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Tuesday, March 21, 2017

—

Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan

CONTENTS

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

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

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 five petitions.

* * *

[*Translation*]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage in relation to Bill C-311, An Act to amend the Holidays Act (Remembrance Day).

The committee has studied the bill and has decided to report the bill back to the House with amendments.

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 28th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs.

The committee advises that, pursuant to Standing Order 91.1(2), the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business met to consider the order for the second reading of a private member's bill originating in the Senate, and recommends that the item listed herein, which it has determined should not be designated non-votable, be considered by the House.

Also, the committee advises that, pursuant to Standing Order 91.1 (2), the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business met to consider the item added to the Order of Precedence on Friday, February 24, 2017, and recommended that the item listed herein,

which it has determined should not be designated non-votable, be considered by the House.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

ANIMAL WELFARE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present three petitions. The first two are from outside my riding. Petitioners from Calgary are urging the government to change the treatment of animals under the Criminal Code and to remove animal cruelty crimes from the property section to strengthen language around federal provisions of the Criminal Code relating to cruelty to animals.

FALUN GONG

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from petitioners in the Toronto area urging the government to press upon the People's Republic of China that it must stop the persecution of practitioners of Falun Dafa and Falun Gong. They particularly draw attention to the horrific issue of organ harvesting.

AGRICULTURE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, my third petition, from constituents within Saanich—Gulf Islands, points to the threat to the diversity of seeds and the ability of farmers, particularly in the global south, to save and preserve their own seed varieties. The petitioners call on the government and the House to adopt international aid policies to aid in seed saving, particularly for the farmers of the developing south, mostly women.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by residents of Elliot Lake who want the government to identify hospice palliative care as a defined medical service to be covered under the Canada Health Act.

[*Translation*]

The petitioners state that palliative care and hospice palliative care help improve quality of life for patients and their families as they cope with terminal illness.

Business of Supply

[English]

These services provide relief from pain and other distressing symptoms, while affirming life and regarding dying as a natural and normal process. The petitioners tell the government that hospice palliative care does not seek to hasten or postpone death but does so much to help with pain, as well as other physical and psychological problems patients and their loved ones must deal with. For these reasons, they ask the government to do the compassionate thing and have hospice palliative care covered by the Canada Health Act so it is available to all Canadians when and where they need it.

IMMIGRATION

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to rise in the House today to present a petition spearheaded by the Ecuadorians in my downtown riding of Davenport. To date, it has received over 1,500 signatures.

The petitioners are calling for the Parliament of Canada to pass a motion allowing the opening of a special immigration program and to fast-track the processing of sponsorship applications for those residing in the Ecuadorian provinces of Manabi and Esmeraldas who were victims of the earthquake of April 2016.

More specifically, the petitioners are asking the Government of Canada to fast-track sponsorship applications for family and extended family members, including siblings, cousins, aunts, and uncles; to allow for private sponsors under group-of-five and community-sponsored programs; and to increase the quota of working holiday visas for young persons.

This petition was presented by Ecutorianos Unidos-Canada and supported by the Latin American Collective, the Latin American Tenants Association of GTA, and the generous support of community volunteers.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

The Speaker? Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1010)

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—BUDGET 2017

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC) moved:

That, given the failure of the government to achieve the economic and employment objectives presented in Budget 2016, and given the growing protectionist and competitive threat from the United States, the House call on the government to ensure that Budget 2017 includes: (a) no further tax hikes on Canadian families, businesses, seniors or students; (b) immediate measures to

encourage companies to hire young Canadians and address the youth unemployment crisis; (c) a credible plan to return to a balanced budget by 2019 as promised to Canadians; and (d) no plan to sell Canadian airports that involves (i) using the revenues to finance the Canada Infrastructure Bank, (ii) selling them to investors or enterprises that are under the political influence of foreign governments, (iii) higher user fees for Canadian taxpayers and travellers.

The Speaker: Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ended March 26, 2017, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bills. In view of recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bills be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Mr. Speaker, as the official opposition, it is the Conservative Party's responsibility to tell the Prime Minister what hard-working Canadian families expect to see in his budget tomorrow.

[Translation]

Canada's Conservatives are the voice of the taxpayer. We focus on results for Canadians.

[English]

Budget day used to be an exciting time for Canadians. Looking at some of our past Conservative budgets, I was thinking about the day before the budget in the 10 years we were in government. It was an exciting day, because we all knew that the next day, we would be giving Canadians a break. For all those people back home who are working hard, who are struggling, who are working in their small businesses, who are worried about their kids, we knew we would be giving them a break. We did that in every consecutive budget, so it was an exciting time.

