmers, the rail industry as a whole. These are significant changes. We have a minister who has been able to pull all this together in a relatively short period of time.

I remember sitting in the opposition benches, and this is something I have made reference to in the past, and asking Stephen Harper directly about the piles of grain on the Prairies. The grain was not in storage bins. It was in the fields. There was the threat that some of that grain was starting to rot, while in the Pacific Ocean there were ships anchored and unable to come into port to be loaded

because the grain was not at the port. The grain could not be exported.

Canada is a trading nation. We need trade. Trade is what allows us to grow our middle class, fuel our economy, and provide the types of jobs that are so very important. When we think of the example I raised back then, we get a sense of the frustration. Imagine the frustration for farmers, whose crops are literally sitting in the fields and they want to get it to market.

I am listening to the debate this morning, and Conservative members have a great deal of criticism toward this legislation. They were in government for many years and had the opportunity to bring forward this kind of legislation. They had many years to do it, but it has taken this government to ultimately get the job done. Now, it is not complete yet, and we very much appreciate all the fine work that has been done by members of all political entities in the House and the Senate.

● (1235)

We also recognize and acknowledge the immense amount of work done by the stakeholders. It is the stakeholders who continued to lobby year after year for the types of changes we are witnessing today. That is why people should not be surprised at the pressure on all of us to get this piece of legislation passed.

There is another interesting quote that was provided to me. I will mention this because I come from the Prairies and we are talking about the importance of wheat. The following is a quote from the Alberta Wheat Commission and Alberta Barley:

The Alberta Wheat Commission (AWC) and Alberta Barley say that [the] Federal Transport Minister[...]s move to endorse key amendments to Bill C-49 in the House of Commons, as recommended by the Commissions, is good news for farmers.

They go on to say:

"We see the news from [the] Minister...as an excellent show of support for the agriculture industry and for farmers," said Kevin Bender, AWC Chair. "

This is why it is so important that we advance this legislation.

I will give a real example of the type of frustration farmers have. Let us imagine a farmer has a contract with the rail company, and the farmer says he will deliver x amount of wheat on x date to the rail line. If that farmer does not fulfill the contract as he had committed to the rail line, the rail line could take action against the farmer, such as fines and so forth. The farmer would suffer penalties. That is the way it is and the way it was, yet it was never reciprocal. The farmer felt helpless. What about the railway company? If the farmer delivers the product on time to where it is supposed to be, should there not be any sort of obligation for the rail line? This legislation actually takes that into consideration so that it would be reciprocal. Not only would the rail line ensure more accountability for farmers, but, for the first time, it would be reciprocal, and farmers could look for some sort of justice if the rail line does not meet its obligation.

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We can call it prairie frustration, but I want to ensure that products coming from the prairie provinces get to market. The same principle would apply for all regions of our country, but right now I am focused in particular on prairie farmers, because our wheat needs to get to market. We want rail line companies to work with us.

I was very happy when the Minister of Transport made the calls necessary to move additional grain. It was the Minister of Agriculture, working with the Minister of Transport, who corresponded with the rail lines to try to get more grain cars to the Prairies and out to our markets. It has improved a great deal over the last number of weeks, but there are a lot of advocacy groups and individual farmers who are still very much concerned about getting their product on the rails. It is not as though there is that much of a choice.

• (1240)

Winnipeg North, the area I represent, probably has the highest number of long-haul truck drivers and trucks per capita. Commodities can only go so far by long-haul trucking. We need an effective, efficient rail line, a rail line that is going to be accountable to producers and manufacturers. Whether it is a widget or a commodity, we need to be able to get them to market. We are talking about billions of dollars and millions of jobs which are affected by our transportation industry. That is why it is so critically important.

I want to also provide some comments in regard to our airline industry. Members of Parliament do a great deal of travelling. A number of us share some of the concerns that we hear from our constituents on a fairly regular basis, some of the frustrations that they face.

People can be on a flight scheduled for five o'clock and after they board the plane, the plane sits on the tarmac for what seems to be an endless amount of time. There are no requirements for the airline to serve its passengers. If passengers are left waiting on the tarmac for an extended period of time, one would like to think that some basics, such as water or food, would be available to them, but there is no guarantee of that. That is absolutely critical.

If members of Parliament were asked what kind of problems they have encountered, we would hear things such as sitting on the tarmac and lost luggage, which is fairly common. What about passengers who arrive at the airport to find that their flight has been cancelled? What about overbooking? All of these things take place and every airline has a different procedure to follow. This legislation takes a unifying approach. Every airline would be obligated to do certain things with respect to those situations I have mentioned.

Consultation does not stop there. If we pass this legislation, the regulations will follow. It is through those regulations that we will get the details as to what the consequences will be. This is something all of our constituents want to see.

I debated a bill on air passenger rights when I was in opposition. All of us are very sympathetic to this issue. We want to see this advance. It would be great to have more details, and a lot of those details will come in the form of regulations. Those regulations will be worked on proactively. The purpose of the legislation is to establish a framework that would provide good regulations. Our

constituents have been calling for this for many years. They want some protection against the airlines.

That is the reason I started off by saying that this is a great piece of legislation. It is comprehensive. Those that were involved in putting it together, the average Canadian, stakeholders, members of Parliament, senators, staff within the minister's office, have come together to provide a comprehensive piece of legislation. Now we are at the final stages.

It is a good day when we see this kind of legislation move forward.

• (1245)

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just have a little clarification on my colleague's lengthy speech.

Farmers do not contract with the railroad. Shippers contract with the railroad. There is an intermediary who makes the contract. That is where the problem is. The shipper contacts the farmer and says, "We have cars coming. The railroad says they are coming on Tuesday." He gets down to his bins and loads it up. It is ready to go, and there are no cars there. He cannot ship it. The port is out there, and the boats are there. That cost does not go to the shipper; it comes back to the farmer.

There are more pieces in it than the member is talking about. There are the shippers in between, who contract with the farmer. The farmer does not contract with the railroad.

On the airline piece, who is going to write the regulations? The airlines are. That is where I have a problem. It should have been the committee and the government writing the regulations, not leaving it for afterwards.

Would the member like to respond to that?

• (1250)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that the shippers represent the farmers. The farmers are the ones who choose the shippers. What predates this legislation? What happens today? There are no reciprocal actions that take place. If the grain arrives on time, but the rail company says, "So sorry, we cannot move it", there is no legal action that the shipper or the farmer can take against the rail line. Under this legislation, they will have an opportunity, whether it is the shipper on behalf of the farmer, or the farmer directly.

As for the airline industry, I would suggest that the member is misinformed to draw the conclusion that Air Canada, WestJet, or any other airline will be dictating to the government what the regulations are going to look like. I can assure the member that it is not going to be the airlines that do it. We will work with Canadians, and no doubt the airlines will play a role in this, but the regulations are going to be there to protect the consumers, too. That is why we are bringing in—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Central Nova.

Government Orders

Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have spent a great deal of time on questions in this debate about the role of Bill C-30 versus the long-haul interswitching included in Bill C-49. Bill C-30 provided a short-term solution to respond to an immediate need, but it did not solve the long-term problem of the transportation of western Canadian grain. It also did not provide any solution for the rest of the country in different industries and different regions.

Although I lived in Alberta for about five years, I am proudly Nova Scotian. I am curious if the hon. member could offer some thoughts on the importance of extending efficiencies in our transportation system to different sectors of the economy and to different regions, to make sure that our transportation system works for everyone and brings the greatest growth to the Canadian economy.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, my colleague and friend brings up an excellent point.

About 20% into my speech, I was talking about how important trade is to our country. There is economic development in every region of our country that has the potential to really grow our economy in an environmentally friendly fashion.

One way we can foster that growth is to look at ways to ensure we are maximizing the efficiency of our rail lines. In Manitoba, for example, there is a great deal of concern about the Churchill connection. As much as possible, we need to support, where we can, rail transportation to different communities, which can have a profound positive impact on those communities.

It is about taking a comprehensive, overlooking approach, a long-term strategy in terms of how we develop as a country. In certain sectors and in certain areas of our country, I suspect we are going to see fantastic growth. We need to support that growth through infrastructure, and rail is part of that infrastructure.

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about the importance of transportation in this country, whether it be airline joint ventures, air passenger rights, railway and rail shippers relationships, or voice and video recording on railways.

I would like to thank all of the members today, especially those who belong to the transportation committee. I know they worked very hard and had some good discussions. There were 18 amendments. The opposition parties disagreed with the Liberal Party on about 18 different positions. The bill went to the Senate, and the Senate came back with almost exactly the same 18 amendments.

If the member is really concerned with safety in Canada, why does he think the 18 amendments supported in principle by the Senate should not be included as the motion was put forward today? He is talking about the safety of the whole transportation system.

•(1255)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, when the minister made his introduction, he provided comments on a good number of those amendments and why some of them could not be supported.

I would rather take it in a different direction by suggesting that we look at what took place at committee. I was not present at the committee, but I understand there was a fantastic flow of information

among all the parties at the table, to the degree that members of all political parties suggested amendments. The amendments that did pass were passed in a very co-operative, almost consensus-building, fashion, which is encouraging because when I sat in opposition, I very rarely witnessed something of that nature, if ever. It sounds like the committee did a fantastic job in making some positive changes to the legislation.

Not all the amendments were passed, but a number of them were. In the minister's response to that, he paid a compliment to all members of the standing committee for their fine work, whether they were Conservatives, New Democrats, or government members. The people who participated did a good job. He also recognized the valuable work the Senate did in terms of bringing the legislation back with a few more amendments that we were able to accept, in the name of making it a healthier and stronger legislation overall.

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a member of that committee, I can certainly vouch for the parliamentary secretary's comments. It was extremely collaborative. Many of the amendments brought forward were wordsmithed and shaped in order to bring this forward.

One of the primary things we tried to do was understand what the previous government had tried to accomplish with Bill C-30. We discovered that the interswitching provision of 150 kilometres, in spite of the difficulties being faced by grain shippers in the season it was brought forward, was never actually used. It did not work.

Although the intention was there to improve the system, our committee focused on ways to take that concept and make it a lot better. I am going to give my hon. friend another opportunity to really underscore the value of the reciprocal penalties as being a far more potent tool for shippers to have, and through the shippers, the producers, in order to get compliance and co-operation from the railways.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would say how important it is to equal the playing field. This legislation, in good part, allows an equalization when it comes to protecting the suppliers and those individuals who need to have access to get their product or commodity to market. That reciprocal ability to ultimately see action for someone who is not fulfilling the other end of the contract is absolutely critical. It is one of the most positive things about this legislation.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): It being 1 p.m., pursuant to order made earlier today, all questions necessary to dispose of the motion are deemed put and recorded divisions deemed requested.

Call in the members.

•(1330)

[*English*]

The Speaker: The question is on the amendment.

•(1335)

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

Government Orders

(Division No. 662)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Anderson	Angus
Arnold	Aubin
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Benson	Benzen
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boucher
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brousseau
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Chong
Choquette	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Cullen	Deltell
Diotte	Donnelly
Dreeshen	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseau
Duvall	Eglini
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Finley
Gallant	Généreux
Gladu	Gourde
Hardcastle	Harder
Hoback	Hughes
Jeneroux	Johns
Jolibois	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kniec	Kwan
Lake	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Laverdière	Liepert
Lloyd	Lobb
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Masse (Windsor West)
Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Moore	Motz
Nantel	Nicholson
O'Toole	Paul-Hus
Quach	Raiit
Ramsey	Rankin
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Saganash
Sansoucy	Saroya
Shields	Shipley
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Stetski
Stewart	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Trost	Trudel
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vecchio	Viersen
Wagantall	Warawa
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer — 118

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arya
Ayoub	Badawey
Bagnell	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Brisson
Caesar-Chavannes	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Cormier	Dabrusin

Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Fry	Fuhr
Gameau	Geretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Hardie
Harvey	Hébert
Hehr	Hogg
Holland	Housethater
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jordan
Kang	Khalid
Khera	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Lebouthillier	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
McCrimmon	
McDonald	McGuinity
McKay	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Érables)
Soeurs	
Monsef	Morneau
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Ng
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	Ouellette
Paradis	Paupé
Peschisolido	Peterson
Picard	Poissant
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Rioux	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Sahota	Saini
Sajjan	Sangha
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schieffe	Schulte
Serré	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
Simms	Sohi
Sorbara	Spengemann
Ste-Marie	Tabbara
Tassi	Thériault
Tootoo	Trudeau
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Virani
Whalen	Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj	Yip
Young — 163	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

[Translation]

The next question is on the main motion.

[English]

[Before the Clerk announced the results of the vote:]

• (1345)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I attempted to vote yes, but the attention had already gone to those voting no. My friend from Cumberland—Colchester will attest to my standing up, but I was not spotted.

If my vote could be recorded as yes, I would appreciate it.

[*Translation*]

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

(Division No. 663)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Alleslev	Amos
Anandasangaree	Arya
Ayoub	Badawey
Bagnell	Baylis
Beech	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Brison
Caesar-Chavannes	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chen
Cormier	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
East	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Fry
Fuhr	Gameau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hébert	Hehr
Hogg	Holland
Housefather	Hutchings
Iacono	Joly
Jordan	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Lebouthillier
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)	
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKay
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Mendès
Mendicino	Mihychuk
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)	
Monsef	
Morneau	Morrissey
Murray	Nassif
Ng	O'Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
Ouellette	Paradis
Peschisolido	Peterson
Picard	Poissant

Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wrzesnewskyj
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Government Orders

Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Shanahan
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tassi
Trudeau
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Yip

NAYS

Members

Aboutaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Anderson	Angus
Arnold	Aubin
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Benson	Benzen
Bergen	Bernier
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boucher
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brosseau
Calkins	Cannings
Caron	Chong
Choquette	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Cullen	Delteil
Diotte	Donnelly
Dreeschen	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseault
Duvall	Egliniski
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Finley
Fortin	Gallant
Généreux	Gladu
Gourde	Hardcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Johns	Jolibois
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacGregor	MacKenzie
Maguire	Malcolmson
Masse (Windsor West)	Mathysen
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	Miller (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound)
Moore	Motz
Nantel	Nicholson
O'Toole	Paul-Hus
Paupé	Quach
Raitt	Ramsey
Rankin	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Saganash	Sansoucy
Saroya	Shields
Shipley	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Ste-Marie	Stetski
Stewart	Strahl
Sweet	Thériault
Tilson	Trost
Trudel	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vecchio
Viersen	Wagantall
Warawa	Warkentin

Government Orders

Waugh
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Zimmer — 121

Webber
Yurdiga

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

[*English*]

OIL TANKER MORATORIUM ACT

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.) moved that Bill C-48, an act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia's north coast, be read the third time and passed.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to stand in the House today and speak to Bill C-48. In my opinion, it is a very balanced, comprehensive framework for a responsible and sustainable future. It would protect our precious coastal communities of northern British Columbia while supporting those communities as they enjoy the ability to grow and prosper in that beautiful part of the world.

It really does not matter which ocean one is facing. Whether it be the Atlantic, Pacific, or Arctic oceans, the health and protection of our coasts are critical to our environment, to our economy, and to all Canadians. In today's competitive markets, ensuring that the import and export of products is done in a safe and efficient manner is paramount to the vitality of globalized economies.

In Canada, our domestic shipping industry is the linchpin to our supply chain that allows us to competitively engage in the international marketplace. With a direct contribution of \$3 billion annually to Canada's gross domestic product, transporting approximately \$200 billion in international goods, the value of a strong domestic shipping industry is unquestionable. The marine industry not only ensures that our goods get to market, but it also provides essential supplies to rural and coastal communities. British Columbia's coastal communities know how important these resupply activities are.

British Columbians will also tell us that what they truly love about living on Canada's Pacific coast is the extraordinary beauty and the breathtaking landscapes, which they rely upon for food, for cultural activities, and for their very livelihoods. The abundance of nature's bounty is a cornerstone of their quality of life.

Obtaining the right balance of safe and efficient marine shipping while protecting our coastal waterways is top of mind for our government. To help preserve and protect our national heritage across all of Canada's coasts, we are investing \$1.5 billion over five years in our national oceans protection plan. In parallel, we are also moving forward with Bill C-48, which proposes to formalize an oil tanker moratorium on British Columbia's north coast. This moratorium complements our ambitious oceans protection plan.

The goal of the oceans protection plan, and Canadians' expectation, is that a strong economy and a healthy environment

go hand in hand. This is an unwavering commitment. Formalizing an oil tanker moratorium that would ban oil tankers from stopping along British Columbia's environmentally sensitive north coast is an important element of this commitment. While still allowing critical local resupply activities to continue, this moratorium would help protect the north shores of British Columbia and still enable communities to develop economically. This proposed legislation underscores that our government is serious about encouraging long-term economic growth in a way that does not harm our marine or coastal environments.

Given that the volume of goods moved by marine shipping has increased by almost 20% over the past decade, Canada needs to be well prepared for the associated risks of increased trade and marine development. Our goal is first and foremost to prevent incidents from occurring, and in the unfortunate event that they do take place, minimize their impacts on the environment, on local communities, and on the economy.

This proposed legislation builds on a solid foundation. Canada has had a comprehensive, multi-layered marine safety system in place for many years. This is reflected in our safety record. Although accidents have occasionally occurred in Canada, there has not been a major incident in decades.

Complementary to this legislation, the oceans protection plan will make important investments in science to better understand how oil behaves in water and to research more effective technologies for spill cleanup, including through partnerships with external research institutions and academia. In addition, we are significantly increasing our capacity to prevent incidents through investments, such as increased towing capacity for the Canadian Coast Guard. Through these initiatives, we want to build an economy that prioritizes responsible and sustainable growth.

● (1350)

I want to acknowledge that the shipping industry has evolved over the years to enhance its safety record. Design and construction have improved, as have safety and communications equipment. Seafarers are better trained than in the past. Lifeboat design and drills have also improved. All these contribute greatly to marine safety and security. Despite the relatively strong safety record that Canada enjoys, there is room for improvement.

We need to address gaps and continue to build a world-leading system that will keep pace with the growth and developments in the marine transportation industries. Canada needs to position itself for a future characterized by emerging and disruptive technologies, and new approaches. Connectivity and automation will have far-reaching impacts on the transportation sector and the economy as a whole.

Statements by Members

Transport Canada is the federal department that oversees a comprehensive legislative and regulatory system that ensures marine transportation remains safe and efficient, and protects our marine environment. Canada has more than 60 marine safety regulations. The key components of this existing safety regime include compulsory pilotage areas in sensitive or busy waterways where marine pilots with local knowledge of the area are required, and marine safety inspectors to ensure that all vessels, including tankers, meet the strict safety requirements in Canadian law.

Building on this record of excellence and marine safety measures already announced under the national oceans protection plan, Bill C-48 would add another layer of protection. It would not only protect one of British Columbia's most sensitive marine environments, but would also complement several other initiatives that promote marine innovation in support of safe and environmentally friendly marine shipping.

In 2016, Transport Canada consulted Canadians on our transportation system. On the subject of the environment and innovation, Canadians told us that pollution should be reduced in all modes of transportation by using options such as alternative fuels and electric power. They also told us that government incentives and regulations can encourage the use of new technologies.

For example, the shore power technology for ports program is part of our effort to limit air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, and to improve air quality in ports near major cities. The program reduces emissions by allowing docked ships to turn off their auxiliary diesel engines and connect to electric power. This is one way Canada is acting on its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 17% from 2005 levels, and to do it by 2020. So far, seven ports have received funding under this program, five of which are in British Columbia, totalling \$9.5 million for the B.C. ports.

Since January 1, 2015, under the North American emission control area in coastal waters, vessels operating in Canada must use fuel with a maximum sulphur content of .01%, or use technology that results in equivalent sulphur emissions to reduce air pollutants. These regulatory changes enacted by both Canada and the U.S. are expected to reduce sulphur oxides by 96%. This is another important example of how government uses incentives and regulations to enable the marine industry to develop innovative solutions to complex problems and invest in new technologies.

● (1355)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The member will have another 11 minutes coming to her once we resume debate.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

CONTRECOEUR KENPO KARATE ASSOCIATION

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, April 28, over 300 guests were in attendance as the Association de Karaté Kenpo de Contrecoeur celebrated its 45th anniversary.

Founded in 1973, the karate school is Contrecoeur's oldest association, older even than the Fédération de l'âge d'or du Québec, or FADOQ. From the very beginning, it has always enjoyed the unwavering commitment of Serge Giard, founding member and president. He has definitely earned his title as a Kenpo knight and his eighth degree black belt. Congratulations on this amazing dedication.

I also want to congratulate the many past and present volunteers and karatekas from the Contrecoeur judo club, and wish them all the best for the future.

* * *

● (1400)

[*English*]

CHAIR OF DURHAM REGION

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a trailblazer, a role model, a dedicated public servant, and a friend, Gerri Lynn O'Connor, on her appointment as the chair of Durham Region. She is the first woman to ever hold this position.

As the mayor of the Township of Uxbridge, Chair O'Connor has 34 years of municipal experience, including 29 years as mayor. As a result of her tireless leadership and fearless advocacy, Uxbridge has grown and been enriched tremendously during her tenure. Whether it was building local infrastructure, improving public services, or seeing Uxbridge designated as the Trail Capital of Canada, Chair O'Connor has always championed and fought for the community that she calls home.

It was an honour working with Chair O'Connor on our shared priorities when she was mayor, and I am looking forward to continuing that hard work as she embarks on her exciting new role.

On behalf of myself and my Durham Region colleagues, I offer my congratulations to Chair O'Connor.

* * *

COLONEL WITOLD PILECKI

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw the attention of the House to Polish Constitution Day, adopted on May 3, 1791, confirming the broadest range of rights and freedoms anywhere in Europe at the time. Generations of Poles have given all in defence of the freedoms it guaranteed.

This year I want to recognize the incredible life of Colonel Witold Pilecki, who went from nobleman to czarist-imposed Siberian exile to decorated infantryman in the Polish volunteer army in 1919, and later in World War II went on to be the co-founder of the Secret Polish Army after being wounded in combat against Soviet troops.

Statements by Members

In 1940, he sacrificially volunteered to enter Auschwitz and escaped in 1943 to rejoin the Polish resistance. He took part in the Warsaw uprisings and would later join Polish troops in Italy. His Auschwitz reports would convince the Allies of terrible Nazi crimes.

In 1948, he was arrested and murdered by the Communists after a show trial.

The Chief Rabbi of Poland called him an example of inexplicable goodness at a time of inexplicable evil.

This Constitution Day, I join Canadians of Polish heritage in remembering him.

* * *

WILLIAM MORROW

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the life of a great member of our community in Avalon and a strong and devoted Liberal, William Morrow, Q.C. Bill left us in late March following a courageous battle with mesothelioma, and the community sure feels his absence.

Originally from New Brunswick, Bill was a well-known and respected lawyer in the Conception Bay area. He and his wife Judy founded the law firm now known as Morrow, Morrow and Crosbie. Bill believed strongly in the rule of law and was committed to representing his clients with excellence.

In addition to his law practice, Bill held charity close to his heart. He served his community through various positions, including as chair of the Avalon Health Care Institutions Board for 10 years.

Our hearts remain with his loving wife and partner in law Judy, their two sons Neil and Aaron, his community, and of course the entire Liberal family. His presence will be deeply missed.

Rest easy, Bill.

* * *

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today is World Press Freedom Day. New Democrats stand with journalists who daily defend our freedom of expression and democratic principles. We pay tribute to journalists around the world who have died or been injured in their quest to inform.