Our plan created 1.1 million net new jobs. It cut taxes to their lowest level in 50 years and increased health transfers to the provinces by 70%. We had a very aggressive free trade agenda. We introduced tax free savings accounts so families could save for their retirement and for their future. We introduced income splitting so couples could afford to have a family. Business confidence was high. However, today, the day before this budget, people feel anxiety. There is anxiety all across the country, and people are wondering when the other shoe is going to drop. Question after question keeps coming up. I have never seen anything like this before a budget day in the House of Commons.

Small-business owners are wondering, families are wondering, "Are the Liberals going to raise capital gains taxes?" They say they are, we just do not know when. "Are they going to come after our homes? Are they going to come after my business?" These are the questions people are asking. "What tax credit are they going to take away from my family that I use day in, day out to make life more affordable? What is next? What taxes are the Liberals going to raise?" These are the kinds of questions Canadians are asking.

Business investment is at an all-time low. Business confidence is low. This is the kind of business climate and economic climate the Prime Minister has created.

Business of Supply

This will be the Prime Minister's second budget, and we are now encouraging the government to seize this opportunity to change course, but all indications are that it will not. There is so much anxiety, in fact, that the Liberals are not even going out to their ridings after the budget.

I think back to the 10 years we were in government. Not only was the day before a budget exciting, because we knew we were going to give hard-working Canadians yet another break, but we were excited to get out to our ridings to tell everyone about it. We would meet with our chambers of commerce. We would meet with all of the families and business owners in our communities, excited to tell them about how we made their lives more affordable.

Do members know what the Liberals are doing? They are staying here for the weekend for an emergency caucus meeting. I guess they are a little embarrassed about what might be in this budget and what might not be in this budget.

After a year and a half, the evidence is clear. There are a lot of broken promises and there is a lot of spending, but no results for hard-working Canadians. Let us go back to the Prime Minister's original election promise, that he was going to borrow his way to prosperity. He was going to borrow only \$10 billion in order to grow the economy and create jobs. On that first part, on the borrowing, Canadians got a lot more than they bargained for. On the second part, the job creating, they got far less than they deserved.

[*Translation*]

The promise to borrow no more than \$10 billion has been forgotten, broken even before last year's budget was presented. The deficit is now much higher—we will know how much higher tomorrow—because of an irresponsible policy of increased spending that has been described as unprecedented in modern times.

In a report that was quietly released right before Christmas, the Department of Finance admitted that the government will not be able to balance the budget for at least 30 years. Under the Liberal plan, the next generation will be forced to pay down our generation's debt. Canadians who are 18 years old today will not see a balanced budget until at least the age of 50.

• (1015)

[*English*]

Imagine, a Canadian who turns 18 years old today will not see a balanced budget until he or she is 50 years old. I do not remember this being in the Liberals' election platform.

The Prime Minister broke one of his key election promises when he said that he promised to balance the budget by 2019. He still believes, apparently, that the budget will balance itself, and those words are just as foolish today as when he said them during the campaign.

What have Canadians actually got for all of this spending and red ink? Growth is no higher than before the borrowing began. The Prime Minister is not growing our economy; he is just growing the size of government.

Let me repeat that. The Prime Minister borrowed all of this money. He put the next generation in debt and this generation in debt

and he has not actually created any growth. He is not creating the jobs that he promised, so what was it all for? It was to grow the size of government.

Imagine: the Prime Minister actually promised to add 0.5% to GDP in 2016. He was very specific. However, Statistics Canada data shows that the economy grew no faster than initially projected. The only thing he is growing is the size of government.

He promised he would spend this money on infrastructure, but guess what—the infrastructure funds are not flowing into critical projects like roads, highways, or bridges. I know that people in my home province of Alberta hoped the government would get the shovels in the ground so those jobs would be created, but in fact the construction industry shrank by 3.3% last year. The shovels are not in the ground and jobs are not being created through infrastructure projects.

Now the Prime Minister is looking for more money anywhere he can find it to fund his pet project, the so-called infrastructure bank, because apparently there are not enough banks in Canada. All of us are concerned that the money that the Liberal Party and the Prime Minister desperately needs will come from a sale of important assets, such as Canada's airports. Private investment might be beneficial for Canadian airports, but the complete lack of transparency about a proposed sale leaves Canadians asking a lot of questions, such as whether this is in our national interest, whether this is just a fire sale to fund the Prime Minister's reckless spending, or whether it will increase costs for travellers, businesses, or airport authorities.

This is not about a vision or strategy. It is just because the Prime Minister has run out of money and needs to find more. A botched airport sell-off does not protect Canadian travellers and could also lead to dramatically higher costs, but we have none of those questions answered.

Of course, this morning, as usual, the Prime Minister creates all kinds of anxiety and then says the government may not do that. That creates a lot of conflict. Once again, he says he is backing away from this idea of selling off strategic assets like airports, but yesterday the Prime Minister refused to actually commit one way or another. It is not good enough to keep Canadians guessing about such a critical issue. He does this on taxes. He does this on everything. This constant indecision and lack of any clear plan or vision for our economy is creating anxiety all across the country. The Liberals move from one thing to another, from one idea that they float out there to another. They actually have no real plan.

Whether it is airports or other assets, the Prime Minister should not be selling off the furniture because he ran up the credit card. That is not a vision for this country.

[*Translation*]

Canadians pay among the highest air transportation costs in the world. Canadian families who want to go on vacation and entrepreneurs who need to travel to build and grow their businesses should not have to pay for this government's mistakes.

Business of Supply

The rumours that airports are to be sold off at a garage sale are problematic and not just because of the costs involved. Canadians have every right to question whether selling those airports is in Canada's best interest or is simply a way for the Liberals to finance their out-of-control spending.

• (1020)

[*English*]

We also know that lurking behind of all these ideas of selling off strategic assets to an infrastructure bank, there is this idea that the Prime Minister is very welcoming to Chinese government-owned companies and their interest in buying up Canadian assets. In fact, Conservatives feel he is ready to sell just about anything to them. The sale of Canadian airports or any other strategic Canadian assets to companies with links to foreign governments must first meet a test of national interest, always, because they are strategic assets, but we have no transparency on this as well.

Let us remember that this is the same Prime Minister who held closed-door cash-for-access fundraisers where he met with people from the Chinese government and then weeks later reopened national security reviews on the sale of Canadian companies to companies that were controlled by the Chinese government.

When they hear this, Canadians rightly wonder, "Is our national security for sale to the highest bidder?" Canadians have good reasons to be concerned about the Liberals selling off assets, and we demand more transparency. Canadians do not want to see a fire sale in tomorrow's budget or the next budget. In fact, since the Prime Minister took office, Canadians are actually working less. Their paycheques are not rising, and they feel it.

The young people of our country feel it the worst. The youngest workers have now lost over 40,000 full-time jobs just in the past year. We have a youth unemployment crisis. What did the Prime Minister do? He promised an EI break for workers who hire youth. Then what did he do? He broke that promise, and instead he raised EI premiums on businesses, making them less likely to hire.

[*Translation*]

We want the budget to include immediate measures to put young Canadians back to work and address the youth unemployment crisis.

However, as we have seen, creating a realistic plan to stimulate the economy and help Canadians find good jobs is simply not a priority for this Liberal government.

[*English*]

However, that is not what we are going to see tomorrow. This will be a budget written by Liberal government consultants, and it will grow the size of government. For some reason, Liberals are enthralled with these latest glossy, jargon-laden consultant schemes, all about moon shots and innovation strategies, but it is really simple when we are thinking about innovating the economy. As economist Jack Mintz says, if we want to create innovation, we have to create an attractive business climate, cut red tape, lower taxes, and boost entrepreneurs' confidence in the economy.

I have a lot of confidence in Canadians and I know they are going to see right through this. They know that these buzzwords and these brochures do not actually put people to work. These flashy programs

also come with a \$1-billion price tag, and this bill gets paid by the millions of regular Canadians who are not so lucky to work somewhere that the Prime Minister wants to go visit for a photo op, such as New York.

Canadians see this Prime Minister's priorities. If people are fashionable and well connected and work in a certain sector that he thinks is sexy, then he is very generous. However, for the taxpayer—well, they have to pay up. They have to pay up to \$2,500 per household for a new national carbon tax, and add another \$2,200 per household for higher CPP premiums. Then they have to give back their family tax cut on income splitting, watch their tax-free savings account get slashed, and say goodbye to their kids' arts and fitness tax credits and the textbooks and education tax credit if they are students.

The Liberals have an innovation program for every government consultant, but to pay for it, they have a tax hike for every Canadian. Frankly, families cannot take any more of this. With the cost of living rising, the last thing they need is more government. The last thing they need is their government looking for new ways to nickel-and-dime them.

[*Translation*]

This government is taking far more from Canadians than it is giving them, and that must stop.

[*English*]

The situation calls for a change in direction, and that is what everybody was hoping to see tomorrow, especially when we know the United States is about to slash taxes and cut red tape to pull investment and job growth south of the border. We are already seeing it. There is a reason that business investment is already leaving Canada to go to the U.S.