This year marks the 25th World Press Freedom Day, and the global theme is “Keeping Power in Check”. Here in Canada, press freedom is also struggling.

Investigative journalism helps keep us from tyranny. It is a pillar of any liberal democracy, giving us a critical window into government, yet the present government has gutted our Access to Information Act, a key tool for journalists, after it promised to do the exact opposite. It has gutted the legislation instead, leaving us with a law that is so weak that independent reviewers say we would be better off with anything else.

Last week it was reported that the Liberal government has more people working on messaging than we have journalists on the Hill.

I would like to thank members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery and journalists across this great country. May their pens continue to be our light.

* * *

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Spadina—Fort York, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was a journalist before politics, and on World Press Freedom Day I am proud to stand in this House to talk about the important role that a free press plays in protecting democracy.

[*Translation*]

We know that local, high-quality journalism is critical to a healthy democracy. Journalistic independence is vital, and our approach is designed to protect that independence.

[*English*]

In many countries around the world today, publications are being closed down and journalists attacked, detained, or, as we saw in Afghanistan this week, killed.

● (1405)

[*Translation*]

We also have work to do here in Canada. Our journalists face a different threat. That is why budget 2018 includes \$50 million to support journalism in underserved communities. On top of that, our action plan for official languages calls for investments of \$14 million in local news and community radio.

[*English*]

A free press protects us all, and today we pledge to defend that principle and defend journalists here at home and around the world.

* * *

KHAMENEI REGIME IN IRAN

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the international community knows that the Khamenei regime in Iran is among the worst violators of human rights in the world, routinely incarcerating, persecuting, torturing, and murdering their own people.

In Iran, members of minority groups such as the Baha’i and Christian faiths know this all too well. Their very basic rights are violated on a daily basis, including their right to life and security of person as well as their right to practise their own religion. Through its continued sponsorship of terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, Iran seeks to further the reach of its tentacles of terror into Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. In this, the regime seeks to export their human rights violations throughout the Middle East.

This Iran Accountability Week, I call upon the government to take a realistic view of this tyrannical regime and deal with it in a fashion that is requisite to the danger it poses to the world.

*Statements by Members***RICHMOND CARES, RICHMOND GIVES**

Mr. Joe Peschisolido (Steveston—Richmond East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the dedicated volunteers at Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives for the excellent services it has offered our community for over 40 years.

[*Translation*]

In addition to being a hub for volunteers and fundraising, Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives is also a direct service provider. The organization operates a child care resource centre, the Richmond Christmas Fund, community support services for seniors, and leadership programs for high school students.

[*English*]

On behalf of all the residents of Steveston—Richmond East, it is my privilege to thank Ed Gavsie, its president and CEO, and all the wonderful volunteers at Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives. Our community is truly grateful for all they do.

* * *

FORT MAC STRONG

Mr. Randy Boissonnault (Edmonton Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two years ago this week, a raging wildfire threatened to destroy the city of Fort McMurray and much of the surrounding regional municipality of Wood Buffalo. Thousands of families and individuals were forced to flee their homes, with fears and doubts as to whether and when they might be able to return.

In these unimaginably difficult times, many thousands arrived in my city of Edmonton, where they were welcomed with open arms and open hearts by their fellow Albertans. That solidarity did not end with those days in Edmonton. From coast to coast to coast, Canadians gave generously. The Government of Canada and other governments stepped up in the response and in the rebuild.

Two years later, there is still some work to be done, and my message to the citizens of Wood Buffalo remains the same: we were there for you during the wildfires and we are still here for you today. All Canadians agree that when one part of this country faces a crisis, we all need to lean in to help.

We remain, to this day, Fort Mac Strong.

* * *

CHIEF RABBI OF ISRAEL

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to welcome the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi David Lau, to Canada.

The youngest chief rabbi in Israel's history, Rabbi Lau is a religious and civil leader in Israel and a well-respected religious authority to Jews around the world. He is known for his modernity and openness and for his willingness to engage in open discussion on the important topics surrounding Jewish life in Israel and across the diaspora.

This is Rabbi Lau's first official visit to Canada. We are excited that he will have the chance to meet with some of the vibrant Jewish communities that have flourished in our country. This important visit is a symbol of the close friendship between Canada and Israel, which

has been built on our shared commitment to the fundamental values of freedom, democracy, and human rights.

On behalf of the official opposition, we welcome Rabbi Lau to Canada, and we wish him the very best as he embarks on this official visit.

* * *

[*Translation*]

JEANNINE BERGERON LYONNAIS

Mr. Ramez Ayoub (Thérèse-De Blainville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am dedicating this speech to my late mother-in-law, Jeannine Bergeron Lyonnais, who passed away in December after a painful battle with this wretched disease.

The Blainville Relay for Life is a very special event where people can come together to pay tribute to those who have lost the fight against cancer, support patients who are still suffering, and raise money for cancer research.

I urge everyone in Thérèse-De Blainville to join the hundreds of people who have already signed up for the Relay for Life on June 8. This will be the fourth time that I take part, so I can attest to the powerful, indescribable feeling that comes over each and every participant.

The hope, laughter, and tears of those fighting courageously day after day are a clarion call for us. Let us all help support life by fighting cancer, which touches each and every one of us directly or indirectly. Together, we will beat cancer one day.

* * *

● (1410)

[*English*]

AGA KHAN DIAMOND JUBILEE

Mr. Arif Virani (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday members of all parties welcomed His Highness the Aga Khan at Rideau Hall to celebrate his diamond jubilee after 60 years as the religious leader of 15 million Ismaili Muslims around the world.

[*Translation*]

The Aga Khan has had a strong relationship with Canada for six decades, beginning with Canada's decision to accept Ismaili refugees, like me and my family, who were fleeing persecution from Idi Amin.

[*English*]

Canada subsequently forged a strong working relationship with the Aga Khan Development Network, which provides critical humanitarian assistance in developing countries. Most recently, we bestowed honorary citizenship on the Aga Khan to recognize his commitment to the Canadian values of pluralism and diversity.

[*Translation*]

As an Ismaili Canadian member of the House of Commons, I am very proud of the Aga Khan's commitment to community service, as illustrated by Canada 150, when Ismaili Muslims gave this country over one million hours of volunteer service.

Statements by Members

[English]

I thank His Highness for being an example to us all. On behalf of the Parliament of Canada, we all wish him “diamond jubilee mubarak”.

* * *

AGA KHAN DIAMOND JUBILEE

Hon. Erin O’Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last night I joined three Governors General, three Prime Ministers from both sides of this chamber, parliamentarians, and prominent Canadians from the Ismaili community to celebrate the diamond jubilee for a special honorary Canadian, the Aga Khan.

For 60 years, this spiritual leader of the Ismaili community around the world has stood for tolerance and support for the most vulnerable. As Prime Minister Harper once said in this chamber, his leadership inspires us to hope for a better world.

This is also an opportunity to talk about the tremendous contribution of the 300,000 Ismaili Canadians. They came to Canada with very little, but have given our country so much.

[Translation]

Today, I have the honour to thank the Aga Khan for 60 years of service and compassion around the world.

[English]

On behalf of the Conservative caucus and all parliamentarians, I want to thank the Aga Khan for 60 years of compassion, global leadership, and friendship with Canada.

* * *

VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER OF PORTUGAL

Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today as co-chair of the Canada-Portugal Parliamentary Friendship Group to express a very warm Canadian welcome to the Prime Minister of Portugal, Antonio Costa. Thirty-six years ago, under then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Canada welcomed the first official visit of then Portuguese Prime Minister Francisco Pinto Balsemão.

Canada is home to a vibrant Portuguese-Canadian community of over half a million Canadians of Portuguese origin.

As a Canadian of Portuguese descent and as MP for Mississauga East—Cooksville, along with the member for Brossard—Saint-Lambert, we are proud to be strong voices for the community. This visit provides the opportunity to strengthen our people-to-people ties and trade relations as both countries look to future opportunity and prosperity.

It is my pleasure to welcome Prime Minister Costa and his delegation.

[Member spoke in Portuguese as follows:]

Bem vindos a todos.

● (1415)

ART STEWART

Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is hard to say goodbye to someone I admire, respect, and love. For those of us who knew Art Stewart, we choose to remember all that was good about Art, and there was so much that was good. Art was top-notch.

He knew the importance of family and commitment to community. It is how he lived his life. He taught those lessons to his children and showed his commitment to friends and neighbours. He made us all feel that we mattered, because to Art we did. He worked to make the smaller and larger community better for everyone. He was a farmer, he loaded trucks for Loeb, he was a union man, a shop steward, a candidate for federal office, a first-rate neighbour and friend, a dear father, a loving husband.

Art never stopped his efforts for the cause of fairness and social justice. Yes, Art was top-notch.

* * *

GORD BROWN

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here are six things you might not know about our friend and colleague, Gord Brown.

Number one, Gord was so Conservative, he often wore blue shoes in the Commons. True story. They looked pretty sharp, too.

Number two, Gord’s oldest son, Chance, was born in November 2000, just as Gord learned that he had lost the election by 55 votes. Gord told me at the time that this had been, all at once, the hardest and the best day of his life.

Number three, Gord never lost again. He won the next five elections by an average of almost 14,000 votes.

Number four, Gord’s riding and mine are side by side. In five elections out of six, Gord got a higher percentage of the vote than I did. He would have wanted me to tell the House that.

Number five, Gord met his wife, Claudine, here on the Hill. Their shared delight in the birth of their son Tristan was one of the highlights of the 41st Parliament.

Number six, Gord had many friends and not one enemy that I knew of. He will leave a hole that is hard to fill.

* * *

GORD BROWN

Hon. Andrew Leslie (Orléans, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I too rise today to mark the passing of our friend and fellow parliamentarian, Gord Brown. I got to know Gord over the past years when we served as whips together in this place.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

I was a new MP and Gord not only taught me how to be a whip, but also how to effectively represent my constituents. We all know that he did brilliant work for the people of his riding of Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.

[English]

Blessed with a great sense of humour and a cheerful and enthusiastic outlook on life, Gord was devoted to his wife, Claudine, and his two sons, Chance and Tristan, of whom we have heard so much. We know that he adored them all. He was an exemplary parliamentarian, a fantastic father, a devoted husband, a proud Conservative, and an energetic and unstoppable hockey player, and I am very, very glad to say that I never met him on the ice. He was also a good friend of all of us.

[Translation]

I extend our most sincere condolences to his family, thousands of friends, the Conservative Party of Canada, all those who work in this remarkable place, and to all Canadians.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

TAXATION

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the cost of fuel in British Columbia is now more than \$1.60 per litre. It is the highest in North America. This problem is being caused by substantial uncertainty surrounding the future of the industry, but it is being compounded by a carbon tax.

When the Prime Minister was asked in Vancouver on Monday, he lauded the price of fuel, claiming he was demonstrating leadership by having Canadians pay more. Does the Prime Minister actually believe that the already historically high gas prices are not high enough?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know the Conservatives' approach is to not let the facts get in the way of a good political argument, but allow me to remind the member opposite that B.C. has had a price on carbon pollution for almost 10 years, and it has led, quite frankly, to growth in the economy while they have reduced and while they have shown leadership on the environment. That is exactly what we know will work right across the country. We are putting a price on carbon pollution so we can grow the economy in cleaner ways. Everyone gets that except the Conservatives.

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister does not get it either, and I will tell him why. The Prime Minister just indicated that raising the price is going to make people make better choices. Imagine my surprise when I read today that the Prime Minister has his food prepared at 24 Sussex and then driven across the street, 700 metres away, to his residence.

Leadership starts at the top. Is it acceptable that while he tells families they have to make better choices, he chooses to have his food driven across the street? Is this just “do as I say not as I do”?

● (1420)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, we are seeing the same old, same old from the Conservatives. They look for any way to attack politically, but when it actually comes to the issues that matter to Canadians, they do not act. For 10 years they did nothing on protecting the environment, and what that actually led to was not only did we not protect the environment, but we did not grow the economy in ways that are sustainable for the future. The lowest growth rate in almost 70 or 80 years, since the Great Depression: that is what the legacy of their government was.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Sadly, Mr. Speaker, Canadians are beginning to learn that the Prime Minister has trouble with the facts. Under the Conservative government, greenhouse gas emissions were reduced by 2.2% and the economy grew by 16.9%. That is the reality. He has a hard time with the facts, but he also has a hard time telling Canadians the truth because he knows very well that the Liberal carbon tax is going to drive up consumer prices for all Canadians and for all Canadian families. He is covering that information up.

Why will the Prime Minister not come clean with Canadians, why is he not being honest with them, and why does he not tell them how much the Liberal carbon tax is going to cost Canadians?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what I find interesting is that the Conservatives promised that they would also tackle environmental challenges and that they would do so by means other than carbon pricing. They have the right to present an alternative vision to Canadians, today and in future elections.

We have been clear: we will put a price on carbon pollution because we know that is how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and grow the economy. They have no proposals, they did nothing for 10 years, they have no alternative solutions. All they do is attack others.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): It is true, Mr. Speaker, we did nothing at all. We did so little, in fact, that greenhouse gas emissions dropped by 2.2%. Even without imposing the Liberal carbon tax, greenhouse gas emissions still dropped. That is the Conservative record. The Liberal carbon tax is yet another example of the Liberals' insatiable appetite for taking money out of taxpayers' pockets.

Could the Prime Minister explain to Canadian families why they will have to pay more for everything they buy because of the Liberal carbon tax and how a tax will reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, by putting a price on something we do not want, pollution, we encourage industry, consumers, and all Canadians to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and seek alternatives. Putting a price on carbon works. It creates clean economic growth, it creates alternatives, and it creates innovation while ensuring that the money collected from the carbon tax is given back to taxpayers across the country. That is our plan. The Conservatives do not have a plan so they are attacking others.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this question was written by Gord Brown, the member for Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, who had anticipated asking it in the House this week:

“Mr. Speaker, after leaving thalidomide survivors to suffer for 18 more months, the government stated in this year's budget that it would finally find help for them. That was two months ago. They are still in agony, waiting for relief. What steps has the Prime Minister taken since the budget was presented, and when will the money flow to those long-suffering Canadians?”

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, I offer my most sincere condolences to every member in this House, but in particular to members of the Conservative caucus who have lost one of their own. For Gord's wife, Claudine, and his two sons, Chance and Tristan, as well as all his many friends and all his parliamentary colleagues, our thoughts are with them.

On the member's question, our government is committed to supporting Canadian thalidomide survivors. We announced in budget 2018 that we will expand the thalidomide survivors contribution program to ensure that more survivors receive the financial support they need. We will have more good news to share shortly on this issue.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in just 10 years, newspaper ad revenues have plummeted by 45% while ad revenues for web giants spiked by 358%. Still, the government refuses to charge them sales tax.

The media's struggle to compete with web giants is jeopardizing freedom of the press in Canada. In Quebec alone, nearly one out of every two jobs in print media have disappeared, to say nothing of the outright closures. Unions and professional associations have called on the Prime Minister to take action.

How does he plan to deal with this crisis?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this World Press Freedom Day, we celebrate the work that journalists do around the world in order to protect democracy.

We also remember those who lost their lives defending facts, getting to the truth, and shedding light on stories that would have remained buried without them. Sadly, countless journalists around the world put themselves in harm's way to keep the public informed. We will always defend journalistic freedom and we oppose all violence, intimidation, censorship, or unlawful arrests meant to silence journalists.

[English]

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Good sentiments, Mr. Speaker, but the industry right now is crying out for help here in Canada. In order to make informed decisions, people need to have access to a free press, and we have less and less of that here in this country. It is troubling to see how the crisis affecting the Canadian media industry has progressed lately. In 10 years, ad shares for newspapers dropped by 45%, and those for the American web giants increased by 358%, and the current government still persists in giving them a 10% to 15% tax advantage by exempting them from collecting sales taxes.

Organizations representing journalists have called on the federal government to take action—

The Speaker: The right hon. Prime Minister.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize today, on World Press Freedom Day, how important it is to support our strong, independent media and to encourage journalists to continue to hold those in power, here and all around the world, to account.

We know that the media world and the press world are facing significant challenges in the transition into this digital era. That is why we are working with them to ensure that, whether it is tens of millions of dollars for a small publication or increasing the funding to CBC—Radio Canada, which the previous government cut, these are things that we are very much continuing to do. We will continue to help them transition into a digital world.

The Speaker: Order. I think there are some noises we can do without.

The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly.

* * *

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, the NDP asked the Prime Minister whether his government was in talks with the Trump administration to create a de facto invisible wall and send asylum seekers back to the United States. He was at such a loss for words that he accused the NDP of fearmongering. Come on.

Has the Prime Minister been paying attention to what we have been saying since January 2017?

Do the Liberals plan on expanding the safe third country agreement, yes or no?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we work regularly with our partners in the United States to secure our borders. We have regular discussions on security and on the integrity of our immigration systems. This is part of being responsible neighbours and partners in keeping North America safe.

With respect to our immigration process, we will always defend the integrity of our values and our laws, and we can assure Canadians that we are enforcing and will continue to enforce Canadian laws to the letter with respect to regular and irregular immigration.

[*English*]

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at committee, CBSA officials stated that applying the safe third country agreement to the entire Canadian border would be more dangerous.

The Minister of Immigration has said that it is not a workable solution. The parliamentary secretary to public safety stated that it would only drive asylum seekers further underground. A Liberal member has warned that this Conservative idea would make Canada a “one-man island where we do not allow others in.”

Will the Prime Minister just clearly state that applying the safe third country agreement to the entire Canadian border is off the table?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, the NDP is trying to create conflicts and conspiracies where there simply are none.

We continue to work in a collaborative, respectful fashion with our partners south of the border to ensure the integrity of Canadian borders, the integrity of our immigration system. We continue to rigorously apply all the rules and laws associated with the immigration system in Canada. We continue to reassure Canadians that everything is done responsibly and properly, both in keeping with the law and with our values of openness and welcome around the world.

* * *

• (1430)

STATUS OF WOMEN

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the federal budget says that all public policy will have a gender-based analysis applied to it. Yet, after five rather awkward minutes of questioning, the finance minister would not answer whether a gender-based analysis had been done for the carbon tax. This was because he was hiding the fact that one had been done. Indeed, it says that the Liberals have produced a sexist carbon tax.

My question is for the Prime Minister. Why has he used his gender budget to gender budget his way to greater inequality for women with his sexist carbon tax?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member opposite's commitment on gender equality. Surely, this is something we can all work to advance together.

As for the member's question about gender-based analysis being conducted, we apply an intersectional gender lens to all items

coming before cabinet. I am sure she has had a chance to look at the price on pollution and the GBA+ that was done on that piece of policy.

Yes, we are so proud that after 151 years, budget 2018 was the first to have that lens applied to all spending.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Here is the thing, Mr. Speaker. Women bear a disproportionate cost of child care. The minister often talks about how there is gender wage gap. However, the minute we start asking if price elasticity for carbon is different for different genders, the Liberal gender budget no longer applies.

To women who are filling up their tank at \$1.60 a litre this week, with more price hikes on the way, could the minister explain why his virtue signalling intersectional gender lens gender budget has produced a sexist carbon tax?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is actually hard to understand whether the member opposite thinks it is a good thing or a bad thing that we look at the gender impacts on all our policies. We did that to carbon pricing, like we do with all the policies.

I want to point out that when the party opposite was in government, it closed 12 out of 16 regional offices of Status of Women Canada. Where was the gender-based analysis of that?

* * *

[*Translation*]

FINANCE

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, after saddling taxpayers and future generations with debt as only Liberal governments have always had the nerve to do, the Prime Minister and his ministers are now censoring their spending. Canadians deserve better and are entitled to clear answers about every penny the Prime Minister spends. They deserve to know when the government will balance the budget.

Why should MPs give the government more power and carte blanche to spend taxpayers' money without telling Canadians where their money is going?

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we respect Parliament and we respect the work of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. In contrast, it was the Conservatives who had to be taken to court by the PBO to get information. It was the same Conservatives who called the PBO “unbelievable”, “unreliable”, and “not credible”. Of course those are the same Conservatives who took millions of dollars from a border infrastructure fund to build gazebos and fake lakes hundreds of kilometres away from the border. The Conservatives were the first government in the British Commonwealth to be found in contempt of Parliament for not giving Parliament the information it deserved. We will take no lessons from the Conservatives.

*Oral Questions***THE ENVIRONMENT**

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, speaking of giving Parliament the information it deserves, I have an idea on how the government could do exactly that.

The government has admitted, through its officials, that it has calculated how much its carbon tax would cost the average Canadian family, but for some reason it will not release it to Parliament, or worse, to the people who have to pay that tax.

Will the government relent today and end the carbon tax cover-up, and tell Canadians what this tax will cost them?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that just this week we released a report, and I am happy to provide a copy of the report, that showed clearly that putting a price on pollution worked. It is a cost-effective way of reducing emissions, and we can do it while growing the economy.

Canadians are wondering what the party opposite would do on climate change, because for a decade it did nothing.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, actually, we did three things. We saw greenhouse gases go down. We reduced taxes. We saw growth go up.

The current government refuses to tell us what this new carbon tax will cost Canadians. We know it will increase the costs of gas, home heating, groceries, and other basic essentials that form a larger part of the household budgets of low-income people than for the rich. In other words, it is a regressive tax that will transfer money from those people who can least afford to pay.

Why will the government not come clean and put an end to the carbon tax cover-up?

• (1435)

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is really important to it make clear in the House that greenhouse gas emissions only went down twice under the previous government: one, because the Ontario government closed coal-fired plants, and the Conservatives cannot take credit—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. I remind members that the time to speak is when they have the floor, not when they do not. That applies to both sides.

The hon. Minister of the Environment has the floor.

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, let me continue. One, emissions went down because the Ontario government phased out coal. The Conservatives cannot take credit for that. Actually, they can take credit for a recession that was created by them. Let us be clear—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Battle River—Crowfoot and others know that the time, as I said, to speak is when they have the floor. There are rules against interrupting. We should wait until we have the floor to speak.

The Minister of the Environment has a few more seconds.

Hon. Catherine McKenna: Mr. Speaker, we have a climate plan. We are going to stick with it. One day maybe Canadians will even see what the Conservatives want to do.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians did see was this. The Prime Minister recently visited Vancouver. When he was asked about the \$1.60 a litre gas price that people there were suffering under and how much that carbon tax would add to it, he essentially said “Let them eat cake”, that if they changed their behaviour, they would not have to pay so much in gas prices and taxes.

Why does he not come clean and tell them how much the cake he is trying to sell them will cost?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not know how many times I can repeat it. Polluting is not free. It is a tax on future generations. I see lots of young people sitting out there wondering what the Conservatives are going to do to tackle climate change. The answer is, apparently, nothing.

We understand there are real costs on Canadians. There are real costs of floods, droughts, and forest fires. It is a tax on future generations to do nothing. That is why we are acting on climate change. I do not know why the Conservatives will not.

* * *

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, a Canadian company is once again attempting to deliver helicopters to the Philippines, but this time it is going through the United States. I have repeatedly asked the government to close the loopholes that allow Canada to avoid scrutiny by exporting arms via the United States. The government's refusal to control that type of sale may be making it possible for Canadian arms to be used in the commission of human rights violations.

Why is the government refusing to tighten controls over arms exports to the United States?