[*Translation*]

We cannot meet these challenges with decades of deficits, an ever-increasing tax burden, and a government that cares more about pleasing major foreign investors than helping Canadian families get by.

• (1025)

[*English*]

Tomorrow Canadians, regular Canadians, want to see a plan that makes their jobs and their families a top priority. They want a break from the government. They want a plan that gets spending under control, focuses on real-life job creation, and stops these nickel-and-dime tax hikes.

As the voice of the taxpayer, we will be judging tomorrow's budget on whether it meets those priorities. Canadians can always rely on the Conservative Party and the opposition to put them and their families first. That is why we are calling on this House to adopt our motion today.

Business of Supply

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think I will go with a comment as opposed to a question.

The atmosphere in the room is providing as much rhetoric as it normally does. However, I will say to the member's comments specifically with respect to the previous budgets and how they were embraced with such fanfare that as a municipal leader, I attended three of the four budgets proposed by the previous government. I sat up there in that gallery and I listened to them, and we usually did not come with a sense of excitement over what was to come. Instead what we witnessed was smokescreens, such as "We will eliminate the penny", while at the same a whole bunch of other legislation was delivered through omnibus bills that lacked support for municipalities throughout the country.

There is no doubt in my mind that the budget we will see tomorrow will be one that will support the middle class, support people struggling in our country, and help to provide the infrastructure that this country so badly needs that was neglected by the previous government for 10 years.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Mr. Speaker, that would all be well and good, except the infrastructure funding is not even flowing. There is no money being transferred to municipalities and projects are not getting out the door. Mayors are saying that across the country, so I am not sure what the member is talking about.

I would like to remind the member of the record of the previous government. We lowered taxes over 100 times for individual Canadians and business owners. It was the lowest tax level in 50 years at the federal level. We balanced the budget. That was not an easy thing to do after taking on a deficit, but we slowly and prudently paid it off. At the same time, we increased federal transfers to the provinces by 70% for health care so that people did not go without the essential services that they needed for their families.

However, the current government is going completely in the opposite direction. All of the money it has spent has done nothing to create growth or create jobs. All it has done is grow the size of government, and who is paying for it? It is the hard-working people of Canada. They are paying for it. Every time we turn around, there is another tax increase, another fee increase, all to pay for the Prime Minister's pet projects. Who has to do this? This is all on the backs of hard-working people.

Every day the Liberals find another way to nickel-and-dime Canadian families and take away from them the things that we gave them to make life more affordable, even the tax-free savings account. This is after-tax income. People have worked hard for it. They are saving for their retirement, and the Liberals are taking half of that away.

There was a tax credit for textbooks. People use these things so that they can make life more affordable if they have students in their house. There was a tax credit for tuition. These are the kinds of things that they just keep taking away from families. They are nickel-and-dime Canadians to pay for their own priority, which is growing the size of government.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate and thank my colleague from the Conservative Party for her speech and her motion.

This is a motion we can really sink our teeth into. It covers quite a bit, but I am going to focus on one aspect on which we can all agree. Canada's airports are a public asset. They belong to us all. There are troubling rumours swirling around that the Liberal government wants to have a fire sale and pay the rent by selling the furniture, the airports, to private interests. Let us consider who will pay the price. Passengers, people who travel, are the ones who will pay the price. Our airports are currently being managed by not-for-profit organizations that have to self-finance. They already charge fees to passengers, but they are not required to make a profit or a get a return on investment. If the government sells these public assets that belong to us all and puts them in the hands of private companies, these companies will obviously want to make a profit. That is the point of buying the assets. What will those companies do? There are two ways to make a profit. They will either cut back on the quality of service and perhaps our level of our security, the health, safety, and working conditions of workers, or they will charge additional fees. One way or another, either airport workers, clients, or passengers will pay the price.

I would like the leader of the Conservative Party to share her thoughts. Did the Liberals get a mandate from voters to privatize our airports?

● (1030)

[*English*]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: No, Mr. Speaker, they do not. I agree with the hon. member about this issue; there is absolutely no transparency around this.

Ports and airports, in particular, are strategic assets. When there is a thought of selling them, we need complete transparency. The member is right about the issue of profit, because we know who the Prime Minister has been meeting with behind closed doors. He has been meeting with a lot of very wealthy investment companies that are looking to buy up assets. They only want assets that they will make a profit off, of course, because this is what they do for a living. If they are going to buy an airport, they are only going to buy one if they can make a profit off it. The member is exactly right. Therefore, where is the transparency about who is going to pay for this? Of course we know who is going to pay for this. The travelling customer, the taxpayer, will pay for it. This is all to make a profit for a private investment firm.