Mr. Matt DeCoursey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government is proud to see Canada once again taking a leadership role by acceding to the Arms Trade Treaty, which is a key step toward preventing conflict caused by the illicit arms trade. Our two countries, Canada and the United States, have historic ties, and it is essential that such matters be addressed through NATO or NORAD. Bill C-47 will give us higher, more rigorous standards regarding the way Canada regulates its arms sales to foreign countries.

*Oral Questions**[English]***CONSULAR AFFAIRS**

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this week we learned the government fought relentlessly to extradite to France a Canadian citizen, Hassan Diab, even as the case was crumbling in the face of scant and unreliable evidence. Mr. Diab spent over three years in near-solitary confinement in a French prison without ever being charged with a crime.

Does the Prime Minister really think we can rely on an internal departmental review, which by definition lacks independence? Will he launch a public inquiry to get to the bottom of this grave injustice and find ways to reform our unacceptable extradition laws?

• (1440)

Mr. Omar Alghabra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Consular Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we advocated on behalf of Mr. Diab at every level on his return to Canada. We are very glad he is back in Canada with his family.

We have read the reports on the involvement of government officials in his extradition. This obviously happened under the previous government. This matter is worth looking into.

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*[Translation]***IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives have always worked hard to ensure the safety of Canadians.

In 2010, we appointed a special advisor on human smuggling and illegal migration, but that advisor retired in 2016. That position has remained vacant ever since. That just shows yet again that the Prime Minister does not take illegal border crossings seriously.

Why is the Prime Minister unable to take this crisis at our borders and in Quebec seriously?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the very serious issue of human trafficking, I am pleased to report to the hon. gentleman that this was a major topic under discussion among G7 ministers of security about a week or 10 days ago.

There was complete consensus among the seven countries, plus the European Union, plus Interpol, that this was an agenda topic for the leaders of the G7 to reinforce. We intend to keep this very prominently on the agenda. To make sure that is the case, the Prime Minister has appointed a gender equality advisory council to reinforce the message.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his answer. I would like him to confirm something since my second question had to do with an unfilled position.

Is my colleague confirming that a special advisor has been appointed to the Privy Council Office to address human smuggling and illegal migration?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the issue of human trafficking is one that we have raised not only with the G7, but also in the context of the policies of the Government of Canada in relation to violence against women, both domestically and internationally.

In broadening out the scope of this very serious topic, it is not only focused upon trafficking, which is in itself serious, but a broad range of issues, which is the topic or the series of topics being addressed by the gender equality advisory council.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, over 45,000 privately sponsored refugees are waiting in the backlog to come to Canada.

Instead of prioritizing the world's most vulnerable, people crossing into Canada from one of the safest countries in the world are getting bumped ahead of the line. The Prime Minister has opened the door wide open to illegal border crossers with his tweet, but will not lift a finger to help those playing by the rules.

Could the Prime Minister explain to those who have been waiting in refugee camps for years how this is fair?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows full well that we are talking about two completely different systems. I would appreciate it if he were more truthful with Canadians.

We have taken meaningful action when it comes to illegal border crossings. We invested \$173 million in the last budget. That is quite a contrast from the previous government, which cut more than \$400 million from border management budgets.

We have also taken steps with our partners, including the different provinces, such as Quebec and Ontario, to ensure that people who cross the border irregularly are processed as soon as possible.

[English]

Hon. Alice Wong (Richmond Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have heard from vulnerable Syrian refugees. They lack resources, such as language training or the ability to find a job in Canada. One woman was begging for someone who could teach her English, and many more are using food banks.

We know these resources will be stretched further with the influx of illegal border crossers who also use these services. How is that fair?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, once again, we are talking about two completely different systems.

Oral Questions

We are very proud of the commitment our government made to welcome 50,000 Syrian refugees to Canada. We will ensure that these Syrian refugees adapt to our reality and to our country. We will give them every means to succeed in our society. We need these people and we know that they actively contribute to our society. We will do everything we can to ensure that they have the services they need to succeed in our society.

* * *

● (1445)

[English]

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Georgina Jolibois (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is a significant concern from members of the Assembly of First Nations that the Liberals' planned indigenous rights legislation will come far too late to matter, and that there will not be enough involvement from first nations people in Canada.

The minister has said that laws in Canada must fully respect the rights of first nations people. Therefore, can the minister tell us when the Liberals are meeting with every first nation and when their legislation will be introduced?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to report on the progress to date and the engagement on the recognition of indigenous rights and the implementation framework.

In over 67 round tables, we have met with over 1,000 people, and 500 of those were women. It is very interesting that, as the member pointed out, some want this done today, because it is all there in volume 2 of RCAP, and some want us to take longer. We are going to do this the right way, and we are going to do it as soon as we can.

[Translation]

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, one of the many promises the Liberals made to indigenous peoples was indigenous languages legislation.

This announcement was made to the chief of the Assembly of First Nations nearly two years ago. Yes, it has been two years. A few days ago, a request for tenders showed up on the government's site to draft this legislation to promote and preserve indigenous languages.

Can the Prime Minister assure us that this legislation will not be doomed to the same fate as his promise on electoral reform?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our relationship with indigenous peoples and nations is our government's most important relationship. I know that the topic of indigenous languages is very important to my colleague, and I would be happy to work with him to ensure that we have solid legislation on indigenous languages.

As he knows, and as you know, Mr. Speaker, we are developing original legislation on indigenous languages that will protect, promote, and revitalize our country's 90 indigenous languages.

[English]

HOUSING

Mr. Shaun Chen (Scarborough North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the national housing strategy is a 10-year, \$40-billion plan to give more Canadians, particularly the most vulnerable Canadians, a place to call home.

Yesterday in Toronto, #TorontoStrong, the government announced the details of one of the key pillars of the national housing strategy: the national housing co-investment fund.

[Translation]

Could the minister responsible for housing tell the House how this co-investment fund will help the federal government work with its partners to move forward on the housing priorities that matter to Canadians?

[English]

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the member for Scarborough North for his great work in helping give more Canadians a safe place to call home. I would also like to congratulate him on his French.

The \$17 billion announced yesterday is going to create wonderful partnership opportunities for all levels of government, as well as the private and social sectors. It is also going to help construct or renovate homes for 300,000 families.

[Translation]

Working together, we will provide more safe and affordable housing to middle-class families and those working hard to join it.

* * *

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last week, an unknown number of ISIS computer servers were seized in Canada. According to the Minister of Public Safety's own department, terrorists such as ISIS "continue to use the internet to recruit new members and radicalize people".

It is therefore shocking that the Liberals have actually removed criminal penalties for promoting terrorism in their new national security bill. When the threat on Canadian soil is so real, why are the Liberals removing criminal penalties for the promotion of terrorism?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. gentleman misunderstands the effect of the legislation.

What is in the existing law is a provision that is virtually impossible to enforce. What we have done is propose wording that would change that to more familiar criminal procedures that have a greater likelihood of success in stopping the very conduct he complains about.

Oral Questions

•(1450)

Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC): Mr. Speaker, they can enforce what they want. It is a question of political will. That is it.

[Translation]

Canada recently took part in a joint police operation with its allies to combat international terrorism, specifically that perpetrated by ISIS. The purpose of the operation was to undermine the power of the terrorist group's propaganda machine by seizing countless software programs and Internet servers all over the world. The operation was laudable and necessary, but in matters of counter-terrorism, we must attack on all fronts.

Why is the Liberal government eliminating criminal penalties for terrorists right here on Canadian soil in Bill C-59?

[English]

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that line of reasoning is quite simply Conservative propaganda. The fact of the matter is that we are changing the wording of the legislation to make it more effective, to put in place an offence that is more familiar within our criminal justice system and has a greater likelihood of success in terms of proving the offence and getting a conviction. We want success on that front, not just baffleab.

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FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the chair of Aecon and one of its chief financiers wrote an editorial in *The Globe and Mail* praising the Aecon takeover by a Chinese state-owned enterprise. They said it would be as amazing as the takeover of Australia's John Holland Group, the same John Holland Group that has been involved in the botched construction of a children's hospital in Australia, with asbestos in the roof, shoddy construction, lead in the water, and inexperienced contractors.

Will the Prime Minister listen to his corporate insiders, who would gain from this takeover, or will he listen to Canadian national security officials and cancel the deal?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government welcomes international investment that will benefit the Canadian economy, but not at the expense of national security. The Investment Canada Act contains a multistep review process that includes a national security review, which we always follow for all international investments in Canada. It is a rigorous process. It is undertaken with the government's national security agencies, and we rely on their very good advice.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when Australian construction firm John Holland was bought by a Chinese state-owned enterprise, the result was a children's hospital built with asbestos in the roof and lead in the water. Despite this, China's envoy to Canada said that it would be immoral for Canadians to question the takeover of Aecon by the same Chinese state-owned enterprise that built the botched hospital.

Does the industry minister agree that it is immoral to question the takeover of Aecon, or will he take the concerns of Canadians seriously?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government listens to Canadians at every step of the way. We have done it since we were elected, and we will continue to do it.

As regards the Investment Canada Act, there is a multistep process in place that includes a national security review. We will never compromise national security, and investments are accepted in Canada at this level only when they are a net benefit to the Canadian economy. All of those principles will abide.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, plastics are entering our waters, entering our food chain, and ending up on our dinner plates. This is a global issue, but Canada has no national policy, and the Liberals' oceans protection plan does not even mention the word "plastic". How can the Prime Minister say he wants to lead the G7 discussion on ocean plastics, when he has done nothing about it?

My motion, Motion No. 151, addresses this regulatory and legislative gap. Will the Prime Minister support my motion and take immediate action to clean up plastic pollution in our waters?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I absolutely agree. We need to do more to reduce single-use plastics, which are ending up in our oceans. It is a travesty. I have gone to the High Arctic, and I have actually seen birds with pieces of plastic inside them.

We know we need to do better. We need to be doing that in conjunction with provinces and territories. We are convening a meeting with provinces and territories to make advances so we can have a robust regime to stop this from happening.

* * *

FISHERIES AND OCEANS

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, marine plastic pollution needs action, not meetings.

As another busy boating season begins in B.C., the abandoned vessel problem remains unsolved. Coastal communities have been calling for a comprehensive solution for a decade. They are done waiting. Following the NDP's lead, Parliament agreed to fast-track Bill C-64 to committee. However, since it was sent back to the House on March 2, the government has dropped anchor on the bill. Will the minister commit to amending the bill to include what coastal communities actually want, and stop stalling?

Oral Questions

•(1455)

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are extremely proud of Bill C-64. We are the first government to take concrete action to deal with the issue of abandoned and wrecked vessels. In fact, I went to British Columbia, to my colleague's riding of Ladysmith, if I am not mistaken, and announced that nine boats are going to be removed from the water there. We will be doing this on a regular basis.

We are also going to ratify the Nairobi convention, which is another powerful tool to deal with owners so they take responsibility for their vessels.

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DEMOCRATIC REFORM

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first the Prime Minister tried to change Canadians' electoral system without letting them have a say. Then he tried to silence the opposition in Parliament. Now he is trying to change the elections law to benefit the Liberal Party. He wants to use voter information cards as a proof of address when, in the last election, nearly one million erroneous cards were mailed out. Canadians have seen through his tricks before, and they will once again.

Why does the Prime Minister want to see Canadians show ID to buy marijuana, but not in order to vote?

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with Bill C-76, our government is making it easier for Canadians to vote, and tougher to break the rules. The defeated Harper Conservatives, on the other hand, made it tougher for Canadians to vote, and they broke the rules. We will not take lessons from the defeated Harper Conservatives—

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Scott Brison: Mr. Speaker, Canadians applauded, too, when the Conservatives were defeated.

We will not take lessons from a party that paid a \$250,000 fine for breaking the law, that used robocalls to send people to the wrong polls—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Banff—Airdrie.

Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, leave it to the Liberals to claim to fix a problem but instead make it worse. There have been numerous claims about millions of dollars in foreign funding being funnelled into third party groups in the last election. Conservatives have raised this problem time and time again. What do the Liberals do? They do absolutely nothing. Under their new legislation, foreign funds can still flow into Canada to influence our elections.

Why do the Liberals not do something that is not just window dressing and actually protect the integrity of our elections?

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am awfully glad the hon. member had a supplementary question, because there are so many things the Conservatives did to attack our electoral system that I needed more time. In fact, the parliamentary secretary to their prime minister went to jail for breaking election rules. The Conservatives attacked our democratic system; the Liberals are strengthening it. That is what Bill C-76

would do, making it easier for Canadians to vote, while strengthening our democratic system. More people voting is good for our democratic system.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will take no lessons from the Liberals on democratic reform. They will not listen to anyone. The Canada Elections Act has been working just fine so far. What do the Liberals do whenever something is working just fine? They find a way to mess it up. With the election just 18 months away, they are only too happy to confuse voters. Across the country, Canadians must identify themselves with at least one piece of official identification, with no exceptions and not excluding anyone.

Why are the Liberals—

The Speaker: The hon. President of the Treasury Board.

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are strengthening Canada's democratic institutions with Bill C-76, and we are increasing Canadians' trust and participation in our electoral process. We are increasing the transparency of the electoral process. We are making elections more accessible to Canadians, including Canadians with disabilities. We are making the electoral process more secure and ensuring that political parties protect the privacy of Canadian citizens. Our government is strengthening the democratic institutions that the Conservatives actually attacked throughout their time in government.

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[*Translation*]**EMPLOYMENT**

Mr. Raj Saini (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government knows that Canada's biggest strength is its resilient, hard-working people. Innovation and technology continue to change the way we live and work. The people of Kitchener Centre, Ontario, and Canada are facing new challenges and new opportunities.

•(1500)

[*English*]

More than ever before, opportunities must be available to acquire the skills needed for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Can the minister tell the House what our government is doing to ensure that Ontarians and all Canadians get the skills they need?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Kitchener Centre for his question and continued advocacy when it comes to skills training.

[Translation]

Yesterday, I was proud to announce agreements between the federal government and the Government of Ontario that will make it possible for Canada to invest over \$6 billion in Ontario workers.

[English]

These agreements represent an increase in funding of over \$800 million and will have 180,000 more Canadian Ontarians get the jobs and skills training they need to succeed. These agreements will increase access to training programs, work placements, employer-sponsored training, job search assistance, career counselling, and—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Durham.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the uranium nuclear deal provided billions of dollars to Iran and granted it access to the SWIFT financial system, which experts agree have helped Iran fund terror operations across the Middle East.

This week Israel revealed intelligence that shows that Iran lied about the extent of its nuclear program when the 2015 deal was struck. Since this agreement was built upon the sands of deception, will this government work with the atomic energy agency and our allies to have the deal with Iran revisited?

Mr. Matt DeCourcey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as all G7 foreign ministers agreed to last week, Canada is committed to permanently ensuring that Iran's nuclear program remains exclusively peaceful and in line with its non-proliferation obligations and its commitments under the joint comprehensive plan of action.

We strongly support the International Atomic Energy Agency and its crucial monitoring and verification work to help ensure Iran's compliance with this joint comprehensive plan of action as well as other commitments, which include safeguards and other obligations. We are a key supporter of the IAEA and have provided \$11.5 million to support its—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

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PRIVACY

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Cambridge Analytica scandal continues as the company and its parent, SCL, have folded up operations, but the main players have just put a new name on the door, Emerdata, and they have disturbing connections to both the Chinese government and international mercenaries.

This morning, at the ethics committee, we received an urgent letter from the data security firm UpGuard urging legislators to ensure that the potential data trail of electoral crimes is not erased.

To the chair of the ethics committee, what steps will he take to ensure that the data is obtained from host servers used by SCL's Canadian operation, AggregateIQ?

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today my office has made data

Oral Questions

preservation requests, and I am compelling Cambridge Analytica, SCL, AggregateIQ, and any third-party vendor to produce information related to the Cambridge Analytica Facebook data breach.

We are also working with the U.K. Information Commissioner, who has already raided the offices of Cambridge Analytica and seized data. We are also working with the Privacy Commissioner in Canada, who is already working on the file, working on Canadians' behalf to see what is really going on with Canadians' data breach.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what is the Prime Minister's word worth? That is what Davie shipyard workers are wondering. He promised them four ice breakers in January, and they are still waiting.

It is his responsibility to make this happen and to keep his word. Elected officials in Chaudière-Appalaches are frustrated with the Liberal government's inaction and are calling for immediate action.

Why is the Prime Minister breaking his promise and why is he making Quebec and Davie shipyard workers wait?

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge the excellent work done by workers at the Davie shipyard. We remain involved in discussions, negotiations, and reviews. We cannot discuss the details in the House, but I can assure my colleague that the discussions are ongoing.

* * *

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette, GPQ): Mr. Speaker, spring is finally here. The days are getting warmer, people's minds turn to their vacations, and we see the return of a phenomenon that is wholly without scientific basis: when the mercury rises, so does the price of gas. Nobody can discern a causal link between the two, but they inevitably rise together, peaking just before summer break.

In the face of such a mystery, some suspect the oil companies of scheming to raise the price of gas.

Will the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development order the Competition Bureau to investigate gas prices?

• (1505)

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are aware of the situation and we will continue to monitor what is happening. We will take action if we need to. For the time being, we are just monitoring the situation.

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, GPQ): Mr. Speaker, of course the Liberals are aware of this.

Business of the House

Anyone can ask the Competition Bureau to investigate gas prices. However, only one person can order it to do so and that is the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development.

Every year, oil companies conspire to pick our pockets. Every year, we ask the federal government to step in. Every year, the federal government leaves Canadians high and dry.

Today, we wrote the minister demanding that he take responsibility.

Will the minister finally order an investigation into the eminently suspicious process of gasoline pricing?

Mr. David Lametti (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

I would like to remind the House that the Competition Bureau is an independent agency, and as such, it will be following its own processes.

As previously stated, the government will continue to monitor the situation.

* * *

[English]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saenich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday Canada lost, yet again, in a challenge we made in Federal Court against a secret chapter 11 tribunal that had overturned a very fair, full, and robust review of the Digby Neck quarry. The company, Bilcon, went from losing to the Nova Scotia Conservative government to the federal Conservative government. It went for \$570 million. It looks like it is now going to get it.

Will the Prime Minister agree that it is time to work with the United States in these renegotiations and get chapter 11 out of NAFTA?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our priority since day one has been to help the Canadian middle class and those working hard to join it. We will continue to advance an agenda that seeks to improve NAFTA, including on issues such as trade and gender, trade and indigenous peoples, labour, environment, and investment.

As we work toward modernizing NAFTA, we will vigorously pursue and defend Canadian interests, but we will not be negotiating in public. We are looking for a good deal for Canada, one that will continue to make North America competitive for years to come.

* * *

[Translation]

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, our border has become a sieve. The government must suspend the safe third country agreement to stop the chaos with asylum seekers at our borders. Even the Association québécoise des avocats et avocates en droit de l'immigration is calling for this. Section 10 exists so that the agreement can be suspended if necessary. We do not even need permission.

Will the government step up and suspend the safe third country agreement?

Mr. Serge Cormier (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we have said many times, Canada is an open and welcoming country. In the past week, a number of parties have proposed different ideas regarding the safe third country agreement. I think this shows that they do not understand the agreement.

The safe third party agreement is a very important tool used by Canada and the United States to work together to process asylum claims. It is an essential part of our immigration system. Once again, the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees stated that the agreement is still being complied with. We will continue to work in collaboration with the United States.

* * *

[English]

PRESENCE IN GALLERY

The Speaker: I would like to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Bruce Ralston, Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology for the Province of British Columbia.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ben Lobb: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I understand that during debate in this House, sometimes questions may be asked and answers may come out not exactly how ministers would hope. During question period today, though, I think you will find, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, when giving an answer, provided a few reasons why the emissions numbers dropped during our time. One of the claims the minister made during that answer was that it was the Canadian government that was the cause of the worldwide economic crisis and depression. I would like to give her an opportunity to set the record straight and just say that maybe she was wrong in her facts.

● (1510)

The Speaker: That does sound like debate.

I believe the hon. opposition House leader has the usual Thursday question.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I ask the Thursday question, I do want to just express my gratitude to the government House leader and to all our Liberal and our other colleagues for the way they responded yesterday after the sudden passing of our colleague, Gord Brown. I thank them for their response.

*Government Orders***GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[English]***OIL TANKER MORATORIUM ACT**

In regard to the business coming up, I want to specifically ask, if I could, about Bill C-76. There are some rumours that the government may be deciding to try to fast-track the bill in some way or another, so I hope that the government House leader can please clarify that the government will indeed not do that. Given the potential impact of Bill C-76 on our democracy, it is very important that sufficient time be allotted. In fact, the House would welcome a commitment from the government that respects the intent of a Liberal motion introduced and previously proposed by the House leader's colleague, the Liberal member for Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame. This Liberal motion, proposed on April 10, 2014, sought to limit the government's ability to shut down debate on a bill regarding elections and our democracy.

That was a Liberal motion. I would ask if the government House leader could give us the update on what the business of the week will be, keeping that in mind and respecting the need we all have to debate important bills around democracy with sufficient time.

[Translation]

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will resume third reading debate on Bill C-48 on the oil tanker moratorium. The debate shall continue tomorrow.

On Monday, we will start report stage and third reading of Bill C-65 on harassment. Tuesday will be an allotted day.

[English]

Next Wednesday, in accordance with the order adopted on April 26, the House will resolve itself into a committee of the whole following question period to welcome the athletes of the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympic and Paralympic Games. Afterward, the House will proceed with debate at report stage and third reading of Bill C-21, an act to amend the Customs Act.

Next Thursday, we will only begin the debate of Bill C-76, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act. As members have heard in this House numerous times, we are committed to seeing more people participate in democracy. I have always committed to ensuring that there is a reasonable amount of time to debate and also to ensure that the committee can do its work. Therefore, I look forward to hearing from all parties how much time is needed so that we can continue to ensure that legislation is advanced in a timely fashion.

Just quickly, Mr. Speaker, I want the opposition House leader and all colleagues to know that this is our parliamentary family, and we are always going to be here to work together. We know that in the days and weeks and years to come, there might be times that we need to lean on each other, and we will always be here to do that, and I know the opposition does the same. We sincerely appreciate those kind words today. Our thoughts and prayers are with the members.

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-48, An Act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia's north coast, be read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport has 11 minutes remaining in her speech and debate.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were talking about the improvements in technology and the changes we see that will actually help to protect our coasts and how much we are actually working to encourage research and to encourage the development of technology partnerships with the marine industry, with academia, with other federal departments and other governments to continue to work with us to develop innovative solutions that enable the official movement of goods and at the same time protect the marine environment. These partnerships are essential to enable us to share the latest innovations in research, knowledge, and intelligence on new technologies and to also encourage skills capacity for an increasingly knowledge-based economy.

Accordingly, the Government of Canada will strengthen the polluter pay principle by strengthening the Canadian ship-source oil pollution fund. We want to ensure adequate industry-funded compensation is available for those affected by oil spills. This includes removing the fund's current limit and providing unlimited compensation to those affected by an oil pollution incident. When compensation is beyond what is currently available, funds will be recovered by a levy on the companies that import and export oil by ship. The changes to the ship-source oil pollution fund will position Canada as a world leader among ship source liability and compensation regimes.

I should point out that Canada has a long-standing tradition of multilateralism related to international shipping. Canada is a founding member of the International Maritime Organization, the UN agency that regulates the world's maritime shipping. Canada also has a proud history of working closely with the International Maritime Organization to advance standards that promote maritime safety and security, protect the environment, and safeguard seafarers.

The Government of Canada will continue to contribute to the comprehensive body of international conventions supported by hundreds of recommendations governing every facet of shipping. In fact, as part of the oceans protection plan, the Government of Canada will strengthen its leadership role internationally. This includes playing an active role in developing international marine safety standards with the International Maritime Organization and other international partners.

Government Orders

As a trading nation, Canada relies on a safe and secure maritime transportation system to support our economic growth. A wide variety of cargo is transported through Canada's marine transportation system, from food and consumer goods to energy resources. Marine transportation is the primary means of transporting Canada's trade with other countries other than the United States. It is critical for economic growth in Canada which has provided us with one of the highest standards of living in the world.

The moratorium will continue to allow critical local resupply activities and still enable communities to develop economically. The moratorium does not apply to lighter oils such as gasoline, propane, or jet fuel that local communities and industries rely upon, nor will it apply to liquefied natural gas. Accordingly, opportunities remain open for the continued shipment of non-persistent oils.

Further, once passed by Parliament, the Governor in Council will have authority under the act to amend through regulation the schedule of persistent oils should future innovations and technological developments in the transportation of these products offer a significantly higher level of protection for our waters.

Amendments to the schedule could be considered following a regulatory review that would assess new scientific evidence about the fate and behaviour of petroleum products when spilled, cleanup technologies, and the state of institutional arrangements to respond to ship-source oil spills.

• (1515)

The schedule could only be revised through the regulatory amendment process. Environmental safety and science would be the primary considerations for any changes to the schedule.

Always keeping an opening for new technology and scientific development is testament to our commitment not only to protecting the environment but also to fostering innovation in the marine industry.

We are committed to demonstrating that a clean environment and a strong economy can go hand in hand, and that is why Bill C-48 is so important to all Canadians. The moratorium is but one of a suite of actions that the government is taking that will strengthen environmental protection, instilling confidence in Canadians that it is possible to have economic growth and to protect the environment, because this is not an either-or proposition.

I have a list of those who have demonstrated and expressed strong support for the passage of Bill C-48, the oil tanker moratorium act. It is quite an exhaustive list: Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Dogwood Initiative, Friends of Wild Salmon Coalition, Haida Gwaii, North West Watch, Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition, SkeenaWild, and Stand.earth, and there are many more.

We remain open to enable future innovation and technological developments in the transportation of oil that offer a significantly higher level of protection for our waters today and for future generations.

I hope I can count on the support of all hon. members to establish in law an oil tanker moratorium on the north coast of British

Columbia. Let us work together so we can continue to create a sustainable future for the generations that will follow.

• (1520)

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary mentioned a list of supporters of this oil tanker ban. I noticed that the Dogwood Initiative was in that list. Is that the same organization the Liberal government gave a grant to for a summer job to stop the Kinder Morgan pipeline?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, we really believe that consultation is actually the key to coming up with the best solution. It is about having those conversations. It is about hearing from all sides of the debate. It does not mean we should just restrict ourselves to one or another perspective. It is important that we get all those different perspectives. That will help us come up with the best solutions as we move forward.

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's comments on the northern tanker ban.

One of the elements the government has introduced is the oceans protection plan to look at how we protect our coastal communities. We have heard a lot about this so-called oceans protection plan.

One of the concerns is the technology that is supposed to exist to clean up dilbit. We just heard the question about Kinder Morgan and the proposal that would bring that diluted bitumen to the coast. It would bring a sevenfold increase of tanker traffic to the Vancouver port.

I am wondering if the hon. member could tell the House about the technology in the oceans protection plan that exists to clean up and deal with that toxic dilbit.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, that is an important question.

We believe that the technology will be developed. Earlier in this session, the transportation committee heard from a company that is actually proposing to take bitumen and press it into pucks, then cover them with a polymer coating. That will make it much safer to transport.

There are technological developments, both in spill cleanup and in how we are actually going to move this product. We will be seeing some of those coming onto the market very soon.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague talks about this tanker moratorium off the west coast. Why is there such a difference in opinion from the west coast to the east coast? Let us put this in perspective.

In comparison, almost 4,000 tankers a day come through off the coast of New Brunswick down the St. Lawrence, many of those carrying oil from regions such as Nigeria and Saudi Arabia, which certainly have much worse human rights records and environmental standards. There are no problems with tankers coming down the east coast, but let us go to the west coast, where we have less than 200 tankers a day and less than 2% of the commercial tanker traffic off the west coast carries oil and bitumen.

Government Orders

Why is there such a difference with what we are doing on the east coast but we are more than happy to debilitate energy investment development off the west coast?

• (1525)

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, it is important to look at the statistics, not just as a grand number, but what percentage of those vessels on the east coast are carrying persistent oils. As I said, this does not preclude transportation of gasoline and jet fuel, but it does provide protections for those more persistent oils.

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier this week when the Minister of Transport was speaking to this piece of legislation, he indicated that one does not need to live on the coast to appreciate how valuable this act would be on the environment, economy, and people in the area of British Columbia. At that time, I mentioned that my daughter is an Earth Rangers ambassador, trying to save the Oregon spotted frog. Many of our children understand that we need to really protect the environment.

I am wondering if my hon. colleague could answer how this particular piece of legislation complements the oceans protection plan, the \$1.3 billion we are investing in biodiversity, one of the largest and most significant investments in nature conservation in Canada's history.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely right. It is not just a one issue deal. It is not just one bill. It is not just a single proposal we are implementing. It is to deal with conservation. It is important. It is to deal with preservation. That is something that had been ignored.

What we want to do is actually prevent accidents from happening. That is why there are investments in the oceans protection plan. That is why there are investments in conservation activities. It is the key to our future, and I believe the young people want us to do this kind of work.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am going to use my time to put a question to the parliamentary secretary, and in the context of that, answer the question from the member for Foothills.

This ban on the north coast of British Columbia against large oil tankers has been in place since 1972. It was only under the previous prime minister, Mr. Harper, that it was removed. It was honoured by every government, including Progressive Conservative governments, from 1972 up to 2012.

I am originally from Cape Breton, and I asked those questions early on, and the reason it is different from the east coast has a lot to do with the intense ocean current action of the Hecate Strait and Dixon Entrance. The ocean current in these areas is far more intense than in any of our coastal areas off Atlantic Canada. As well, geographically, Haida Gwaii, what we used to call the Queen Charlotte Islands, is right up against those channels. It is far too dangerous to have oil tankers on that coast, and the tankers on the B. C. coast are the only ones shipping dilbit. None in Atlantic Canada ship dilbit, which cannot be cleaned up.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her education. I appreciate knowing that.

Knowing what the product being transported is, knowing how it is going to act when it hits the water, and knowing how currents are going to affect that product are absolutely key. We are undertaking that research to make sure we understand what that product would do, but we are not done yet.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was listening attentively to the commentary and the back-and-forth of the different questions and answers. As far as I know, this is a tanker ban, really a pipeline ban in northern British Columbia. It is just moving the traffic 100 kilometres further to the west.

The member opposite talked about doing this for the purpose of conservation. However, section 6 of the act gives cabinet the ability to give a blanket exception for any reason to allow the tanker traffic to continue. Therefore, it cannot be about conservation when the government gives itself a mechanism to do the exact opposite of that plan. I think that does matter.

Why would the government approve a pipeline like Trans Mountain when it means, in the name of conservation, to eliminate any traffic closer to the coast? Why would it not do it on the southern coast as well? Is there a difference in value between the two?

• (1530)

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Mr. Speaker, it is my belief that the possibility for an exception is under extraordinary circumstances. If something changes, if there is an emergency, if technology changes so drastically that something needs to be adjusted, then it can be adjusted. However, a lot of homework needs to be done before something like that can be considered. The cabinet would have that ability. If there is some kind of emergency that it needs to address, it can do so. It is a very worthwhile piece of that legislation.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-48 is one part of the Liberals' plan to phase out Canada's oil and the jobs of hundreds of thousands of Canadians whose livelihoods depend both directly and indirectly on Canadian energy. The Canadian Energy Research Institute has said that every job created in Canadian upstream oil and gas results in the creation of two indirect and three induced jobs in other sectors. From engineers in Edmonton to steel manufacturers in Hamilton and refinery workers in Sarnia and Saint John, Canada's economy depends on Canadian energy.

Canada can and should play a major role in the global future of oil and gas, for which demand will continue to grow. Of the world's top 10 oil and gas producers, Canada and the United States are the only two Liberal democracies, yet these Liberals' policies are suffocating Canada's energy sector while the others thrive.

Government Orders

Canada has long been the world's most environmentally and socially responsible oil and gas producer. The Liberals should champion Canada's expertise, innovation, and regulatory know-how. The Liberals should be proud of Canada's track record and of Canada's future in oil and gas, instead of imposing policies and laws to phase it out, like this tanker ban.

As developing countries modernize and the world's middle class grows, oil and natural gas will continue to be the most significant sources for meeting global energy needs. Therefore, the world needs more Canadian energy, and the world wants Canadian oil and gas.

The Liberals constantly undermine Canada's energy sector. They killed energy east with red tape and rural changes and outright vetoed the approved northern gateway pipeline. While the Trans Mountain expansion is at risk and a full-blown crisis is escalating, the Liberals are imposing Bill C-48 to ban on and off loading of crude and persistent oils on ports on B.C.'s north coast, which will cut Canada off from the most efficient route to the Asia Pacific and prevent any new energy infrastructure opportunities to the region. The International Energy Agency estimates that in the past five years, 69% of global oil demand growth has been in the Asia Pacific and that is expected to grow for decades. Canada needs to supply that demand because the United States is both Canada's biggest energy customer and competitor.

However, Bill C-48 is an intentional government-created roadblock that deprives Canadians of potential benefits. The bill will permanently prevent any opportunities for pipelines to transport environmentally and socially-responsible Canadian oil to the Prince Rupert-Kitimat area, where it could reach the rapidly growing Asia Pacific.

Deliberately limiting Canada's export potential by blocking access to tidewater risks the livelihoods of Canadians everywhere. It will put very real limits on future prosperity. Reaching tidewater in all directions for Canada's oil and gas should be a pressing priority. It makes no sense to delay or to equivocate on this from an economic, environmental or moral perspective. Stopping Canadian oil cedes market share to countries where standards, enforcement, and outcomes do not measure up to Canada's performance, to many corrupt regimes with abysmal environmental and human rights records where energy development only benefits a select and wealthy few.

A 2014 WorleyParsons study comparing major oil and gas producing jurisdictions confirmed that Canada maintained the highest level of environmental stringency and compliance, the highest level of regulatory transparency, life-cycle analysis, community consultation, and collaboration with indigenous people in the world. That conclusion echoed several major benchmarking assessments before it. I note that was before the last 2015 election.

Every time the Liberals attack Canada's track record of energy and environmental assessment and evaluation, they empower and embolden anti-Canadian energy activists who are fighting to shut down Canadian oil and gas and exports. That is how the Liberals have created the mess they are in, picking and choosing which energy projects to defend and to attack. For the Liberals, this is about politics, not about facts. Here are the facts.

The safety track record of Canada's energy infrastructure and transportation systems, including pipelines and tankers, has also long been world-leading. The evidence shows tankers have safely and regularly transported crude oil from Canada's west coast since the 1930s.

The previous Conservative government implemented a suite of strong measures to create a world-class tanker safety system, modernized Canada's navigation system, enhanced response planning and marine safety capacity for first nations communities, and ensured that polluters paid for spills and damages on all coasts. Canada already has industry-leading regulations with standards well beyond other jurisdictions on all aspects of tanker safety, pipeline safety, prevention, and response. The Liberals are building on that work.

The average response time of the Western Canada Marine Response Corporation has been 60 minutes for the last 10 years. The Canadian Shipping Act requires this corporation to have the capacity to clean up 10,000 tonnes of oil in 10 days. The largest marine spill to ever occur was on the east coast.

• (1535)

Chief Isaac Laboucan-Avirom of the Woodland Cree First Nation said, "What I don't understand about this tanker moratorium is that there's no other tanker moratorium on other coastlines in Canada. You have oil coming in from Saudi Arabia, up and down the St. Lawrence River right now."

Therefore, when it comes to tankers bringing in foreign oil along the St. Lawrence River, the answer is yes. When it comes to oil tankers delivering oil from Saudi Arabia to the Irving oil refinery in New Brunswick, the answer is yes. When it comes to continuing operations on offshore oil rigs off the coast of Newfoundland, the answer is yes, but of course not in northern offshore areas near the Northwest Territories, which the Liberals banned against the will of the premier. However, when it comes to opportunities to expand market access, create well-paying jobs for all Canadians, and millions of dollars in economic opportunity for indigenous communities, the answer from the Liberals is no, phase it out.

Government Orders

During a transport committee testimony, first nations were given only 30 minutes to share their opposition to the tanker ban, and spoke of their investment in the Eagle Spirit pipeline project, a \$17 billion indigenous-owned corridor and what had been called “the largest first nations endeavour in the world”, which could secure economic opportunities, social benefits, and reduce poverty for at least 35 first nations for generations to come. Bill C-48 would undermine the hard work and aspirations of those first nations. It might drive their project into the U.S. too, chasing even more energy investment across the border.

During the committee meeting, which was the only consultation the Liberals offered with directly impacted first nations, Calvin Helin, the chairman and president of Eagle Spirit Energy and a member of the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation, said that the 35 first nations supporting the project, “do not like outsiders, particularly those they view as trust-fund babies coming into the traditional territories they've governed and looked after for over 10,000 years and dictating government policy in their territory.”

Calvin said:

...we set up a chiefs council that represented all of the chiefs from Alberta all the way out to the B.C. coast. They have had a position with a lot of power and control over the environmental aspects and over the project in general, so it was a fairly high hurdle that we sought to meet. They were so satisfied with the environmental model we put forward that they voluntarily voted at their first meeting to support an energy corridor.

The Prime Minister says that the relationship with Canada's indigenous people is the most important to him and that he wants “an opportunity to deliver true, meaningful and lasting reconciliation.” However, his words do not match his actions. This legislation, dictated by the Prime Minister, would block wealth and opportunity for first nations communities.

Gary Alexcee, vice-chair of the Eagle Spirit chiefs council, said:

With no consultation, the B.C. first nations groups have been cut off economically with no opportunity to even sit down with the government to further negotiate Bill C-48. If that's going to be passed, then I would say we might as well throw up our hands and let the government come and put blankets on us that are infected with smallpox so we can go away. That's what this bill means to us...Today, the way it sits, we have nothing but handouts that are not even enough to have the future growth of first nations in our communities of British Columbia.

Less than a month after the last election, the Prime Minister directed ministers to work toward this tanker ban. However, the Prime Minister also said that his Liberals would “ensure that decisions are based on science, facts, and evidence, and serve the public's interest...”. How does the Prime Minister expect Canadians to believe that he consulted indigenous communities, industry, and experts with comprehensive assessments of existing environmental and safety records, standards, outcomes, gaps, and comparative analysis of marine traffic rules, enforcement and track records on all Canadian coasts and internationally, and thorough local, regional, and national economic impact in less than a single month? It is a sham anyway, targeting docking and loading at ports of Canadian oil, not banning any other vessels of any other kind or from any other countries. Unfortunately, it is a pattern. Because despite all the talk, voter coalitions, politics, and ideology drive the Liberals' predetermined conclusions, not evidence, facts or consultations.

Alarmingly, foreign funds and interests have also influenced this bill. Before the 2015 election, the Oak Foundation, based in

Switzerland, gave a \$97,000 grant to the West Coast Environmental Law group to campaign for a change in government, with the express purpose of constraining Canadian oil and gas development “through a legislative ban on crude oil tankers on British Columbia's north coast.”

The West Coast Environmental Law website says:

WCEL aims to establish the conditions under which...opposition parties holding a parliamentary majority work together to enact a legislative tanker ban under a minority government and/or incorporate a ban promise into their manifestos, committing them to act following an election that produces a majority government...

Calvin Helin said:

What the chiefs are starting to see a lot now is that there is a lot of underhanded tactics and where certain people are paid in communities and they are used as spokespersons...Essentially (they are) puppets and props...to kill resource development...

He went on to say that it was outrageous and people should be upset about it, that the chiefs were upset.

Eagle Spirit's indigenous leaders say the tanker ban is the result of a lobby campaign by foreign-financed environmental groups. Notably, some of these groups were also involved in a coordinated opposition to the Pacific Northwest LNG project, which the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation members also supported and welcomed after meeting environmental assurances and getting more information, another project that was killed under the government's watch.

● (1540)

The port of the project was to go straight into their traditional territory. Their community has a municipal-like government whose leaders are elected, while their original tribes are represented by the Lax Kw'alaams Hereditary Chiefs' Council.

Calvin Helin wrote:

It turns out the Seattle-based Wilberforce Foundation financially supported a local environmental extremist who posed as a hereditary Chief of the Gitwilgoots tribe.

The Nine Tribes publicly clarified the misrepresentation in May 2016. It was later settled in court.

Calvin Helin went on:

The rightful hereditary leadership who had been governing their territory for over ten thousand years were shocked that an outside environmental organization would seek to essentially overthrow their ancient leadership structure....

Another quote:

Wilberforce, the California-based Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Hawaii-based Sustainable Fisheries Partnership and others have poured money into anti-LNG campaigns in B.C., as they funded opposition to oilsands development before them. Indeed, the record suggests the long project to establish...the Great Bear Rainforest was a strategy to stop hydrocarbon exports from western Canada, even as U.S. sources ramped up production.

Government Orders

One of the same groups involved in the anti-LNG campaign pushed the Liberals' tanker ban and opposition to the proposed Eagle Spirit project while claiming to be representatives of the Lax Kw'alaams.

In September 2016 the chiefs' council said:

[it] does not sanction inviting professional protestors from non-governmental organizations, and non-Lax Kw'alaams First Nations members into their traditional lands in breach of ancient tribal protocols. Conversely, the Nine Tribes of Lax Kw'alaams would never go into another First Nation's territory without first obtaining their permission. The unauthorized action by this renegade group has created needless confusion, damages tribal unity, and is insulting to tribal members.

However, here is the point: when the Liberals, along with the NDP and green activists, propose legislation like Bill C-48 to appease those groups, they undermine the will of first nations and their elected leadership. They talk of consultation and reconciliation, but their attack on economic opportunities and their failure to consult and listen to directly impacted indigenous people are the height of hypocrisy. Mayor John Helin, Calvin's brother, is forced to spend time and resources fighting this coalition and Bill C-48 in court.

It is stunning to hear Canadian politicians speak of the poverty and socio-economic challenges experienced disproportionately by indigenous Canadians while deliberately using every possible means to block financial opportunities for them and to undermine all their efforts to secure agreements to benefit communities, their youth, and their future.

Five hundred of the 630 first nations in Canada are open to pipelines and to oil and gas development. For example, Fort McKay, near the Athabasca oil sands, has an unemployment rate of zero and financial holdings in excess of \$2 billion.

There are 327 indigenous-owned enterprises in Alberta alone that do business with oil and gas operations. Oil sands businesses have conducted more than \$10 billion of business with first nations-owned companies.

Chief Jim Boucher of the Fort McKay First Nation says:

We have a different view of the oil sands industry than other people who are not close to our neighbourhood. A lot of people are making judgment calls in regards to what they see and hear from environmental groups, which is really contrary to what we believe and what we see in our region.

Responsible oil sands development is a key driver of Alberta's and Canada's economies and creates employment. Even as recently as 2014, nine out of every 10 new full-time jobs created in Canada were created in Alberta, bringing tax revenue for all levels of government to support the social programs and capital infrastructure projects on which everyone depends.

However, Alberta continues to face obstacles to move oil to markets, hostage to the myth that a broad-based carbon tax on everything will buy support for pipelines. Instead, it will disproportionately harm the economy and make it harder for vulnerable, low-income, working poor Canadians everywhere,

This narrative is especially toxic because Alberta was actually the first jurisdiction in all of North America to regulate and report emissions, to set targets for reduction across all sectors, and to implement a targeted carbon levy on major industrial emitters. That was more than a decade ago.

Oil sands developers and workers have led the world in improving sustainable production, enhancing energy efficiency, and minimizing the footprint of development, ensuring air, water, land, and habitat stewardship while working towards complete reclamation. The oil sands are a long-term strategic asset that any country in the world would want to have and that any other national leader would value and promote.

The oil sands are all about innovation. Without new technologies, Alberta would still be sitting on a hydrocarbon resource with no economic value. That is true of the energy sector overall: it is always innovating, adapting, advancing.

In the 1970s an Imperial Oil engineer, Roger Butler, invented a thermal recovery process called steam-assisted gravity drainage. Around roughly the same time, the Alberta government established the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority to focus on developing Alberta oil sands that were too deep to mine, which is the vast majority of the resource.

● (1545)

In 1996, the first commercial SAGD project was built at Foster Creek. It went into production six years later. The federal Liberal and provincial Progressive Conservative governments worked together to put in place fiscal and regulatory conditions to unlock this incredible resource.

Securities regulators took notice that deep-lying bitumen could now be recoverable. In 2002, when the Houston-based *Oil & Gas Journal* released its authoritative estimates of global petroleum reserves, it raised Canada's total proven oil reserves nearly fortyfold, from 4.9 billion barrels to 180 billion barrels. Major authorities followed suit over the next few years.

Alberta is blessed with abundant, accessible, affordable resources, and responsible development is an opportunity for all Canadians, benefiting every community, reducing poverty, and sustaining middle-class jobs. Producing from the oil sands is a technological, innovative, and relatively recent and unique achievement from a private, public, academic, and indigenous partnership of which all Canadians should be very proud.

Government Orders

The Liberals should champion Alberta's oil sands and not phase them out. However, Bill C-48 is a clear attack on the oil sands, on pipelines, on Canadian crude oil, on the livelihoods of the hundreds of thousands of Canadians who depend on its success, and it limits Canada's role in the world. I urge all members to vote against the tanker ban.

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my hon. colleague's passion, her intervention, and the knowledge that she brings to this debate.

The member talked about what has been done to improve efficiency in technology in the oil sands, but right now the world faces the fact that we are burning carbon at an alarming rate, and it is a huge problem. Global scientists have told us that one of the largest problems, if not the largest problem, that humanity faces on the planet is to reverse this trend.

We are at over 400 parts per million and are quickly approaching a two-degree rise in global average temperature. What is the Conservative plan to deal with and reverse this trend while they are still promoting the use of fossil fuels?

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Speaker, Canadian energy remains the most affordable, abundant, and available source of energy for our domestic use and for the world. Stopping Canada from being able to export its crude oil does not protect the environment globally. In fact, all it does is cede the market to other oil and gas-producing jurisdictions that are ramping up aggressively and have nowhere near the same standards as Canada.

This debate about the oil tanker ban should concern members of the NDP, the Greens, and the left-wing voters that the Liberals are trying to pander to in order to secure their vote. The hypocrisy and emptiness of this proposed legislation is shocking, since it would not enforce the voluntary exclusion zone already in the area.

With this proposed bill, the Liberals create a scenario in which they would stop pipelines and stop the oil sands and stop Canadian oil tankers from being in the area while American and foreign tankers of all kinds, all sizes, and with all products would still be the area. Therefore, the NDP should be opposing this proposed legislation, since it would not do anything that the Liberals are claiming it would do but exists just in order to keep NDP voters so that they will win in British Columbia again.