The Prime Minister does have to come clean on this because he is making a transaction that will hurt the public for a profit for an investment firm. Right now we have no transparency around this. We also hear that the Prime Minister might actually put up public money to fund this kind of an interaction or this kind of arrangement with a private sector company.

Let me get this straight. Taxpayers have already paid for this asset, and now we are going to pay for a private investment company to buy it so that we can now pay again. How does that in any way—

An hon. member: That is Liberal financing.

Business of Supply

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Mr. Speaker, that is Liberal financing.

How does that in any way benefit the taxpayer?

At the end of the day, we have the Prime Minister nickel and diming families and businesses over and over again with tax hikes, and his solution is to give a benefit to a private investment firm at the expense of taxpayers. No, this plan has not been thought through whatsoever. Once again, I think it is just a way for the Liberals to find some fast money to pay for their pet projects.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the leader of my party gave a great speech, contrasting former budgets with what we are seeing today.

One thing we all know here in this House is that tomorrow's budget will be written in red ink. It will all be red ink. There will be no talk about balanced budgets; there will be no plan. The Prime Minister made the commitment and promised that; and right away, in the first budget, backed away from it. We know that will not be mentioned. We know that the other contrast with former Conservative budgets was that we lowered taxes to increase economic growth opportunities for people and for business. We know that will not happen. The government has committed to new taxation, whether it is payroll taxes or small business taxes. Those are some of the things we know about.

We know that in former budgets Conservatives supported families, especially seniors. We created things like tax-free savings accounts and changes to the RRIF and universal child care benefits. We know the government is bent on taking those tax breaks away and creating new taxes.

The leader of my party mentioned in her speech a number of job-creating opportunities that the budget could have. I am wondering if she would elaborate a bit on that. The government has backed away from tax cuts to small and medium-sized business. If we talk about middle class, we cannot really speak about middle class without talking about small and medium-sized business.

I would ask the leader of my party to elaborate a little on missed opportunities and things the government should be bringing forward to help businesses that are the job creators.

•(1035)

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is exactly right. We all know, although I do not think the Liberals know that—breaking news—governments do not create jobs. Businesses create jobs; individual Canadians create jobs. It is our job in this place to create the climate for that and allow them to reach their potential to do the things they want to do, like start a new business.

How do we do that? We lower taxes. We put in place the right measures so that when they take that risk and invest their own hard-earned money to start that new business, buy that equipment, and hire that new first employee, there will be some kind of return for that investment. That is not what we are seeing now. We are seeing, across the country, income taxes over 50%. The Prime Minister talked about helping youth, and that has just been thrown right out the window. Youth is where we really need to focus our efforts. What did he do? He is punishing small businesses with all kinds of taxes, to the point where there are not jobs available for youth today.

There are a lot of things this government could have done differently. Conservatives are going to keep pushing the government to do the right thing.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise before the House today to talk about our ongoing support for Canadian youth and seniors. I am glad the member opposite has raised this important issue, which is so vital to the economic well-being of our nation.

Youth and seniors are high on our government's agenda. There is no doubt about that. Since we took office in 2015, we have brought in real, tangible changes that are making a real difference for Canadians both young and old.

Youth represent our present and our future in Canada. They lead, shape, and transform this country. When we invest in our youth, we are investing in a brighter future for all of us. With that said, let me start by outlining the support we provide to young Canadians.

In budget 2016, we increased our investment to the youth employment strategy, better known as the YES program, by \$278.4 million. The fund is being used to create new jobs for youth and increase the number of youth who access the skills program. It also increases job opportunities for young Canadians in the heritage sector, and it increases the number of jobs offered through the Canada summer jobs program. In fact, the Canada summer jobs program created more than 65,800 jobs last summer, essentially doubling the number of jobs created, compared to the previous year. Our investment has yielded real results for young Canadians.

Apart from making investments in our youth programs, we know that we need to identify barriers to youth employment. This is why we launched the expert panel on youth employment initiatives in October 2016 as a way to improve the opportunities for all youth in Canada. The panel's findings will play a key role in identifying future investments in youth programs, including ways to enhance our youth employment strategy.

For young Canadians to get good jobs, they first need to get a good education. With this in mind, we will continue to work with our provincial and territorial governments regarding the implementation of the Canada student loans and grant measures. In fact, as of August 1, 2016, we kept our promise and increased Canada's student grants by 50% for students from low- and middle-income households. This will help an estimated 247,000 students from low-income families and 100,000 students from middle-income families, as well as about 60,000 low-income part-time students each year.