● (1550)

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect the Government of Canada to balance economic needs with environmental policies and goals. This tanker moratorium would do just that.

How does my colleague across the way propose to address the issue of climate change and upcoming crises we may be facing in the future?

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Speaker, Chief Isaac Laboucan-Avirom of the Woodland Cree First Nation opposes the tanker ban and is one of the representatives of the 35 communities all along the route, every single one of which supports the Eagle Spirit pipeline as a new energy corridor. He says:

I'm 100% an environmentalist as well, but I'm also 100% into the economy so that I can provide purpose and get people to work. This tanker ban is not just going to hurt us at the moment, which it is doing, but it's going to hurt future generations. I

have four daughters at home, and I want to provide a better education for them. I can't do that on social assistance.

Bill C-48 would hurt these first nations and would stop Canadian oil, which is extracted, transported, and produced under the safest and most environmentally rigorous standards of any oil and gas-producing jurisdiction on earth. That is what the Liberals would be stopping with this tanker ban. It makes no sense whatsoever.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Lakeland, my fellow Albertan, for doing a fantastic job in her role as a shadow cabinet minister on the energy file.

For 10 years, when I was a member of the former governing party, I would watch as the Liberals, the NDP, and the Greens continued to pander to, and try to get the votes from, anybody who was opposed to energy projects. Now that the Liberals are in government, they have found out that it is a lot harder to get these things done if they have to be dishonest with the people they made promises to. They like to couch everything in saying that in the 10 years Stephen Harper was prime minister, he did not get any pipelines built.

How many kilometres of pipeline did Stephen Harper actually cancel, and how many kilometres of pipeline has the current Liberal Prime Minister cancelled?

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Speaker, in fact, pipeline capacity in Canada was tripled under the previous Conservative government, while under the Liberals almost 7,000 kilometres of pipeline has been killed by their policies and their attack on Canadian energy. They have already killed more pipelines than were actually constructed and operating under the previous government.

To the point about the government's crass alliance with anti-energy activists and all-for-votes political pandering, I am going to read a declaration from the nine tribes of Lax Kw'alaams, who collectively declare the following:

We have unextinguished Aboriginal rights and title from time immemorial and continuing into the present within the land and ocean of our traditional territories...

We have protected the environment as first-stewards of our traditional territories for over 13,000 years;

We have and will always, put the protection of the environment first, but this must be holistically balanced with community, social, employment, business and other priorities;

We absolutely do not support big American environmental NGO's (who make their money from opposing natural resource projects) dictating government policy and resource developments within our traditional territories... [S]uch foreign interference serves only to perpetuate the rampant poverty and dysfunction encouraged by previous colonial policies—

The Deputy Speaker: We will have to leave it at that.

The hon. member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle.

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as part of our election platform, the Liberal Party had proposed just such a type of measure. It was the will of the people, and that is why we are here as a government.

Government Orders

Does my colleague across the way not believe that this is what Canadians want? We are here as a majority government. This was part of our platform promises. Can she answer that, please?

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Speaker, a growing number of Canadians, certainly the vast majority of the constituents I am blessed to represent, no longer really believe a word the Liberals say, especially about energy and environmental protection. That is the reason why nobody on the left supports them on the Trans Mountain expansion, for example. None of the Conservatives, who wholeheartedly agree that the approval of the pipeline is in the national interest, believes their words either.

The Liberals also got elected talking about basing their decisions on evidence, consultation, science, facts, and particularly consultation with indigenous people. They constantly claim that this is the most important relationship to them.

What do they not understand about the fact that their tanker ban would actively undermine the opportunities, the will, the decisions, the aspirations, and the hard work of 35 indigenous communities from Alberta to British Columbia, and that it would do damage to Canadian future prosperity that benefits all of Canada, every single resident in every province, right across all sectors? That is what the Liberals are actually doing here. They can go on and on about the things they believe, they promised, and they said they were going to do, but nobody believes them anymore at all. They deserve it. They created that mess.

•(1555)

Mrs. Kelly Block (Carlton Trail—Eagle Creek, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to speak to this bill at report stage on Monday, and I made the comment that the Conservatives will not participate in the fantasy that this bill has anything to do with transportation. We know that this is a moratorium on a pipeline and on resource development, which is precisely why my colleague from Lakeland, who is our shadow minister for natural resources, has been given the lead on this particular file. I think she has done a tremendous job in terms of bringing forward all the issues that surround this tanker ban.

I also want to thank her for the opportunity to attend a press conference that she held today with Mayor Helin from Lax Kw'alaams. I would like to give her an opportunity to tell us what the purpose of that press conference was.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs: Mr. Speaker, Mayor Helin feels that his community, his leadership, and the elected leaders there are being drowned out by the anti-energy activists alliance. He and his community were not consulted on the tanker ban, but that is the community that will be most directly impacted by it. He is moving forward, having to fight on behalf of the best interests and aspirations of his community, to challenge the government, because he says that it has violated the community's rights and title to make decisions on its traditional territory. That is the same community that supported and welcomed the Pacific NorthWest LNG project, which was later cancelled. It is also being blocked by the Liberal government from being able to diversify its fisheries.

The community members oppose the tanker ban. They are doing everything they can to be heard. They had one meeting with the Liberals and were told that there is no flexibility on it. This tanker

ban was dictated by the Prime Minister within one month after the 2015 election. The mayor was here to speak on behalf of the people he represents, and Canadians cannot be grateful enough for his leadership.

Mr. Fin Donnelly (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-48 on an oil tanker ban on British Columbia's north coast. Canada's New Democrats are pleased that the Liberal government is finally taking action to protect the north coast of British Columbia from crude oil tanker traffic. However, we are concerned that Bill C-48 would give the minister too much arbitrary power to exempt vessels from the ban or to define what fuels would be covered under the act. We hope the government will implement constructive amendments to limit ministerial power and increase spill response resources. We are certainly concerned about the lack of consultation with first nation and other coastal communities.

I want to talk about my colleague, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, and the work he did in his riding on the northwest coast with regard to this oil tanker ban. He consulted with many people in communities and first nations. He worked with them and listened to their concerns. What they told him, over many years, was that one oil spill could ruin their way of life. That way of life depends on the ocean: on salmon, on halibut, on shellfish, on a healthy, clean ocean. What he heard was that the risks were too great. They were just not worth it.

Patrick Kelly, chair of the board of Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative, wrote an opinion piece called "Opinion: Coastal First Nations affirm support for oil tanker ban on north coast", which was published February 11, 2018. It reads:

The ocean is an integral part of our coastal First Nations cultures, societies and economy. An oil spill in our territorial waters, which includes all of the North and Central coast and Haida Gwaii, would be catastrophic.

We understand that large-vessel shipping is essential for our modern economy. Fossil fuel use is a reality we must deal with as we transition to a clean energy future. But we already know that the question is no longer "if" there's going to be an oil spill, it has already happened. There is no "world class" oil spill clean-up system that will work on the coast. It simply does not exist.

The Heiltsuk Nation still has not recovered from the Nathan E. Stewart diesel spill. It may be years before their waters, clam beds and other marine resources are healthy again. The Haida also experienced a near disaster in October 2014 when a 135-metre bulk carrier, the Simushir, lost power in storm-force winds in their territories. The Gitga'at have been impacted by two spills, the MV Zalinski which was carrying Bunker C [fuel] when it sank and the B.C. Ferry, Queen of the North, which sank in 2006. Despite government promises of clean-up, both wrecks still leak fuel.

Our identities and culture will cease to exist if the fish, animals, plants, medicines, creatures and birds are compromised. Our way of living and livelihoods has already been severely impacted because of past industrial and commercial unsustainable practices. One example is the decline of fish and fisheries on the coast.

Government Orders

Historically, our leaders managed our territories and resources to meet our community needs. Wealth and surpluses were generated when times were good, and this enabled trade and inter-tribal commerce. Governing also meant enforcement of Indigenous laws and protection of lands, seas and resources. We are guided by our potlatched hereditary leaders and elders who have taught us how to balance the economic needs of our people and the need to respect our lands, cultures and environment. They have told us that oil tankers are too risky to our existence and therefore must be kept out of our territories. Consultation has been provided through the clear leadership of the CFN communities.

As chiefs and leaders we have a responsibility to leave future generations with a healthy environment and a sustainable economy. This is why we are working with the federal government to develop a fisheries industry that will benefit our communities. It is why we are working with the B.C. government to develop new clean energy strategies which includes First Nations from the outset.

● (1600)

CFN, through its Carbon Credit Corp., is now the largest carbon credit seller in Canada and revenues generated from sales are re-invested by each nation to further protect their lands and resources. Collectively, our nations have trained and now employ over 100 stewardship staff and guardians.

Our people and communities need jobs and revenue, and we know that the traditional resource sectors alone will not meet growth demands of our nations so we are open to new developments. But new resource or industrial developments must never compromise our natural environment. There is no place for oil tankers on our coast. As Indigenous people who have lived in our territories for more than 14,000 years, as British Columbians, and as Canadians, we have a collective responsibility to protect our lands, waters and resources.

The tanker moratorium is good and necessary public policy.

That is a powerful letter, and a powerful statement, and I am glad to have read that into the record.

I got into politics to defend our west coast way of life; the incredible biodiversity we enjoy in the province of British Columbia; the rivers, the lakes, the forests, the mountains, the oceans, the wildlife; and the communities and economies that have developed as a result of that abundance. However, the way we are living now is impacting that abundance and biodiversity. We have species at risk, threatened and endangered, whether it is salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, caribou, or many other species that are SARA listed.

These are real issues, and they are not easy problems to fix, but there needs to be political will to address these problems and to do things differently. We must find ways to live within our means and move to a low-carbon economy, and we need to do that in a just way. We need a just transition to a sustainable way of living.

This is what motivated me to swim the 1,400 kilometre length of the Fraser River, one of the greatest salmon rivers on the planet. The northern gateway Enbridge pipeline project would have crossed hundreds of rivers and streams, going through salmon and fish-bearing rivers and creeks and crossing very steep slopes and mountainous valleys right through the northern part of the Fraser River basin. I was so passionate about bringing my message of sustainability, I swam for three weeks in icy cold water from Mount Robson, in the Fraser's headwaters, to Prince George, down through the Fraser canyon, past Hope, and west past my home community of Coquitlam to the river's mouth, Musqueam territory, in Vancouver, near the Salish Sea.

This was the hardest thing I had ever done in my life, swimming for three weeks in that cold water, but it taught me one thing. It taught me to be resolute, and I committed that I would do everything in my power to encourage people to transition to a sustainable way of living, which includes transitioning in a just and fair way to a low-

carbon economy, shifting away from oil and gas and toward renewable forms of energy.

The reasons are clear. The science is overwhelming. The world is burning so much carbon from oil, coal, and gas that we are changing the climate. We have now passed 400 parts per million, a historic high. We are well on our way to an average warming of 2° C, which global scientists warn us will have a dramatic impact on human civilization, our economies, our communities, and all others we share this planet with. That is not just in the future. That is happening now, and we are seeing it in the form of floods, fires, and impacts on our planet.

● (1605)

This means that sometimes we have to say no. We need to say no to things that we know will harm us. This is one of those times. Banning oil tanker traffic off B.C.'s north coast is the right thing to do.

Another one of those times is the Kinder Morgan pipeline project which, if built, is planned to bring a 700% increase in oil tanker traffic to the Vancouver port in Burrard Inlet. For the past two years, my colleague, the member for Burnaby South, has been working hard to raise awareness about the detrimental impacts of that Kinder Morgan project, how the risks far outweigh the benefits of this proposal. He knows, like I do, it is times like these that we must take a strong and principled stand on projects that will not bring prosperity to the country that we love and that we know is full of promise. Worse, it will have a detrimental impact on the existing way of life and on future generations.

I am very disappointed the government is sticking to its decision to move ahead with the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline. This pipeline would triple the amount of tar sands oil being moved to the coast of British Columbia where it will be loaded onto oil tankers and headed out to sea and directly through critical habitat of the endangered southern resident orca, and other marine life. Not only does this significantly increase human caused noise and ship strikes, but it also increases the risk of catastrophic oil spills in southern resident orca habitat, which would be devastating for this endangered iconic species and the entire ecosystem of the Salish Sea.

Government Orders

The government tells us not to worry, that it has everything covered with its so-called oceans protection plan. The problem is the government has no marine mammal response plan for an oil spill. As I and others have said many times in the House, the tankers would be carrying diluted bitumen and there is no technology in place today to clean it up. It simply does not exist. On top of that, the rugged B.C. coastline and often challenging weather conditions can make response efforts extremely difficult.

The government's record and its ability to respond to emergency incidents have been causing many on the B.C. coast concern. Response to the 2015 *Marathassa* spill in Vancouver's English Bay and the 2016 *Nathan B. Stewart* spill near Bella Bella proved that Canada's response plan is completely lacking. The government keeps making funding announcements for the oceans protection plan, but all the money in the world will not change the fact that the impact of an oil spill on B.C.'s rugged coast would be devastating.

I want to conclude my remarks by referring to DeSmog's summary of what it wants Canadians to know about Bill C-48.

One, DeSmog indicates that a tanker ban will not ban supertankers of refined oil from the coast. While the proposed legislation does prevent supertankers of crude oil and similar hydrocarbon products from moving in and out of northern ports in large quantities, it does not prevent refined oil products from doing the same. This leaves the door open for future major oil refinery projects on B.C.'s north coast. There are two proposed refineries, one in Kitimat called Kitimat Clean, which would refine 400,000 barrels of oil per day, and the Pacific Future Energy refinery project, which would refine 200,000 barrels per day. Those are the projected refinery amounts.

Two, DeSmog is very concerned that tankers carrying 12,500 tonnes or less of oil are excluded from this ban. This is a huge amount of oil. Once passed, the bill would only prevent vessels carrying more than 12,500 tonnes of crude oil from stopping at coastal ports. This is a big concern to its readers.

Three, DeSmog indicates that the tanker ban would not prevent another *Nathan E. Stewart* incident from happening. The tanker ban was first announced by the federal government after the Minister of Transport travelled to the Heiltsuk territory to witness a diesel spill from the *Nathan E. Stewart*, a sunken fuel barge. This spill had a devastating impact on the local fishery and shellfish fishery.

• (1610)

Jess Housty, a tribal councillor from the Heiltsuk First Nation said that the tanker ban "changes nothing". She is adamantly concerned about tanker traffic and the types of products that will be transported off the north coast of where she calls home.

Fourth, DeSmog indicates that the south coast of B.C. near Vancouver and Victoria is still not protected. DeSmog is concerned that this tanker ban would not impact tanker traffic off B.C.'s south coast near the terminus of the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline in the Burnaby-Vancouver port.

The fifth concern that DeSmog would like to bring to the attention of all Canadians is that the details of the banned fuels are subject to change. I talked about ministerial discretion. There is a concern that the tanker ban will prevent the movement of large amounts of crude

oil from traversing coastal waters in B.C. and the ban will also cover heavy hydrocarbons known as persistent oils in the schedule. DeSmog is concerned that there are many other types of deleterious substances that will be transported which could have an impact on the coastal way of life.

This is a huge concern to many coastal communities, first nations, and others on Canada's west coast. It is a growing concern to many throughout this great country.

This is a good first step to ban oil tanker traffic off the north coast, but we still have a way to go to deal with the impacts of a changing climate, the impact of losing species at an alarming rate, and transitioning in a just and fair way toward a sustainable way of life.

• (1615)

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam for his passion on this file. I serve with him on the fisheries committee and I know how dedicated he claims to be toward saving salmon, and so on.

I will not say that he is purposely misleading the House, but I would like to point out a few things.

He talked about a 700-fold increase in tankers. That is a manufactured percentage. He is not taking into account the number of tankers that are actually coming into Canadian ports, bringing foreign oil into the same area that he wants to block the Kinder Morgan pipeline from accessing.

The member also mentioned his swims down the Fraser River. That is a great athletic feat. He also remarked about the pipeline traversing those same areas. While he was swimming down that river, did he happen to count the number of railcars going by on the railway line right beside the Fraser River? They go through the same area. They go through my riding, past the Shuswap, down the Thompson River, down the Illecillewaet that flows into the Columbia system. All of those railcars that he should have counted as they rolled by create more of a risk than any pipeline ever would.

What are his thoughts on blocking pipelines and tankers?

Mr. Fin Donnelly: Mr. Speaker, my colleague shares my passion about salmon and other wildlife. I know his work at the B.C. Wildlife Federation before he became involved in politics was impressive and is welcome in the House.

I do want to correct him on what he thought I said. I mentioned a sevenfold increase, not a 700-fold increase. It was a 700% increase, which means a sevenfold increase. I want to correct him on another thing. I said oil tanker traffic, not just tanker traffic. That is certainly an increase.

Government Orders

People are essentially saying that they do not feel that the risk is worth it on the west coast. They are not willing to take that risk.

I did have an opportunity to count the crossings as I swam the 1,400 kilometre river. I did see a lot of crossings and I certainly did think about many things. I thought mainly about the passion of why I was doing that swim. There are so many others in British Columbia and all across the country who share the passion I have for this incredible way of life, this biodiversity that we share on the west coast. People on the west coast want to see it remain, as do I, and that is going to be a challenge for the future.

Ms. Joyce Murray (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to congratulate the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam for all of his work to protect salmon and salmon habitat, and also for his work to protect the north coast from tanker traffic through an initiative a number of years ago when he was first a member of Parliament.

Earlier in the debate, a Conservative member asked why, when there are so many more tankers on the east coast, there does not appear to be the same kind of concern about the risk there that we have on the west coast. He wondered why we would be concerned on the west coast. What is the difference? I thought I might ask the member if he could share his thoughts about what is unique about our Pacific north coast compared to other areas of Canada and other Canadian coastlines.

• (1620)

Mr. Fin Donnelly: Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague has been on the fisheries committee in past Parliaments. I know the work she does privately to restore our forests in British Columbia. I know her past work as a provincial minister. Therefore, I appreciate her question and her interest. I think she brings up a good point about the difference between the two coasts.

What is so incredibly magnificent about the west coast is we enjoy an abundance of biodiversity, both marine and terrestrial. We have whales. Some are threatened, such as the resident whales, but we have seen the recovery of some other species of whales. We have salmon and halibut. We have an incredible variety of species of fish and shellfish that are in abundance from the south coast up to the north coast. It is what has developed our local economies. There have been 10,000 to 15,000 years of development of these economies by our first peoples. They tell us about how they have lived off of these resources, the products of the ocean, for thousands and thousands of years. There are so many today in coastal fishing communities who rely on this abundance. They want to see these resources protected. That is why they are so passionate, as am I, about protecting, preserving, and conserving these resources.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague on his speech, his intense passion for the environment, as well his commitment in this crusade to bring awareness to the significance of the challenges we face. Honestly, I did not know that he engaged in the athleticism it takes to spend three weeks in cold water. I congratulate him. I am impressed at his unwavering convictions. I think he does a great job representing the people of his riding for whom these issues are crucial and vital.

In the House, we are having a societal debate and he is right to say that we have run out of choices, we have to identify what is hurting our planet. Obviously this is awful for a province whose economic growth is tied to developing its fossil fuels.

I would like to know whether my colleague believes that it would be a good idea to devote some energy to the task of looking into other job prospects for workers in the oil sands sector.

[*English*]

Mr. Fin Donnelly: Mr. Speaker, yes, we are at a crossroads. I am glad he learned of the story of my three-week swim down the Fraser, which was a life-changing event for me. I have done that twice. I did it in 1995 and again in 2000. The only effect that I have suffered as a result of that is I got into politics, which I feel passionate about.

His question about the world and the country being at a crossroads in our energy use is critical, and we must shift. Our science, information, and local knowledge are all converging and telling us that we have to shift now, that we are beyond the point of knowing that we cannot avoid this shift and that we have to make it. It is not a future issue; it is now. We have to look at developing, supporting, and turning to a just transition in renewables, moving to geothermal, solar, wind, and hydro. We need to invest in these projects.

We need to work with municipalities, provinces, territories, and with working people to make the transition. We need to have jobs and work. We need them to make our communities and economies thrive. We also need to have a planet that is livable and sustainable, one that we can pass on and feel proud, as a society and national government, that we did the most we could to pass on a sustainable way of living.

That is why Bill C-48 is a move in the right direction. We need to make an even greater move in the direction of a sustainable way of living, support it, invest in it, and make the needed transition happen today.

• (1625)

Ms. Joyce Murray (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful for the opportunity to speak today about the importance of B.C.'s north coast and why we are seeking to protect it with Bill C-48.

[*Translation*]

The area targeted by the tanker moratorium goes from the southern border of Alaska to the tip of continental British Columbia, to the north end of Vancouver Island, and it includes Haida Gwaii.

[*English*]

I will begin by reading from a document written eight years ago:

[This bill] legislates a crude oil tanker ban in the dangerous inland waters around Haida Gwaii known as Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait and Queen Charlotte Sound. It will protect our oceans and communities from the risk of a major oil spill and promote a sustainable economy – one that supports B.C.'s growing fisheries and tourism sectors.

Government Orders

[This] bill responds to the clear voices of British Columbians, [the majority]...of whom support a permanent tanker ban on B.C.'s north coast. First Nations, B.C. municipalities and thousands of businesses whose growth and sustainability depend on a healthy ocean and coastal ecosystem are united in their call for a permanent ban.

To be clear, [this bill] does not apply to natural gas products and will not affect existing deliveries of condensate into Kitimat, B.C. It will not prevent the continued transport of diesel and other oil products to local B.C. communities or in any way affect current or future shipments of oil to Asia and the United States through the Port of Vancouver. The bill does not limit growth in exports of Canadian crude to expanding international markets. And finally, it allocates no new ministerial ability to close other shipping areas in Canada, as these powers already exist under the Canada Shipping Act.

[The bill] does acknowledge that Canadians want communities and wildlife protected and [they want] prosperity. This can be achieved by making smart choices about where and how development takes place.

We have witnessed the environmental, economic and social devastation caused by the *Exxon Valdez* and BP catastrophes [in the Gulf of Mexico]. One major spill along B.C.'s shorelines would threaten fragile ecosystems, endanger wildlife, harm lives and communities, and jeopardize many of our...[tens of thousands of] coastal jobs. It is simply not worth the risk.

I am reading from a letter that was written to my colleagues when I tabled Bill C-606 back in 2010. Today, I am so grateful and appreciative to our Minister of Transport for having tabled this bill, Bill C-48, which would do exactly what I called for with my bill, Bill C-606.

I had a chance to visit 15 communities up and down our coast, hosting events to hear from community members, including the chambers of commerce, indigenous people, and citizens. There was an overwhelming consensus that the Pacific north coast was a very important internationally-significant area that we must protect and defend from the risk of a major oil spill.

I spoke with individuals who showed me pictures of themselves wearing gumboots as they cleaned up oil from sea life and shorelines up in Prince William Sound in Alaska after the *Exxon Valdez* spill of 10.8 million U.S. gallons of oil back in 1989. Some of those ecosystems have never recovered from that spill, and it affects the economy and ecology of those areas today. I certainly understood the concern the people in the north coast had.

I will explain why that area is so unique, actually risky, and why in my letter I talked about this risk British Columbians did not believe was worth it with respect to the benefits to our province.

•(1630)

I want to give credit to the environmental advocacy groups that raised awareness about the risk of oil tanker traffic and spills in our north coast related to a pipeline that was proposed for the area. It has since been determined not permissible by our government. I want to also thank our Prime Minister for recognizing that our Pacific north coast is not the right route for pipelines and oil tankers.

I was privileged to successfully ensure that the ban on oil traffic in the Pacific north coast was included in two Liberal platforms, one in 2011 and one in 2015: promise made, promise kept.

The marine ecosystems that span the northern coast of British Columbia are unique. The coastline itself with its rugged cliffs and inlets provides an abundant environment for its ecologically rich and diverse animal populations. It is dotted with thousands of islands and etched with deep fjords. The coastal rainforests are places of stunning biological prosperity and diversity, and an environment that deserves protection.

Not only is the north coast geographically complex, it also supports a wide range of distinct marine ecosystems. These ecosystems provide spawning and schooling areas for fish, and is important for a variety of sea birds, marine mammals, and other marine fauna, like humpback and killer whales, and that says nothing about the region's rich flora.

I had a chance to travel in this area as the environment minister for the province of British Columbia. I spent a week on a B.C. Park's boat touring the isolated inlets and shorelines as we sought to discuss with local indigenous peoples the possibility of creating a provincial park and reserve in the Great Bear Rainforest. I had a chance to see just how little human impact there had been on that part of our coast and how it really was a virgin ecosystem, which is expressed in the rich variety of the ecosystem I spoke about.

It was not just the marine areas that were so important to protect, but also the area on land, which a pipeline was proposing to traverse. The pipeline would have crossed hundreds of fish and salmon-bearing streams. It would have crossed wilderness, mountain, and valley areas with virgin forests and ecosystems, which are almost impossible to even hike through as they are so remote and uncivilized, and I say that in the technical sense. So few people live there in such vast areas that are uneroded. It is very important for grizzly bears and other wildlife to live without the impacts of human civilization, which have caused challenges to their abundance in other parts of our province and country.

In the northern coastal area, salmon still runs in the rivers, trees hundreds of years old loom over vast landscapes, and predators and prey keep the delicate balance necessary for these ecosystems to thrive. Our government is committed to ensure that this coast remains a vibrant ecosystem for generations to come. Ecotourism in this area is growing year by year as people from around the world recognize how internationally unique the area is.

The government recognizes that indigenous groups have inhabited the north coast for millennia and continue to rely on its bountiful ecosystems as foundations for their cultures and economies. As I travelled around Haida Gwaii and Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve in a sailboard a few years ago, I spoke to many indigenous people from Haida Gwaii. They were completely and utterly determined that their precious area would not be subject to the risk of a major oil spill by oil tanker traffic. Therefore, this moratorium is very important to those members of the Haida Gwaii community.

•(1635)

Bill C-48 is a significant step being taken by our government to enhance environmental protection for this pristine and important coastline.

Government Orders

The minister also travelled from coast to coast to hear from people about this particular project. From Haida Gwaii to Iqaluit and St. John's, he wanted to hear their perspectives on the oil tanker moratorium and improving marine safety.

Our government has met with stakeholders, non-governmental organizations, other levels of government, and indigenous groups to listen and gather input. I have to recognize that the Minister of Transport has done a full and deep job of consulting with people across the country. As the proponent of Bill C-606 in 2010, which was up for debate in March 2011, I was not able to do quite that thorough a job of consulting, but certainly the majority of people I spoke with felt that this was an important initiative. The minister heard a diversity of views, and the importance of these environmental protections was made abundantly clear.

Coastal communities and industries everywhere in Canada understand the importance of healthy ecosystems to protect the way of life and livelihoods of those areas. In fact, there is a wide range of economic activity that feeds and sustains the Pacific north coast region's economic life cycle. For over a hundred years, we have had logging, mining, fisheries, and canning and processing facilities. Those activities have been important and have supported many communities along the coast.

I want to acknowledge that the Province of British Columbia has really worked hard to consult with stakeholders from environmental groups, communities, indigenous communities, and industry to make sure that its land use planning process reflects where there should be more intensive use of the land and waters, and where there should be more protection of the land and waters. That balance has been found in our province. It can always be improved, but there has been a great deal of emphasis on proper management of the lands and waters in British Columbia since the 1990s, including the government I was part of in the early 2000s.

It is not something our government takes lightly, to ensure that a particular activity, such as a pipeline or oil tanker traffic, will not be permitted there. The jobs that would have been created, I would point out, were not an enormous number. The building of the pipeline would have created some jobs for sure, but once it was built, the number of ongoing jobs would have been far less.

The moratorium would protect the livelihoods of communities on British Columbia's north coast by providing a heightened level of environmental protection, while continuing to allow for community and industry resupply by small tanker, which was an important part of the bill I proposed as well, Bill C-606. We know that these communities and the industry rely on marine shipments of critical petroleum products to sustain their livelihoods. That is why our government will continue to allow shipments of crude or persistent oil products below a certain level, which is 12,500 metric tons.

The moratorium would protect the northern coastline, that whole area and its delicate ecosystems, including Haida Gwaii, from accidents that could upset this fragile region via a major oil spill.

• (1640)

We know that the vast majority of citizens in this area do not believe the risk of that kind of major spill, which we have seen before on our west coast, is worth it. We understand that should

something like this happen, our coast would never be the same. On the north coast, there are far fewer services to prevent a spill, to act quickly if a major oil tanker were in difficulty, and to prevent the damage.

This tanker moratorium does not tell the whole story of our protection of the coast and the precautionary approach that we are building in to help safeguard the marine environment in this region. I want to mention the oceans protection plan, which adds another set of protections. The oceans protection plan is a \$1.5-billion initiative on which there was wide consultation. I know many members of the Pacific caucus, the B.C. members of Parliament, were asked to provide input into what should be in the oceans protection plan.

It will improve our incident prevention and response regime and address environmental concerns in the event of a marine accident. The oceans protection plan will lift the liability cap for defraying the costs of cleanup, should there be a spill, to unlimited liability. I am referring now to smaller ships. My colleague from Port Moody—Coquitlam read into the record some concerns about the smaller ships that were underneath the cap. There would be unlimited liability and the government would implement a levy on oil shipments to fund compensation, as well as to speed it up, so communities would not be not stuck footing the bill for the cleanup of smaller spills.

In the bill, we recognize that when the delicate balance of this coastline becomes threatened, it upsets relationships between the environment and its inhabitants. It is not just about today's coastal communities. It is also about inhabitants that have spanned thousands of years. The Musqueam first nation, for example, which is on a different part of the coast, the south coast, has a record of habitation and its traditional areas for over 4,000 years. We know there are deep historical and cultural ties to the Pacific north coast that support cultural practices and social structures, and that is also what makes this area worth protecting.

Clearly, the oil tanker moratorium is just one of many initiatives in our comprehensive plan to protect the marine environment, to begin restoring some of the species that have been impacted by human activities over the years, and changes to our oceans, like acidification and warming from climate change, and the warming of streams that are necessary for our salmon cycle. There is so much work to be done, but this is a key part of it for a key part of our country, which is the Pacific north coast.

I hope we will have the full support of all members present for the passage of this bill, to take this important step in protecting one of the world's most diverse and rich regions anywhere on the planet.

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, Rail Transportation; the hon. member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, Employment.

Government Orders

•(1645)

[English]

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have many questions for the member, but I will try to keep my comments short. The member might be able to work around some of these questions.

She talked about the ecotourism that is building in the areas where the pipelines may go through. How do the international ecotourists get there from other countries, from foreign lands? Surely they do not row a boat or pedal a bike. How does the fuel get to the planes that get them there? It is from other countries that produce oil with less environmental safeguards than we have here in Canada, but the Liberals are going to restrict Canadian oil from getting into those planes to get those ecotourists here.

The member did not talk about it, but the Liberal government has said that the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion will be built. It is interesting to see the member try to work around that, and yet say that another pipeline that would serve another portion of the country with greater economic benefits for that portion of the country, and a portion of her province and my province, is being basically punished for where they are. How can the member explain her way out of that conundrum?

Ms. Joyce Murray: Mr. Speaker, I welcome questions about this initiative which, as I have said, I was proud to champion starting in 2009, travelling up the coast and to coastal communities to hear from people and understand how important it is to have this oil tanker moratorium in that area.

Tourists get there by arriving in a number of ways. Cruise ships stop in Prince Rupert. People can bike from Prince George to Prince Rupert, if they choose. There are many ways. Prince Rupert has an airport, and yes, communities do use oil products and will for many decades to come. However, that is not an excuse for putting a pipeline through an essentially untravelled and unimpacted wilderness area of the northern part of our province and impacting 750 streams that are important for salmon.

It is not a reason to say that this is an area where we are going to have massive supertankers in a geography that is very dangerous in terms of the shoals and the storms. No, we have to choose where it makes sense to move our oil products to market—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I did notice at the outset of questions and comments about four or so members standing. We will try to get all of them in, but I will try to ask members to keep their interventions to around a minute or so. Most members, if not all, are pretty good at doing that. It is just the same length of time as a Standing Order 31 statement, and we have had good practice with that.

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague from Vancouver Quadra for her long-time advocacy for a ban on the north coast. I want to commend her for that, but I also want to thank her for her description of the sensitive ecosystems that we have in coastal British Columbia and the importance of that for jobs and our economy. The member also

cited the spill of the *Exxon Valdez* in the north coast and how some of the ecosystems still have not survived.

In fact, the Prime Minister said, “Crude oil supertankers just have no place on B.C.’s north coast.” The member talked about that being a promise that the Liberals made, and that they have followed through with that promise. She said that it is a promise made and a promise kept.

Where I have concerns is that with the same ecosystems we have on the south coast, the member supports a pipeline project, Kinder Morgan, that is going to increase supertanker traffic by sevenfold. This was a promise made—the Liberals were going to have a renewed process—and it is a promise broken.

Maybe the member can square with people at home how she can support this project, in light of the fact that we have southern resident killer whales and we have the same ecosystem that will be affected by this project, and what is at stake.

•(1650)

Ms. Joyce Murray: Mr. Speaker, it is not surprising that the NDP members opposite just cannot take yes to heart as a solution to an important challenge and say that they appreciate it. They need to tie it into other things they would like.

Let us recall the incredible outpouring of concern about the ecosystems of our north coast area with the possibility of having a greenfield pipeline, which means a pipeline that crosses areas that are almost un navigable or impossible to hike, they are so mountainous, treed, and full of important species that have a refuge in that area. That is just the pipeline route.

The coastal route is one that is extremely concerning in terms of the danger of navigation. There is always the risk of human error. As good as the—

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments, the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Vancouver Quadra, hon. the parliamentary secretary. I completely agree about the hazardous area of the Hecate Strait. From the last time I rose, when talking to the parliamentary secretary for transport, I looked up the reference. Environment Canada’s marine weather hazards manual lists the Hecate Strait as one of the fourth most dangerous bodies of water in the world.

However, I have to agree with my friend from Courtenay—Alberni. It is hard to understand. I applaud Bill C-48, but our Salish Sea needs protection. We have no known technology for cleaning up diluted bitumen. I know it is not a Bill C-48 issue, but could we not agree that no new pipeline should go through for Kinder Morgan until we know how to clean up dilbit?

Government Orders

Ms. Joyce Murray: Mr. Speaker, our government has a range of initiatives for the oceans protection plan that are focused on the Salish Sea areas, on the species in those areas, and on doing what has never been done, which is to have steps to recover Chinook salmon, which is food for the southern resident killer whales, and initiatives such as regulating to keep the boats, tourists, and other ship traffic further away from our southern resident killer whales.

The one thing I want to mention is that it is very important that we achieve our Paris targets. We cannot do that without the kinds of measures Alberta has put in place to reduce their planned expansion of the oil sands, including putting a cap on it, increasing their tax, regulating methane, and shutting down coal-fired plants. That is in the national interest. Having Alberta as part of the national plan is in the national interest. Alberta had one requirement for that, and that was access for their oil to Asia.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is an incredibly important topic to people in Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, not because we are on the coastline but because we believe in the importance of the environment. It is not only because of the Oak Ridges Moraine and kettle lakes like Wilcox Lake but because of the environment in this entire great nation, in particular in the Pacific northwest.

I owned a canoe outfitting business in northern Ontario, an eco-tourism business. I understood how united we are as Canadians, as people from all around the world came to enjoy something that many countries do not have to offer.

I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her comprehensive and clear exposition. I wonder if she could give us the three key reasons, from her expertise and her background, she believes that this is the right bill to support.

Ms. Joyce Murray: Mr. Speaker, it is almost difficult to limit this to three reasons. One is that so much of the world is becoming developed. As populations grow and communities spread into former nature, it becomes ever more important that when there are areas that have not had this happen, we say that this is not an area where we can risk a major oil spill or accept the kind of impacts human habitation and concentrated industrial activity result in. It is internationally recognized as a special wilderness area.

Second, we have the spirit bear in this area. It is a unique variant of the black bear. The area around it is incredibly significant, which is why we have a spirit bear park.

Last, the indigenous coastal peoples around the area of this tanker ban formed a group, Coastal First Nations, and came out solidly in favour of the ban.

• (1655)

Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks on Bill C-48, let me add my voice to those who have spoken before about our colleague from Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, Gord Brown. Although Gord was a few years younger than me, he became my mentor when I was first elected in 2008. His quiet demeanour, his love for his community, and his respect for this institution, along with his fervent belief as a Conservative that individual rights and freedoms create the strength of our nation, are beliefs that he so passionately championed and ones that this side of

the House will continue to champion and hold dear. To his wife Claudine, as well as his two sons, my wife Judy and I offer our sincerest condolences.

I will be sharing my time with the member for Markham—Unionville.

The bill we have before us today is the genesis of the demise of our oil and gas industry under the advisement and dictation of the Prime Minister's chief of staff, Gerald Butts. It has been said that it is not the puppet that we fear; it is Butts, the puppeteer. It is now obvious that both the puppeteer and the puppet are things Canadians need to fear.

This proposal was developed to ensure that the northern gateway project, although properly vetted, with stringent conditions, would be derailed. This was the goal of eco-activists headed and funded by groups whose goal was to cause havoc in Canada's resource industry to curry favour with international donors, who many say are simply hedging their bets with oil and gas investments in other parts of the world. These groups do not care about the well-being of Canadians. They do not care about our first nation entrepreneurs. They do not care about our commitment to humanitarian causes around the world. They just want to see Canada's natural resources stay in the ground so that their global partners can reap the benefits from such actions.

Whenever we hear from those who want to “phase out” the oil sands, including the current Liberal Prime Minister, we need to know that it will be all Canadians who will suffer from these actions. How can it be in the interest of Canadians to have Venezuelan oil power vehicles in Quebec? How is it better for the environment to have Saudi Arabian oil filling up refineries on the east coast? Why would we want American oil to fuel our machines in Vancouver? None of this makes sense.

If we had a government that recognized the need to diversify our export markets so that the most ethical oil and liquid natural gas on the planet could find its way to the rapidly growing markets of Asia, then maybe we would not be the laughingstock of the world. What other country would do this to its own economy and its own people?

As was mentioned in a November 8, 2017, article in the *Financial Post*, entitled “How the B.C. tanker moratorium is killing First Nations' enterprise”, Canadians have to be awoken to what the current government is doing and what the consequences of its actions are.

Government Orders

Five years ago, members of the Lax Kw'alaams Band proposed an energy corridor from Fort McMurray to the B.C. coast. The social licence, which has now become some imaginary, elusive target, would have been achieved for all types of future expansion, helping all Canadians, especially first nations people. After consultation, and with broad acceptance, Eagle Spirit Energy came to the table with practical solutions that focused on environmental protection that even exceeded Canada's world-class regulations. What happened after was pure sabotage of a nation-building project, a pattern that has become all too familiar under the current Liberal government.

We should have been aware that this was the Liberals' goal all along, as they have been trying to limit the potential expansion of northern gateway since the project was first proposed a decade ago. The previous attempts by the Liberals, when in opposition, proposed banning tankers sailing within the defined waters of Canada's fishing zone 3, which is from the northern tip of Vancouver Island to the Alaska panhandle. Bill C-48 would expand this original proposal to prohibit tankers carrying crude oil from entering or leaving ports in the same area. In order to avoid a conflict with the U.S.A., tankers can still carry crude up and down the waters, as long as they do not enter or leave from a Canadian port.

• (1700)

Who does this hurt and who does this benefit? We have stopped our private sector partners from moving ahead with first nation partners to move Canada's natural resources to tidewater. That hurts Canadian taxpayers who could have been building schools, building hospitals, and other needed infrastructure across this land with the profits attained, but they now need to depend on deficits to be paid off by future generations in order to develop those same types of projects.

Who benefits? The foreign funders whose investments flourish around the world as those countries market their crude at world prices to the very markets that we are shut out of. What adds insult to injury is, as I mentioned earlier, that we buy oil from those very same countries to fuel our economy in eastern Canada. However, those same activists and complicit provincial governments that want to shut down or oil going west have also thwarted our efforts to move it to the east.

Is that what makes a nation strong or is that what causes division and scorn? The old Trudeau government only cared about the unity of our country as long as he got his way. What is the difference now?

In November of 2014, the Conservative government introduced and implemented a number of measures to create a world class tanker safety system, including the modernization of Canada's navigation system, enhancing area response planning, building marine safety capacity in aboriginal communities, and ensuring that polluters paid for spills and damages.

The concept of Liberals demonizing Conservative actions, layering them over with red paint and calling them new and improved, is nothing new. This was the game played with regulatory reviews for pipelines. The Liberals used this to argue for Kinder Morgan, but now they stay quiet about how safe this would make all our other waterways because that does not fit their narrative.

In summary, Bill C-48 would do very little for the preservation of British Columbia's environment. Ships, including U.S. tankers, travelling from Alaska to Washington State, will continue to be able to travel up and down the coast just outside the 100 kilometre limit. This is just another slap in the face to resource developers, as it is just another pipeline moratorium under a different name.

There is no recognition, because it does not fit the Prime Minister's "keep it in the ground" narrative, that Canadian oil is extracted and transported under some of the safest and most environmentally strict regulations in the world. Preventing our Canadian resources from reaching customers in other countries only serves to encourage the use of foreign oil products that are extracted and transported in a less safe and less environmentally friendly way.

What is ironic is that the political machinations of both the Liberal government and the NDP, which also hold a negative view and constant vendetta against our oil and gas sector, actually defeats their stated goals of "protecting the global environment". Their efforts not only cripple our economy and communities, they are also helping to fill the coffers of some of the most unethical and ruthless regimes on the planet. It is the Liberals who insist on creating wedges among Canadians.

The Liberals know that on this issue they are losing ground, and now they are desperate to paint any distractions in the most negative manner. One thing is for sure. The Conservatives will always be the party of freedom, opportunity, security, prosperity, and conservation. We will always stand proud of Canada and the millions of Canadians who work hard every day to make it the best country in the world.

Canadians deserve a government that takes pride in what Canada has to offer. Canadians deserve better. They deserve a government that will put them first. In 2019, that is exactly what the Conservatives will offer Canadians.

• (1705)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's efforts in standing up for Albertans and jobs. I share that view, as much as he may not agree with my perspective. I have family there. We want our brothers and sisters there to thrive and do well.

The member touched on a few things. He certainly touched on Kinder Morgan and this project replacing foreign oil. However, it is my understanding that this oil is for export. It will not be replacing any foreign oil, or dirty oil, if one wants to call it that.

Frankly, we have not had a good, robust conversation about a refinery and the value added, creating more jobs in Canada and more energy security in Canada while we fund transition, like Norway did. We have not had a conversation about whether we have been responsible or not. When we look at Norway, it has \$1 trillion in its prosperity fund. When we look at Alberta, it has \$11 billion.

Government Orders

Maybe the member, who is from Alberta, can explain how that gap is happening and how the leadership of Norway is funding transition, a healthy economy, and protection of the environment at the same time as funding oil extraction.

Mr. Earl Dreeshen: Mr. Speaker, it does grate on me somewhat when I hear someone talk about dirty oil coming from Canada. It is so frustrating to hear that. The rhetoric is part of the frustration and reasons why we have a B.C. government tag-teaming with the Quebec government to slow down energy east, and then the reverse happening. I see those kinds of issues.

The member spoke about exporting and that this oil would go onto the world market. The point is to get it onto the world market and get world prices for these products. Right now we are captive to the U.S. market and we are taking a terrible discount on every bit of oil that we sell. These are the sorts of things about which we have to be concerned.

An article from a guy from Seattle thanks B.C. for the oil discount. He thanks the citizens of B.C. who seem to once again have blocked an oil pipeline to the coast. Those living south of the border will continue to enjoy importing Canada's oil at substantial discounts while exporting American oil from Gulf ports at world market prices. This gift to them is around \$100 billion a day Canadian, and the Americans greatly appreciate it. That is what we have to stop.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member across the way made reference to government using this as a wedge issue. It is interesting because we have the New Democratic Party that often talks about the environment in the sense of doing everything necessary to protect it, including not having pipelines even being built to other economic deterrents. Then we have the Conservatives who are on the other extreme. However, we can look at what the government has consistently said, which is that we can work and move forward both for the environment and for our markets and the economy. Today we are talking about not only an election commitment, but something Canadians as a whole would support, which is having a moratorium in a certain section of the ocean.

Would my colleague not agree that we can do both, that we can be sensitive to the environment and oceans while at the same time have economic development that is based in some of the commodities and raw materials that we have in Canada?

• (1710)

Mr. Earl Dreeshen: Mr. Speaker, a few months ago I had the opportunity to go to some southeast Asian countries with the trade committee. We spoke to fund managers who were looking at Canada and asking for the reasons to invest in Canada. These people were talking about tens of billions of dollars. We have already seen \$80 billion leave because of the actions of the government.

Is it a wedge issue? Yes, it is a wedge issue between traditional Liberals and the government of today. They are the ones who are telling us that there has to be a change because of what the government is doing. At any opportunity, it is labelling people and pushing people into different areas. Right now, the Liberals are using this whole concept of the environment, saying that they have done so

much, that they are going to help, and that they are going to give social licence. We know there has been no social licence. The Liberals more or less have a tangential point of contact with the truth, and they do catch it once in a while. However, there is not that much extra to be learned from these Liberals.

Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise in the House today to discuss Bill C-48. It is always both an honour and a privilege to stand in the House and have the opportunity to take part in these crucial debates.

I am speaking today mainly about the issue that Bill C-48 raises and why I will not support the bill.

The Liberal government has introduced Bill C-48, the oil tanker moratorium act, which would ban all tanker traffic on the north coast of British Columbia. Aside from this legislation just being another shameful step in phasing out the oil sands, it seems highly hypocritical to me. The Liberals believe that Venezuelan oil in Quebec is fine, that Saudi Arabia oil on the east coast is fine, that Canadian oil in Vancouver is fine, but they do not believe it is fine in northern British Columbia. This does not make any sense.

My colleagues in the Conservative caucus and I know that diversifying Canada's export markets for oil and gas is crucial to support the continued growth of our economy. We also know that the demand for Canadian oil is strongest in the rapidly growing market of the Asia-Pacific region.

We on this side of the aisle want to keep our country competitive and we will always support jobs and growth in Canada's energy sector.

Our Conservative caucus wants Canada to prosper in the international market so that Canadian families from coast to coast can prosper. I just do not understand why the Liberal government would put forward legislation like this which seeks to stifle prosperity for Canadians on one specific coast in one single sector.