Business of Supply

We are doing more. Starting August 1, 2017, students from low-income families will only have to contribute \$1,500 per school year, with contributions rising to a maximum of \$3,000 for students with a higher family income. This change will allow students to work and gain valuable market experience without having to worry about the reduction in their level of financial assistance. It will also simplify the application process for student financial assistance, making the Canada student loans program more transparent and more predictable for our youth. Furthermore, students with identified employment barriers will not be expected to make a contribution, including students who self-identify as indigenous, students with permanent disabilities, and students with dependents.

In November 2016, we also increased the repayment assistance plan threshold to ensure that no students will have to repay their student loan until they have reached earnings of at least \$25,000 per year. We estimate that about 23,000 additional borrowers will have lower, more affordable payments if they apply for their repayment assistance plan.

Helping families plan for education expenses is also key and very important. The Canada learning bond is money the Government of Canada deposits into registered education savings plans for children to help save for their post-secondary education. The government is committed to working in collaboration with the provinces and territories to promote the benefits of early savings for post-secondary education in RESPs for all Canadians to ease access to the CLB for low-income Canadians. These measures are making post-secondary education more affordable for Canadians.

● (1040)

Post-secondary education is an invaluable asset in today's job market, but employers are looking for more than a person with a degree. They also need the experience and the skills to succeed in today's workforce. That is not something we can teach in a classroom.

That is why our government has invested more than \$73 million over four years to support the student work-integrated learning program. One might ask what exactly this initiative is. The goal is very simple: the program will help ensure that students develop the foundational, entrepreneurial, and business skills required to secure meaningful employment in high-demand occupations in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and business.

We need to work with colleges and universities to prepare the next generation of Canadians for the highly skilled jobs that are out there, and we need to ensure that Canadian employers can bring about and benefit from co-op and work-integrated learning opportunities. Under our government, more students and workers will have access to co-op placements, work-integrated learning opportunities, and summer jobs so they can get the skills they need and their employers need.

Let us take a moment now to talk about seniors. I have covered the extensive support we have provided to youth, and now I would like to turn my attention to seniors.

Seniors are among the most valuable members of our society. They actively contribute to their families, to our communities, and to

our economy, but they can also be among the most vulnerable of our society, especially low-income seniors.

We are proud to report that Canada has one of the lowest rates in the world of seniors living in low income. Our latest numbers indicate that, in 2013, 3.7% of our seniors were considered low income. However, Statistics Canada tells us that about 192,000 seniors still live below the low-income cut-off. These valued Canadians are struggling to make ends meet at a time in their lives when most are not able to work. Our government believes that all Canadians deserve to live out their senior years with respect and dignity. They should also be able to have peace of mind knowing that their needs will be taken care of. We also have to keep in mind that the demographic composition of this country is changing very fast. I, for one, know that in the province of New Brunswick, where I am from, we are actually at the point that the death rate is outnumbering the birth rate. It is very concerning.

Predictions are that seniors will make up nearly one-quarter of the population by 2030. Millions more Canadians will be eligible for the OAS and the CPP over the coming years. We are talking about hard-working Canadians who contributed to this country their entire lives and paid into the tax system. When they enter retirement, it is time for us to give them the support they need in recognition of the contributions they have made to Canada during their entire working years. That is where the old age security program comes in.

The old age security program, also known as OAS, has a clear purpose: to provide a minimum level of income to seniors and contribute to their income replacement in retirement. The OAS program is composed of a number of benefits. The first is the OAS pension, which is paid to everyone who is 65 years old and older and who meet the residence and legal status requirements. The second is the guaranteed income supplement for low-income seniors. The third is the allowances for low-income Canadians from ages 60 to 64 who are the spouses or common-law partners of GIS recipients or who are widowers or widows.

The previous government increased the eligibility age of OAS from 65 to 67 years old. These changes were set to take place starting in 2023. However, changing the age of eligibility is unfair to Canadians who have worked hard their entire lives and cannot, for a variety of reasons, continue to work at the ages of 65 and 66. This government will not leave low-income seniors high and dry at a time when they need our support the most. That is why our government set specific goals to support Canadian seniors and ensure economic security for them.

● (1045)

First and foremost, we have repealed the previous government's measures to move the eligibility age for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement from 65 to 67. This will put thousands of dollars in the pockets of the lowest-income Canadians each year as they become seniors.