This bill would establish an administration and enforcement regime that includes requirements to provide information and to follow directions, and that provides for penalties of up to a maximum of \$5 million. Nowhere else in Canada would there be a ban like this. The government is just trying to throw a wrench into the Canadian energy sector.

I want to touch on the work of the previous Conservative government. We introduced and implemented a number of measures to create a world-class tanker safety system in November 2014. These measures included modernizing Canada's navigation system, enhanced area response planning, building marine safety capacity in aboriginal communities, and ensuring polluters pay for spills and damages. These were meaningful changes while still supporting our energy sector in Canada.

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I want to remind the House that there is already a voluntary exclusion zone of 100 kilometres for oil tankers travelling from Alaska to Washington state. This is a voluntary practice that has been in place since 1985.

The Liberals claim this legislation is being put forward in the name of the environment, but that is not at all the case. This is a pipeline moratorium under a different name.

My Conservative colleagues would suggest that Bill C-48 would do absolutely nothing for the preservation of British Columbia's environment. Ships, including U.S. tankers travelling from Alaska to Washington state, will continue to be able to travel up and down the coast just outside the 100 kilometre limit. This bill does not take meaningful action in terms of the environment.

• (1715)

On that note, Canadian oil is extracted and transported under some of the safest and most environmentally strict regulations in the world. Conservatives are here to help, rather than hinder, Canada's energy sector. Preventing our Canadian oil resources from reaching customers in other countries only serves to increase the production of oil products extracted and transported in a less safe and less environmentally friendly way.

We need to support Canadian industry. The strange contradiction that we see here with the government's view on Canadian oil is that its opposition to it defeats its supposed greater goal of protecting the world's environment. Canadians deserve better than this.

The proposed moratorium would be in effect from the Canada-U.S. Alaska border and the northern tip of Vancouver Island. This legislation would prohibit oil tankers carrying oil as cargo from stopping, loading, and unloading at ports or marine installations in the moratorium area. Vessels carrying less than 12,500 metric tons of crude oil would be exempted from the moratorium. I believe the government should maintain strong regulations to allow for the safe passage of all vessels through Canadian waters rather than impose measures that target the development of one single industry.

In addition to this, there is another issue with this legislation I would like to raise. The 3,800-member Lax Kw'alaams based near Prince Rupert is a collective of nine tribes that oppose Bill C-48, known as the oil tanker moratorium act. I am proud that my colleagues and I support responsible development of all kinds of energy in all sectors across all provinces for the benefit of all of Canada. The government needs to look at the facts. It is important for this discussion that it consider all of the risks, costs, and benefits associated with this legislation, which was imposed without sufficient consultation with local communities and indigenous Canadians.

If we look at the evidence, we see that the tankers have safely and regularly transported crude oil from Canada's west coast since the 1930s. We also see that there have not been any tanker navigational issues or incidents in about 50 years in the port of Vancouver.

There is considerable support among first nations on B.C.'s coast for energy development opportunities. How does the government plan to move forward with this tanker moratorium without properly consulting coastal first nations? Canadians are concerned about the direction in which the government is taking this country. They are

worried about their jobs, their industry, and their economy. This bill is an attack on the hundreds of thousands of energy workers across Canada. It is an attack on one industry, and one industry only, and one product. The government needs to head back to the drawing board with this legislation and focus on what is best for the growth of this industry, the growth of communities, and the growth of livelihoods.

My Conservative colleagues and I will continue to stand up for Canada's energy sector and continue to hold the government to account.

• (1720)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, before I ask my question, on behalf of the people of Courtenay—Alberni, I would like to extend our condolences on the loss of our good friend from Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. When we lose a colleague in this place, it certainly puts aside all of the partisan elements. The member was at members' orientation. He welcomed us and treated us all with great respect, and I want to acknowledge that.

The member talked about safe passage of supertankers. As someone who lives on the coast of British Columbia, there have been recent incidents. There was a bunker spill in English Bay. It took 14 hours for the Coast Guard to respond. There was the diesel spill off the Heiltsuk territory. There was the floating freighter, the *Simushir*. The Coast Guard did not have an adequate response, never mind dealing with bitumen, which sinks. We need to figure this out before we can even talk about expanding tanker traffic in our coastal regions, and I think a ban is appropriate.

Mr. Bob Saroya: Madam Speaker, I was in Vancouver 10 days ago. We do not want any accidents, any spillage of diesel, gas, or crude in any shape or form at any time, but we have the technology. We have the means to fix it.

The bottom line is that Canadian resources help all 36 million Canadians. The number I hear is that we could build a school on a daily basis. We could build a hospital on a daily basis.

The oil from Saudi Arabia, from Venezuela, and from the United States travels through the same routes. Why can Canadian oil not go through the same routes, which would help all Canadians throughout the country from coast to coast to coast?

Mrs. Celina Caesar-Chavannes (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the moratorium would provide the highest level of environmental protection for B.C.'s northern coastline. A particular moratorium has been in place since 1972. We have reinforced it. We have made it such that it would be the highest level of environmental protection.

I am wondering what my hon. colleague would say to young people in his riding. I know there are young people in Whitby who are Earth Rangers ambassadors who are looking to our government to protect the environment. What does he say to the young people in his riding about why he opposes such a critical piece of legislation that would protect the regions of our coasts?

Private Members' Business

Mr. Bob Saroya: Madam Speaker, let us talk about what the Liberals promised. Remember Prime Minister Chrétien? He went to Kyoto and signed the deal, then Prime Minister Martin said it did not make sense. The Liberals keep coming back time after time with a different moratorium, a different point of view. At the end of the day, the children in my riding and in the member's riding, and the children in the 338 ridings throughout the country, do not want an accident. We want to make sure that we do what we need to do to make it accident-free and spillage-free in any shape or form.

Other countries are doing it. These are our resources. This is the only way we can take our resources to the Asia-Pacific. Otherwise, we are getting, as I understand, 70% of the crude price for the United States alone.

• (1725)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be joining the debate at this late hour.

“He who looks for light work goes very tired to bed.” That is a Yiddish proverb and is often used to tell people who are looking for an easy way out of a hard day's work that at the end what happens is people actually work much harder. There is no such thing as easy work. There is no such thing as an easy way out.

We heard earlier from the member for Lakeland, who added that this was part of the Liberal Party's platform. The Liberals rolled this out right after the last election, and there was very little time for evidence-based policy-making to review whether this was the best thing to do. The Liberals committed to it, but it is an error in commitment. I would consider that the hard work of balancing the economy and the environment can be done with a quick moratorium is the easy way out.

If we look at the contents of the bill, we see that a blanket exemption could be provided by cabinet for anyone at any time to ship through those lanes. American tankers will still be able to go through this area, as long as they do not stop at a Canadian port. It simply shifts some of the tanker traffic further west off of the coast. It does not apply to where 95% of the tanker traffic is, which is on the southern part of the coast.

I have a lot of constituents who ask me what is wrong with the British Columbian government. They want to know why it is harassing oil and gas companies and pipeline companies. I am sure that some day it will start harassing railway companies as well for trying to ship a product that Vancouverites, people of the Greater Vancouver area and the entire Lower Mainland, want to use. People want a tank of gasoline, they want diesel, and they want to be able to heat their homes. These are products that everyday Canadians need to use. We live in a colder climate, and it is a necessity.

For people in my riding, this is twofold, because they work in the oil and gas sector. I have a great many white-collar employees and a lot of blue-collar workers—riggers, guys and women who used to work on the rigs—for whom this was their livelihood. They moved to Alberta or grew up in a small community in Alberta and went out to work on the rigs, and they earned an amazing income and were able to provide for their families.

Decisions like this, a tanker moratorium ban—which truthfully should be called a pipeline ban, because that is effectively what it is

going to do—puts those people out of work. It is just one part of this grand Liberal strategy to phase out the oil sands, but also, in great part, to phase out the oil and gas industry, the lifeblood of Albertans. To phase it out, Liberals are going to have to do things like these moratoriums, cancelling pipelines, and making it so much more difficult to upgrade the product right here at home.

Today—and I checked the Library of Parliament—we pretty much upgrade and refine most of the product that we produce right here in Canada. It is about a 2,000-megalitre difference between the two. In the Greater Vancouver area over the past 30 or 40 years, there were refineries that closed, and new ones did not open. It is pretty easy to see. Most provincial governments and the federal government have been imposing carbon taxes, and they fall very heavily on large emitters. It turns out that it is not free to produce a refined good. It produces large amounts of carbon emissions. Therefore, they get taxed at an excessive rate. It is not that easy.

There is no such thing as easy work or an easy job. I think that through this piece of legislation, the government will find that it will not achieve its goal of balancing the economy and the environment. It is actually going to hurt the economy much more than it is thinking.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member will have just a little over 16 minutes the next time this matter comes before the House.

[*Translation*]

It being 5:30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1730)

[*English*]

HISTORIC SITES AND MONUMENTS ACT

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.) moved that Bill C-374, An Act to amend the Historic Sites and Monuments Act (composition of the Board), be read the third time and passed.

He said: Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to my private member's bill, Bill C-374, an act to amend the Historic Sites and Monuments Act, composition of the Board.

I would like to begin by recognizing that we are gathered here today on the traditional land of the Algonquin people. This recognition is a small but important way in which to advance reconciliation with indigenous peoples.

Bill C-374 shares the same objective of advancing reconciliation and ensuring that the perspectives of indigenous peoples are incorporated in our decision making processes federally. I am extremely privileged to have Bill C-374 make it to third reading in the House and thankful for cross-partisan support of this legislation.

Private Members' Business

Bill C-374 seeks to include a much-needed indigenous representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The board, which is responsible for advising the Government of Canada through the Minister of Environment on the designation of people, places, and events of national historic significance, currently lacks formal statutorily mandated representation of indigenous peoples on its board.

The fact is that we cannot hope to accurately commemorate issues of historical significance if we do not fully include the perspectives of the first peoples of this land.

My personal motivation to put forward Bill C-374 is rooted in a career spanning more than three decades with Parks Canada. I had the opportunity to live and work with indigenous communities in a variety of settings and it helped inform my opinions about the need to do things differently with indigenous communities. When I was elected, I came across the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In the TRC's Summary of Final Report, there is a section on commemorations which spoke quite personally to me about the need in the commemorations field to do things differently. Drawn out of this section were calls to action to change and improve upon the ways in which we commemorate our past.

Bill C-374 is specifically intended to implement call to action 79 (i), which states, "We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration. This would include, but not be limited to", and this is the section that is covered in Bill C-374, "Amending the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and its Secretariat."

The implementation of call to action 79 was also put forward by the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development. In our report, "Preserving Canada's Heritage: the Foundation for Tomorrow", the committee recommended the implementation of several of the TRC calls to action, including 79, as reflected in our committee's 17th recommendation of the report.

Our government has made clear our support for the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action. Implementation of over two-thirds of the calls to action under federal responsibility is ongoing, and Bill C-374 continues in this spirit.

We have endorsed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, without qualification, and committed to its full implementation. This includes support for Bill C-262.

In February, the Prime Minister announced in this place the creation of a recognition and implementation of indigenous rights framework. This will ensure that the recognition and implementation of rights is the basis for all relations between indigenous peoples and the federal government going forward. To ensure the protection, preservation, and revitalization of indigenous languages in the country, we are working with first nations, Métis, and Inuit communities to co-develop an indigenous languages act.

In this spirit of indigenous language preservation, I have also worked with Senator Jaffer on a bill to designate February 21 as international mother language day. The bill has been tabled in the Senate and debate has already started on it, another small step toward reconciliation.

This week, we witnessed all-party support for a motion respecting TRC call to action 58, calling for a formal papal apology for the role of the Catholic Church in the establishment, operation, and abuses of residential schools.

These are important steps forward, but the work does not end here. Reconciliation is a complex and difficult journey that grapples with the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. The TRC summary of the final report discussed this complexity:

● (1735)

To some people, *reconciliation* is the re-establishment of a conciliatory state. However, this is a state that many Aboriginal people assert never has existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. To others, reconciliation, in the context of Indian residential schools, is similar to dealing with a situation of family violence. It's about coming to terms with events of the past in a manner that overcomes conflict and establishes a respectful and healthy relationship among people, going forward. It is in the latter context that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has approached the question of reconciliation.

To the Commission, reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.

The report goes on, and this is important in the context of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and the changes that Bill C-374 would make. It states:

Too many Canadians know little or nothing about the the deep historical roots of these conflicts. This lack of historical knowledge has serious consequences for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and for Canada as a whole. In government circles, it makes for poor public policy decisions. In the public realm, it reinforces racist attitudes and fuels civic distrust between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians.

Too many Canadians still do not know the history of Aboriginal peoples' contributions to Canada, or understand that by virtue of the historical and modern Treaties negotiated by our government, we are all Treaty people. History plays an important role in reconciliation; to build for the future, Canadians must look to, and learn from, the past.

Bill C-374 would ensure that indigenous perspectives are fully incorporated into our commemorations process federally. Indigenous peoples' participation in our commemorations decision-making process will help us move beyond the colonialist and paternalistic approaches of the past and allow us to engage in a more frank and authentic manner.

This bill is not a criticism of the work of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board over the past 100 years of their existence but shows that there is a need to evolve by creating structural inclusion for indigenous perspectives in how we commemorate the persons, places, and events that are of national significance.

Our history is as messy and complex as the process of reconciliation itself. The legacy of our residential school system is a stark and tragic reminder of this. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission explored this complexity:

Private Members' Business

For Survivors who came forward at the TRC's National Events and Community Hearings, remembering their childhood often meant reliving horrific memories of abuse, hunger, and neglect. It meant dredging up painful feelings of loneliness, abandonment, and shame. Many still struggle to heal deep wounds of the past. Words fail to do justice to their courage in standing up and speaking out.

There were other memories too: of resilience; of lifetime friendships forged with classmates and teachers; of taking pride in art, music, or sports accomplishments; of becoming leaders in their communities and in the life of the nation. Survivors shared their memories with Canada and the world so that the truth could no longer be denied. Survivors also remembered so that other Canadians could learn from these hard lessons of the past. They want Canadians to know, to remember, to care, and to change.

During our heritage study at the environment committee, we heard the powerful testimony of Mr. Ry Moran, the director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, who discussed the intricate and delicate nature of commemorating residential schools. Our report stated:

Mr. Moran is particularly concerned about the state of conservation of the 17 remaining residential schools if nothing is done to preserve them. He explained to the Committee that some Indigenous communities want to preserve these residential schools as evidence of history. However, he said it is easier to obtain funding to demolish these schools. Mr. Moran noted that Indigenous communities wanted to be able to choose whether they preserve or demolish these buildings. Moreover, he emphasized the need to commemorate the places where demolished residential schools once stood, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommended

That includes the burial locations of the missing children.

● (1740)

The committee heard that the inclusion of indigenous people was a priority and a necessity for the heritage community; that today's heritage organizations, departments, and agencies were ill-equipped to protect and preserve indigenous heritage; that indigenous people must be involved in defining, designating, commemorating, and preserving their heritage; and that indigenous communities, governments, and organizations wanted to have a voice and a place for their people to have a voice in heritage conservation.

During my 32-year career with Parks Canada working with heritage spaces, I similarly encountered the often difficult nature of commemorations. I witnessed both successful and unsuccessful approaches to commemorating people, places, and events of historical significance.

I have spoken about those in the House, including the great success of retelling the story of the place of Yuquot, originally commemorated as Friendly Cove and celebrated as the first point of European contact. That location was actually the birthplace of the Nuu-chah-nulth people. The repackaging and rethinking of that designation showed it as a place of welcome by the indigenous people, who had lived there since the beginning of time, and a place of welcome to the Europeans when they arrived in Canada. It was the indigenous people's voice that helped with the retelling and reframing of that story.

I am proud that Bill C-374 has made it to third reading with unanimous support at report stage. This is a proud reflection of the non-partisan nature of reconciliation. Reconciliation is not an indigenous issue. It is truly a Canadian issue.

The success of Bill C-374 and this opportunity to advance reconciliation would not have been possible without the support of the government and a royal recommendation to deal with remuneration provisions in the bill. I am grateful to the government

for supporting Bill C-374 and for granting it a royal recommendation, which is the third of its kind since 1994, to the best of my knowledge. This support reflects our government's commitment to a renewed relationship with indigenous peoples based on a recognition of rights, mutual respect, co-operation, and partnership.

The road to reconciliation is a long and difficult one, but with Bill C-374 we have the opportunity to advance this objective by improving upon the ways in which we commemorate our past. I am hopeful that all members will join me in supporting this important legislation.

Bill C-374 is poised to move to the Senate, where I am proud to have the support of Senator Murray Sinclair, who has agreed to sponsor the bill in the Senate. Members will no doubt know that Senator Sinclair has a distinguished 25-year career in the justice system and served as the chief commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I hope members of the other place will recognize the importance of this legislation and work, as we have in this place, to continue advancing reconciliation.

I would like to thank all members for their consideration of this bill and ask for their support at third reading so this important piece of legislation can move one step closer to becoming law.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from the bottom of my heart for introducing this bill. It is also heartwarming to see a majority of MPs inclined to support it. I ask the following question with tongue firmly in cheek.

Does my colleague not think that, in a few months or years, people will see how obvious this all was and wonder why we even needed to legislate in the first place?

[*English*]

Mr. John Aldag: Madam Speaker, I had a slight problem with the volume on my translation. I will do my best to answer the question.

It really is important that we start now and work toward reconciliation. I appreciate the support of all parties and their work in advancing this discussion and moving forward in a concrete way through their support of Bill C-374.

● (1745)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am so glad to be able to get in on private members' business. Given my status in this place, I am not allowed to make a speech on the bill, but I am very proud to be a seconder of this private member's bill. Bill C-374, an act to amend the Historic Sites and Monuments Act, is an important step in reconciliation. I would like to thank my friend from Cloverdale—Langley City for bringing it forward.

Private Members' Business

I wonder if my colleague would like to explain how he sees the process of selecting indigenous participation once this goes forward. I sure hope it has the support of enough members of Parliament to go forward.

Mr. John Aldag: Madam Speaker, should this become legislation, I think the intention is to have the process overseen through a Governor in Council appointment process.

To me, what was really important in the legislation was to respect the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendation that we not limit it to one indigenous voice but that we truly make it inclusive. Therefore, the proposed legislation includes a representative from first nations, from Métis, and from Inuit. When the legislation comes into play, that would go into the formal appointments process, which will be transparent as our government has committed to and as we are delivering on for other government appointments.

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for bringing this important bill forward.

We understand that this is not only part of the reconciliation, but by having composition on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, I wonder how this can also unite Canadians in understanding that history and position us as we go forward. I wonder if my colleague could speak to that.

Mr. John Aldag: Madam Speaker, as I noted in my comments, this is a Canadian story. Reconciliation is not just an indigenous issue, but something we all need to understand and work toward. In that spirit, understanding the history we have as newcomers to the land about the indigenous peoples who have lived here since the beginning of time is a way to understand some of the past wrongs and the legal frameworks we live with, such as treaties and constitutional guarantees. It is about fostering the discussion with Canadians about how we can co-exist and support each other. That is really what reconciliation is about. That is how we can make a stronger Canada and ultimately achieve reconciliation for all of us living in this amazing country.

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise again in support of my colleague from Cloverdale—Langley City's Bill C-374. I would also like to add that I am very pleased with the overall support this legislation is getting from both sides of the House. It is unusual for a private member's bill to pass second reading with unanimous support.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize that we are on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people. Since we are discussing inclusion and participation of indigenous peoples on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, I think it is very important that we recognize regularly the historic site that we are right now standing on.

Bill C-374 seeks to amend the Historic Sites and Monuments Act. The bill addresses call to action No. 79 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report. There are two further recommendations under the "Commemoration" heading that have not been discussed in this bill.

The mandate of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada is:

...to advise the Government of Canada, through the Minister of the Environment, on the commemoration of nationally significant aspects of Canada's history.

Following a thorough evaluation process and recommendation by the Board, the Minister declares the site, event or person on national historic significance.

It further states:

The Board is composed of a representative from each province and territory... [with] appointments of up to five years with the possibility of additional terms... [there is also] the Librarian and Archivist of Canada, an officer of the Canadian Museum of History and the Vice-President of Parks Canada's Heritage Conservation and Commemoration Directorate, who also acts as the Board's Secretary.

Presently, quorum sits at 10. With the passage of Bill C-374, that number would rise from 10 to 13.

During the second reading debate on Bill C-374, the author and the member for Cloverdale—Langley City said this, which stuck with me:

As it stands today, Canada's historic designation system is outdated. Many past designations, along with the board's composition, are rooted in this country's colonial history. We should celebrate Canada's entire past. We should tell a broader, more inclusive, and more accurate story.

He is absolutely correct. We cannot hope to achieve reconciliation if we continue to deny portions of our history. The three additional voices representative of our indigenous population on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board will be a significant step in bringing new ideas and a fresh perspective to the board, as well as a comprehensive history going forward.

As I mentioned in my earlier remarks, my home province of Saskatchewan has many national historic sites, some of which are in my community of Saskatoon. I spoke about the Wanuskewin Heritage Park, and I believe it is worth repeating here today that on that 240 hectares there are 19 sites that represent both the active and the historical society of northern plains people. Six thousand years ago, indigenous peoples from across the northern plains gathered there to hunt bison, gather food and herbs, and escape the winter winds. The story of Wanuskewin is just beginning to be uncovered in my home province of Saskatchewan.

Another fine example of a national historic site in my own backyard is the Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo. The area called the Sutherland Forest Nursery Station played a vital role in the settlement and development of the Prairies from the years 1913 to 1966. Shipping 147 million trees over that span of 50 years, the nursery supplied the northern part of the prairie provinces with an abundance of ash, along with maple, elm, and willow.

When the nursery was closed, a portion of the site was reopened as the Forestry Farm and Park by the City of Saskatoon in 1966. Designated a national historic site, the forestry farm continues to strengthen the roots of our community, while providing an awe-inspiring landscape for the park and zoo. The zoo is home to 300 animals, including two mobs of meerkats.

Private Members' Business

• (1750)

Another national historic site right in our province would be the legislative building in Regina. I spoke about that earlier in my remarks. I also mentioned its resemblance to where we are right now. Both buildings were built by the same Montreal company, Peter Lyall and Sons Construction Co. Ltd., and the fine craftsmen he employed back then, not only for the city of Regina's legislative building but the House of Commons in Ottawa. Both buildings are truly beautiful.

I know we are going to have at least a 10-year shutdown of the House of Commons to refurbish it, but I encourage anyone visiting Ottawa or Regina to tour them quickly and get to know two of our most beautiful sites in the country.

I have served on the Canadian heritage committee, and I currently sit on the indigenous and northern affairs committee. My experience on both committees, along with the opportunity recently to tour communities in Nunavut with Senator Dennis Patterson for a week this spring, have given me a pretty good perspective on what we can do to bring a much more inclusive attitude to our non-indigenous population.

• (1755)

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise for the third time to speak in favour of Bill C-374. Once again, I would like to extend my compliments and gratitude to the member for Cloverdale—Langley City for his work bringing this important piece of legislation to the floor of the House.

When that member and I listened to witnesses speak to the Standing Committee on the Environment and Climate Change regarding issues of national heritage, we learned that our treatment of indigenous heritage has been severely lacking, consistent with much of our treatment of indigenous peoples. The committee heard that the federal government offers funding to tear down former residential school sites, but no funding to preserve them. That is a shocking disregard of an important, though dark, time in Canada's history.

To quote Ry Moran, director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, when speaking of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report's calls to action:

Central within those calls to action are a number of calls related directly to commemoration. Those commemoration calls relate directly to the creation or establishment of a "national memory" and our ongoing need as a country to make sure we continue to shine light into the darkest corners of our history.

We are fortunate in my riding of Kootenay—Columbia that the former St. Eugene Mission residential school has been converted to a hotel, visitor centre, casino, and golf course operated by the Ktunaxa Nation Council. Visitors to the centre can take a tour to learn the grim history of the building. We almost lost this important building. The first idea was to tear it down, and of course we know how much anger many indigenous people have toward residential schools. The plans were well under way when one of the Ktunaxa elders came forward and said that we needed to stop the demolition, that we needed to take a dark piece of their history and turn it into a positive future. It is a good thing we did. It is a magnificent resort.

In my riding, first nations bands include the Aq'am, whose chief is Joe Pierre, Jr. The name of the band means "deep dense woods". There is the Akisqnuq, led by Chief Alfred Joseph. The band name means "place of two lakes". Chief Mary Mahseelah leads the Tobacco Plains Band, which is also known as Akan'kunik, meaning the "people of the place of the flying head. Chief Michael "Jason" Louie leads the Yaqan Nukiy, meaning "where the rock stands", otherwise known as the Lower Kootenay Band. They are all members of the Ktunaxa peoples.

I would be remiss if I did not mention one other Ktunaxa leader, Chief Sophie Pierre. Chief Sophie Pierre served on the council of the St. Mary's Indian Band, now known as Aq'am, of the Ktunaxa Nation for 30 years, 26 of them as chief. She is a recipient of the Order of Canada, the Order of British Columbia, and the National Aboriginal Achievement Award, as well as two honorary doctorates of law, from the University of British Columbia and the University of Canada West.

To the north, the Shuswap Indian Band is led by Chief Barbara Cote. Shuswap is derived from a phrase that means the "trout children". Chief Wayne Christian leads the Splatshin Band Council, also part of the Shuswap people. Splatshin is a Salish word that may mean "meadow flat". The Shuswap tribe is thought to be a related but distinct people from the Ktunaxa.

I bring them up because they are all great leaders who would make great additions to fill a seat on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board once this act is passed. I say this because the histories of these people are interesting and they are important, yet we spend little time and less money on indigenous history because we do not fully understand it or appreciate it. That is why one of the calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report was to amend the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include first nations, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and its secretariat. Of course, Bill C-374 would fulfill this call to action.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board's mandate, according to its website is:

...to advise the Government of Canada, through the Minister of the Environment, on the commemoration of nationally significant aspects of Canada's history.

Following a thorough evaluation process and recommendation by the Board, the Minister declares the site, event or person of national historic significance.

That is, the board members evaluate the importance of sites and monuments and decide whether they are significant enough to merit federal protection and support. Currently, the Directory of Federal Heritage Designations includes 3,613 sites and monuments across Canada.

Private Members' Business

● (1800)

It is difficult to tell how many of those are dedicated to indigenous sites, because often the site will have a name that appears to be related to first nations, Inuit, or Métis, but the site itself is only recognized because of its relationship to the development of our country by Europeans. That is simply unacceptable, and we need to do better. Only by including indigenous people in our decision-making can we expect that their cultural, spiritual, and historic places, activities, and beliefs will be properly respected and honoured. This is precisely what Bill C-374 hopes to achieve. In the context of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the evidence presented to our committee, passage of this very fundamental bill makes tremendous sense.

Bill C-374 also improves the board's composition to ensure that all members have the knowledge and experience that will assist with the business of the board.

As pleased as I am and as hopeful as I am, I have serious concerns that government is slow to accept the critical importance of indigenous history and culture.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission issued 94 calls to action. They were grouped into categories of child welfare, education, language and culture, health, and justice. I am proud to say that earlier this week the House supported one of those calls to action in a resolution moved by my colleague, the member for Timmins—James Bay.

That resolution said in part that in responding to the call of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to move our nation on a path of true healing for the crimes of the residential school era, the House "...invite Pope Francis to participate in this journey with Canadians by responding to call to action 58 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report and issue a formal papal apology for the role of the Canadian Catholic Church in the establishment, operations, and abuses of the residential schools".

According to the CBC, as of March 2018 only 10 of the calls to action had been completed. Bill C-374, if passed, would be number 11 of 94. I congratulate my friend across the floor for bringing this piece of legislation forward. Bill C-374 would advance our nation-to-nation relationship with indigenous people while providing opportunities to preserve critical heritage that we can all learn from.

I look forward to seeing the passage of this important bill. It is a positive step forward for heritage in Canada, but there is much more to do.

Mr. Don Rusnak (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I stand today to express the support of our government for Bill C-374, an act to amend the Historic Sites and Monuments Act, composition of the Board.

I begin by acknowledging that our debate today takes place on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people. As my hon. colleagues recognize, acknowledging the traditional territories of indigenous peoples represents a small but significant step in our journey towards reconciliation.

The legislation now before us proposes to take another step in this journey by improving the way that Canada commemorates the persons, places, and events that have shaped Canada's history since time immemorial. I commend my colleague, the hon. member for Cloverdale—Langley City, for bringing this private member's bill forward. I believe this is only the third time ever that a private member's bill has received royal recommendation, and it is a testament to my colleague's hard work that the bill received unanimous support from this chamber in the report stage vote.

For my colleagues to fully appreciate the context of Bill C-374, it is important to note that the Historic Sites and Monuments Act was first proposed in a Speech from the Throne in November 1952 to give a statutory basis to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, which had been established in 1919. The act was put forward in response to recommendations in the Massey Commission report of 1951. The bill received royal assent in 1953.

The mandate of the minister responsible for Parks Canada includes deciding which sites, events, or persons are commemorated for their national historic significance. To help make these decisions, the minister relies on the recommendations of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

The current board includes a representative from each province and territory and one representative from Library and Archives Canada, the Canadian Museum of History, and Parks Canada.

Under the proposed legislation, the composition of the board will now include one representative each for first nations, Inuit, and Métis. To appreciate the impact of this change, it is important to have an understanding of how the board operates.

The board's main role is to receive and analyze nominations for historic designations. Each year, the board receives about two dozen nominations from members of the public, community groups, and other organizations. The vast majority of official designations originate with nominations sent in by the public, which reflects the interest of Canadians in the history of this land.

The board meets about twice a year to review nominations and make recommendations to the minister as to whether a subject merits designation. In making their recommendations, the board considers whether a person, place, or event has had a nationally significant impact on Canada's history, or illustrates a nationally significant aspect of our history. In virtually all cases, my predecessors and I have accepted the board's recommendations.

Once an official national historic designation is bestowed, Parks Canada organizes a ceremony, and installs and maintains the bronze plaque, which is the usual form of commemoration. This process serves Canadians well.

Today, our country's network of heritage designations includes nearly 1,000 sites, 700 persons, and 500 events. Canadians and visitors to our country appreciate these designations because each one represents one part of the larger stories of Canada. They honour our roots and accomplishments. They reckon with darker chapters of our history. They also describe our aspirations: how we have seen ourselves in the past, how we see ourselves in the present, and how we want to be seen in the future.

In this way, they link past, present, and future. This idea is particularly relevant at a time when so many Canadians are re-thinking the country's relationship with indigenous peoples. For millennia, indigenous peoples thrived in communities across the landscape we now call Canada.

Since the arrival of Europeans a few centuries ago, much of this history has been either ignored or downplayed. There can be no doubt that indigenous peoples have made and continue to make important contributions to the country. Yet, if one were to travel across the country and visit every historical plaque or historic site, I am confident that person would get an extremely limited sense of the history and contributions of indigenous peoples in the country.

• (1805)

The simple truth, of course, is that Canada's network of historic designations reflects a rather narrow view of the past, a view rooted in our colonial history. In recent years, however, Canadians have begun to take a more critical view of our history. Many now recognize that indigenous peoples have long been prevented from participating equally in and contributing fully to this country's prosperity. We must change this sad reality to unlock Canada's full potential. Through reconciliation, I am confident we can achieve this goal.

Our government is committed to achieving reconciliation with indigenous people based on the recognition of rights and through mutual respect, co-operation, and partnership. Reconciliation involves a multi-faceted, deliberate, and ongoing process—a journey. That is why our government is committed to implementing the 94 calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission helped to educate Canadians about Indian residential schools and to raise awareness of how past policies continue to harm this country today.

Budget 2018 proposes to provide \$23.9 million over five years, starting this fiscal year, to implement call to action 79, regarding the commemoration of heritage in Canada. The funding will support the integration of indigenous views, history, and heritage in the heritage places and programs managed by Parks Canada.

The legislation now before us is an essential step in the journey to implement call to action 79 by establishing ongoing first nation, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. Along the way, we must acknowledge the wrongs of the past, learn more from our history, and work together to implement indigenous rights. Bill C-374 is a step in that direction in the area of historical commemoration.

The Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development reviewed Bill C-374 and endorsed the proposed legislation with a series of technical amendments. The amendments

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clarify a few points about expenses incurred by board members and the expertise of board candidates. I am convinced that these amendments would strengthen the bill and serve the best interests of Canadians.

I expect that every person here today supports reconciliation with indigenous peoples, but I am convinced that we will make little progress toward this goal until we critically re-examine our history and take stock of the stories we have told and those we have not.

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plays an essential role in the commemoration of our history. The inclusion of indigenous peoples and indigenous representation on the board would help us bring greater perspective to the telling of the stories of Canada and foster reconciliation with indigenous peoples across this land. For these reasons, I urge all members of the House to endorse Bill C-374 at third reading.

Meegwetch.

• (1810)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Cloverdale—Langley City has a five-minute right of reply.

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to close by once again thanking all members for their contributions to and consideration of this important bill. I would also like to take a brief moment to recognize and thank Kyle Harrietha for his support, guidance, and hard work in helping get Bill C-374 to this crucial stage.

I also thank the indigenous caucus for its valuable input and support for Bill C-374. No relationship is more important to our government and to Canadians than the one with indigenous peoples, and support for Bill C-374 is a proud reflection of that. I thank the Prime Minister for his leadership toward reconciliation and his support for implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, including item 79(i) covered in Bill C-374.

In closing, I humbly ask all members on both sides of the House for their support of Bill C-374 at third reading. This bill offers us, as parliamentarians, the opportunities to advance reconciliation with indigenous peoples, and I am hopeful that it will receive the full support of this House.

[*Translation*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): 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 Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

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The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to Standing Order 98, a recorded division stands deferred until Wednesday, May 9, immediately before the time provided for private members' business.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

* * *

[English]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise tonight at adjournment proceedings to pursue a question I asked. I am really pleased to bring it up when not too much time has passed since the question was raised. It was toward the end of March this year, when we were seeing Prairie grain shipments almost at a standstill when the shippers, CN and CP, were unable to bring forward enough railcars to move the grain. It was of crisis proportions, but it was not the first time this had happened.

I will briefly review the question I asked, which was to point out that millions of tons of grain were stuck on Prairie farms and in grain elevators. However, it was connected to a problem we were also experiencing on the coast of British Columbia, where freighters and container ships waiting to pick up that grain in the port of Vancouver were backed up and using the waters of the Salish Sea essentially as a free parking lot. The port of Vancouver was backed up, so as the container ships were waiting to go in and out of the port of Vancouver, which could each have three and four different containers within them, they would go back to collect grain and then go back to sit off Plumper Sound in the Salish Sea in my riding waiting to know if the grain had been delivered.

The knock-on effects of poor service by CN and CP are real pain and economic trouble for the Prairie grain farmers, an inefficient port of Vancouver, and a significant cost in quality of life to people living in Saanich—Gulf Islands and Nanaimo—Ladysmith, where these container ships were sitting off of Gabriola Island.

Members will be surprised to know that these anchorages for container ships off Saanich—Gulf Islands and Nanaimo—Ladysmith are available legally, but in that sense are largely unregulated, and there are no fees paid for sitting in the waters off Ganges, Plumper Sound, or Pender Island.

These enormous factory ships often have lights on through the night. I have talked to constituents who said that after they turn off all the lights in their house, they can still read a book because of the lights from the ships stuck there waiting.

It is a real cost in quality of life that we do not have an efficient rail service to deliver grain on time. It costs money to the shippers, the farmers, and those buying the grain. There needs to be a whole-of-government approach. At the least, Transport Canada needs to start figuring out how we make sure we move goods quickly and effectively. Perhaps through a computerized system, the port of Vancouver could tell the grain farmers when to move the grain.

By the way, we used to have a better system when we had the Wheat Board. The Wheat Board did a better job in synchronizing shipments, and this problem did not come up. However, we had a crisis in 2014. On Vancouver Island, we were two days away from livestock operations not being able to get any feed because none of the mills that process the grain into livestock feed had any grain. The farmers had to band together and hire trucks. Again it was a big cost and poor service.

I know that Bill C-49, which we just voted on in the House, would help. There would be penalties for the shippers. From 1918 until 1995, this railway was a crown corporation, and it worked much better. What do we do to get goods moving in this country? Do we need to make it a crown corporation again?

• (1815)

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Madam Speaker, our government understands the challenges faced by our farmers every day. We are committed to ensuring that they have access to freight rail systems that effectively move their goods to market. That is why we introduced Bill C-49, the transportation modernization act, which would put in place the right conditions, over the long term, for a safe, efficient, effective, and transparent freight rail system, which would benefit all rail users right across the country.

We are delighted that this bill, which both the member opposite and I voted for today, would provide robust, long-term solutions for many of the challenges facing our freight rail transportation system and its users. It would provide for enhanced accountability through reciprocal financial penalties between shippers and railways. It would improve transparency through increased reporting from railways, and it would provide captive shippers with a way of accessing an alternate rail carrier through long-haul interswitching. It would encourage investments in hopper cars through changes to the maximum revenue entitlement process, which would be retained for the benefit of the grain sector. In short, it would help avoid the kind of situation we are witnessing now. It would also provide the Canadian Transportation Agency with the powers it needs to investigate systemic issues of its own motion.

We understand that rail service this year has not lived up to expectations, both for grain and other commodities. That is why our government continues to work with railways to ensure that they are taking the necessary steps to improve service and to move grain and other commodities to market. Railways have provided us with their plans for relieving the backlog, and we will continue to keep a watchful eye on their performance to ensure that these plans have the desired effect.

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What our government has not done is introduce a short-term approach, like minimum grain volume requirements, which could risk negative consequences for farmers, grain shippers, and shippers of other commodities. Minimum grain volumes could result in preferential treatment of some corridors, even within the grain sector. As a result, they are not a silver bullet. Their benefits are not felt evenly, and they can have real implications for shippers in the grain sector and for other commodities.

As to the particular question the member opposite raised about nationalizing the rail system, I am pretty certain that this is not in our government's forecast in terms of potential legislation that may be introduced. However, I will note that in the city I come from, one of the greatest inhibitors of stronger passenger rail movement is the conflict between rail that is carrying cargo and passenger movement, in particular commuters in the GTA.

There is a missing segment of the rail lines between Sudbury and Ottawa and down towards the east coast, which was given away and abandoned by rail companies. If used properly, it could reroute some of that cargo and free up rail capacity for commuters, which would take cars off the road. Switching away from cargo on the rail and getting passengers is one priority, but the other option is to make sure that other commodities that can move by different methods do not plug up the rail system as well.

Therefore, realigning, reassessing, and recommitting ourselves to a long-term rail strategy in this country is one of our government's priorities. The member can see that in budget 2018, with the significant investment we have made in modernizing VIA to get it back into a position where it can start to grow its customer base and move people more effectively, and in environmentally clever ways, so that we can make our strategic investments in infrastructure and also reduce greenhouse gases.

As for grain, I am glad that the bill has come through the vote today. It is progress. We continue to move forward to make sure that grain shippers get the service they need from this government.

• (1820)

Ms. Elizabeth May: Madam Speaker, I agree with the member's comments on passenger rail. It used to be the case that the U.S. had the same conflict. Passenger rail could never arrive anywhere on time, because it had to rent the track from freight, and freight controls the traffic lights. However, I recently took the train from Seattle to San Francisco. It was a 24-hour trip, and it arrived spot on time. They have renegotiated. With government leadership, they got freight to yield to passenger rail. I like the thinking I am hearing from the parliamentary secretary, and I hope we can move on that.

I do want to flag a concern I have. CP right now has put forward an unacceptable offer. Teamsters are voting right now. May 23 is what they are calling judgment day. I am sure that the Minister of Transport is paying close attention.

I will be very blunt. I do not trust these guys, CN and CP. I do trust our workers. We need more workers and more rail cars so that we can get goods delivered on time.

Mr. Adam Vaughan: Madam Speaker, one of the concerns we have in the city I represent, in part of the riding that used to be part of the area of Toronto I represented until redistribution, is the Dupont

rail corridor that goes through midtown Toronto. It would be an excellent service for commuter rail. The challenge is that it is the main freight rail as it moves through the most dense part of the City of Toronto.

Those who followed the Lac Mégantic situation and saw the resources moved by rail through that Quebec town, to great disaster, will know that only a few hours earlier, it came through midtown Toronto. If the derailment that happened at Lac Mégantic had happened close to downtown Toronto, as the Mississauga derailment did almost a generation ago, the death toll would have been off the charts. This is one of the reasons we need to move volatile substances off rail cargo, out of residential areas, and find a rerouting of that system. Perhaps even a pipeline may be one of the alternatives.

However, the reality is that what we actually need is a rethinking of the rail system to accommodate people and to accommodate the environmental outputs that are possible. In the city of Toronto, that means rethinking how cargo moves through Toronto.

[*Translation*]

EMPLOYMENT

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on January 29, 2018, I asked a question about the summer jobs program and the personal values test that, in my view and that of many organizations, is inconsistent with our rights and freedoms. I have asked this question repeatedly but, as usual, remain without answers, so I will ask it again.

After I asked the question, some ministers acknowledged that it probably did go too far, but they did nothing about it. They did not scrap the values test. Now that the Canada summer jobs program is over, it seems that some organizations that did not agree to the values test have had their funding cut.

I was very surprised because this has never happened in Quebec. Everyone knows that people in Quebec are pretty open about a lot of things, but the more time passes, the more people are realizing that the government opposite is becoming opaque and forcing people to think like they do. I think that is wrongheaded. We have the right to believe in whatever we like. In Canada, we have the freedom to choose what we want in life. We have the freedom to be who we are. We have the freedom to practice whatever religion we want. We have those freedoms and we want to keep them.

I think it makes no sense for the government opposite to impose a mandatory values test despite the fact that it conflicts with some people's way of thinking. That violates the rights and freedoms of people in Quebec and Canada. I can speak on behalf of my province because I am a Quebecker, and people who know me know I am a "live and let live" kind of person.

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I have no business inside people's heads, trying to make them think like me. That is what the government opposite is doing with its values test. Sooner or later, that has to stop. We have called on the government several times to remove this values test. The government acknowledged that things might have gone too far. Now I would like to know why it is forcing Canadians and Quebeckers to think like it does.

• (1825)

[*English*]

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to address a very important issue, which is the new eligibility criteria for the Canada summer jobs program.

Our government knows that a strong middle class and a growing economy depend on young Canadians getting the skills and work experience they need to succeed. That is why this government doubled the Canada summer jobs program compared to the previous Conservative government, which was actually in the process of trying to eliminate it when it had to be rescued.

The program creates meaningful, paid work for almost 70,000 students, and those students will still get the work they need this year as a result of strong investments in our previous budgets.

However, I find it very disappointing that members of the opposition are spending so much time spreading misinformation about what has happened. I will be very happy to set the record straight.

First, the attestation, as outlined in the application guidelines, concerns both the job and the core mandate of the organization. What do we mean by core mandate? We mean the primary activities undertaken by the organization that reflect the organization's ongoing services provided to the community. It is not the beliefs of the organization and it is not the values of the organization that are being tested.

I would like to point out that applicants have always been required to outline their organization's mandate, roles, and responsibility of the job to be funded. This is not a new requirement. What is new this year is that applicants have to attest that both the job and the organization's core mandate respect individual human rights in Canada.

What do we mean by respect for those rights? We mean the respect of individual people, including the rights of women and LGBTQ2 Canadians. That is to say that these rights are respected when an organization's primary activities, and the job responsibilities, do not seek to remove or actively undermine these existing rights.

By including this requirement, we want to prevent federal funding from flowing to organizations whose mandates or projects do not respect individual human rights, and do not respect the values underlying the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is as simple as that.

Our government has a responsibility to ensure that its policies, programs, and budgets respect and protect human rights. I want to

make it clear, as per previous years, that churches and religious organizations as well as faith-based organizations were encouraged, welcomed and eligible to apply for CSJ funding. I want to confirm that in my riding many did.

The Liberal members have helped hundreds and hundreds of faith-based organizations receive the funding they need to support students this year and do the good work they do in our communities.

The attestation introduced to the Canada summer jobs program does not represent any infringement on the freedom of religion, conscience, or any other rights that people in Canada enjoy. It does not require any individual employee in any organization to change his or her beliefs in order to qualify.

The attestation is designed to ensure that federal funding is not used to create jobs that discriminate and undermine people's human rights. We do not want groups, like the Canadian Centre for Bioethical Reform, using federal funding to put kids to work distributing disturbing and awful graphic flyers of aborted fetuses. This was done in my riding. It was horrible and we had to explain to people that their tax dollars were used to scare children. It is unacceptable let alone the impact it may have on some of the students working in these programs. That is what we sought to end. That is what we did effectively end.

We are proud to stand against all forms of discrimination in our country because Canadians deserve a life of equality, dignity and respect.

Human rights are an important part of the social fabric of Canadian society. This government does not abandon that.

• (1830)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sylvie Boucher: Madam Speaker, what hypocrisy. That is the only word that comes to mind. It is pure, unadulterated hypocrisy. Even the ministers said that things had gone too far. We did not make that up. It was in all the papers. The Liberals failed to tell it like it is.

The government claims to respect rights and freedoms when granting funds, but that is completely false. This was evidenced as recently as last week. The Liberals gave money to people who are working against the Trans Mountain pipeline, a project that their government supposedly supports. That is complete and utter hypocrisy.

Rights and freedoms apply to everyone. I have the right to disagree with the Liberals, and that is a good thing. People have the right to disagree with the Conservatives, and that is a good thing too. Everyone has the right to their own opinion, but the Liberals do not have the right to make threats and prevent young people from working.

[*English*]

Mr. Adam Vaughan: Madam Speaker, the member opposite is free to hold her rights and speak about her rights, but what she is not entitled to do is demand government money to campaign to change other people's rights. That is what the attestation is focused on.

If an organization would put its personal beliefs in the way of a kid getting a summer job and its primary goal is to push those beliefs onto other people's lives rather than simply to employ people, the organization is missing the purpose of the program. This program is designed to employ young people and help them pay for school. That is what it is all about. It is not a program that entitles organizations to get tax dollars to fight people's rights and campaign against them.

On the issue of Kinder Morgan, there is an organization that for years, under the previous member of Parliament, was getting money to fight pipelines and fight the environment, with Conservative

consent. They had no problem funding Leadnow, which is running a campaign right now against Kinder Morgan. That was a Conservative policy. I was subjected to it. I tried to stop it, but unfortunately—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The time allotted for this is done.

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 6:34 p.m.)

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