Business of Supply

We are not just maintaining the status quo. We are taking clear steps to help lift thousands of seniors out of poverty. In this spirit, we are increasing the guaranteed income supplement for low-income seniors by 10%. This will give one million of our most vulnerable seniors up to almost \$1,000 per year. This is much needed support for our most vulnerable in our society. We will also consider a new seniors price index to make sure that the old age security and income supplement benefit keep up with seniors' actual rising costs.

Let us take a moment now to talk about the CPP, Canada pension plan, measures. Retirement income security starts with a good, stable, public pension program. This is more important than ever at a time when many Canadians are not saving enough for their retirement. In particular, middle-class families without workplace pension plans are at a greater risk of under-saving for retirement. A third of these families are at risk. While those in workplaces where pension plans are faring a little better, 17% of them are still under-saving, and they are not the only ones feeling the pinch. Economic conditions since the global recession of 2008 pose a particular risk for younger Canadians.

With this as a backdrop, we have enhanced the Canada pension plan. Last summer, Canada's finance ministers reached a historic agreement to make meaningful changes to the CPP that will allow Canadians to retire with more money in their pockets. The CPP enhancement will increase the benefits that people receive when they retire. This also means that contributions will increase accordingly, typically 1% for most people, and cash benefits will accumulate gradually as individuals pay into their enhanced CPP.

Young Canadians just entering the workforce will see the largest increase in benefits. What does that mean for future generations? That is a good question. As my fellow members know, the CPP is currently designed to replace a quarter of our income in retirement. The changes we are proposing will increase that percentage to fully one-third, so if someone earns \$50,000 a year over their working life, they will receive about \$16,000 per year in retirement, instead of today's \$12,000 per year.

To fund these enhanced benefits, annual CPP contributions will increase modestly over seven years, starting in 2019. For example, individuals who make \$54,900 per year will contribute about an additional \$75 per year, or \$6 a month, starting in 2019. By the end of the seven-year phase-in program in 2025, their contributions will amount to an additional \$515 per year, or \$43 per month.

Employee contributions to the enhanced portion of the CPP will also be tax deductible. Providing a tax deduction for new employee CPP contribution will avoid increasing the after-tax cost of saving for Canadians.

I used the amount of \$54,900 per year in my example because this is currently what we call the year's maximum pensionable earnings when we talk about CPP. This means that everyone contributes 4.95% of their income up to that amount. Once these enhancements are fully implemented in 2025, the maximum will increase by about 14% to \$82,700. An individual who makes \$80,000 a year over his or her working life will get a third of that per year in retirement from his or her CPP.

Helping people plan for their retirement is among the key elements of long-term economic and social stability, and in fact Canada has a long history of doing so. Our retirement income system is widely recognized around the world as one of the best. A stronger CPP is the core promise we made to middle-class Canadians, and we are very proud that with the collaboration with the provinces, we have been able to deliver these important enhancements. Our government is fully committed to supporting seniors and giving them a dignified retirement.

● (1050)

We are also giving equal attention to our youth. By focusing on education and job training, we are giving young people the support they need to steer Canada to economic success both today and in the future.

In closing, tomorrow, our government will cement this commitment as we table budget 2017.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am growing more and more concerned. The Liberal government said it was going to have a \$10-billion deficit. We now hear comments that this budget is going to be focused on people's feelings. People's feelings; that is absolutely ludicrous. We have a government that thinks the budget will balance itself and that an economy grows from the heart out.

When the member opposite was campaigning, did she stand in any forum or at any door and commit to a budget that would get back to balance by 2019, a \$10-billion deficit? What is she going to do to make sure that she sees those commitments through for the constituents she made those promises to?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: Mr. Speaker, what I told constituents when I was campaigning and knocking at their doors was that our commitment to middle-class Canadians was that we were going to work hard for them. When I spoke to my constituents, I told them we would enhance the CPP. I also advised constituents at the door that we wanted to put in place the Canada child benefit program, which has lifted hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty.

We also indicated to our constituents, or I did anyway, that we were going to be increasing the guaranteed income supplement for low-income seniors. When I attended several senior citizens' homes and provided them with that information, I could see how relieved they were, because that \$1,000 additional amount they were going to be receiving per year was going to make a real difference in their lives. It was going to allow them opportunities to buy groceries or to pay for whatever expenses they had.

Our government is focused on helping middle-class Canadians, which is exactly what we are doing.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if my colleague while canvassing and speaking to people during the last election campaign talked about the fact that the Liberal government might privatize the airports. I never saw that in one debate. I never saw that in the program of the Liberal Party, but still the Liberals are not closing the door to that possibility.

Business of Supply

Right now, airports are a public asset managed by non-profit organizations. Those airports are paying rent of about \$1 billion per year to the federal government. If the government sells all those airports, the quality of service will decrease and fees for passengers will increase. Let us say the government sells them for \$8 billion. In the ninth and 10th years, they will begin to lose money. It is a short-term sell-off to try to balance the books, and it is going to be a disaster, like Hydro One in Ontario. Sell, sell, sell, but after that the people, the clients, the consumers, will pay the bill, not the Liberal government.

I ask the member if the Liberal government will or will not privatize the public airports in our country.

•(1055)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

During the 2015 election campaign, we promised to support the middle class and those working very hard to join it, especially the most vulnerable. Our plan provides for concrete steps. First, we said that we would cut taxes for the middle class. We also said that we would introduce the Canada child benefit, and then we would help our seniors.

With respect to airports, the Minister of Transport clearly said that any decision made would ultimately benefit travellers.

At this point, we must wait for the budget to be tabled tomorrow to finally see what initiatives will be implemented.

[*English*]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was very relieved and impressed by how much time the parliamentary secretary focused on talking about seniors in our country. This is something that I heard about when I was out canvassing during the last election campaign. Seniors and those getting close to the age of retirement are seriously concerned about what their future looks like. In fact, the World Health Organization now says that there are more people over the age of 65 than under the age of 14, for the first time in human history.

I am wondering if the parliamentary secretary could provide some input as to how she thinks what this government is doing and proposes to do for seniors will have a real impact on seniors in our country and in her riding in particular.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: Mr. Speaker, during campaign 2015 when I knocked on doors and talked with seniors about what we were proposing to do for seniors, it hit really close and near and dear to my heart. I am the youngest child of a family of nine kids. My father was a janitor, and my mom was a stay-at-home mom, so we are talking about middle-class Canadians who worked very hard to raise the family. My parents actually depend on the guaranteed income supplement and the OAS. When I was able to go to doors and speak to people about the real difference this investment can make to Canadians, I really spoke from the heart, because my parents could see what that tangible difference was going to mean in their monthly budget and also in their pocketbook.

What does the increase that we have made mean? As indicated, when we look at the projections over a year, we can see that is almost \$1,000 that those people are going to have in their pockets. Again, that can contribute to purchases that they are going to be able to make throughout that year, whether it be medication, groceries, whatever they choose to invest their money in. The other important thing this government did was to enhance the CPP, the Canada pension plan. We have been able to work collaboratively with the provinces and we have all come to the agreement that this is the best way to move forward as we want to ensure that our seniors have a dignified retirement. Finally, we have lowered taxes for middle-class Canadians. Again, that is a step in the right direction. That is exactly what we are going to continue doing moving forward, helping middle-class Canadians and those working hard to join the middle class.

Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member could tell us who the middle class is.

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: Mr. Speaker, middle-class Canadians are hard-working Canadians, just as my neighbour here indicated. When we campaigned at the doors, we heard what the priorities were for Canadians. We have indicated to them very clearly that our priority was to focus on their needs. That is why we put in place the Canada child benefit program. That is why we lowered taxes for middle-class Canadians and why we are continuing to move forward in putting programs in place that can absolutely assist them. From there, we have also made some historic investments when it comes to infrastructure. As a result of those investments, we have been able to see that jobs are being created and from there the economy is stimulated.

•(1100)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, if the Liberals want to help the middle class, why do they not lower taxes for everyone earning less than \$45,000 a year, or everyone who makes less than \$23 an hour, which is the majority of Canadian workers? Why do the Liberals not include those people in the middle class?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor: Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to remind the member that the first thing our government did was cut taxes for the middle class and also increase taxes for the wealthiest 1%. The opposition party, however, voted against that proposal.

In addition to that, it was our government that introduced the Canada child benefit, again to help lift hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty. I will reiterate that we increased the amount of the guaranteed income supplement for seniors.

We implemented initiatives and our program is working.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I wish to inform you that I will be sharing my time with the incredible, fantastic member for Windsor—Tecumseh.

Business of Supply

I want to pick up on what our Liberal colleague just said. According to the Liberal government's definition, the middle class does not include any workers who earn less than \$45,000 a year. Those workers did not benefit in any way from the tax cuts the Liberals have been bragging about for the past year. They did not get one red cent. That is a rather strange definition of middle class. The people who benefited the most from Liberal tax cuts are those who earn between \$90,000 and \$210,000 a year. Those folks got a rebate of \$270, while the workers who need it the most got absolutely nothing. Zero.

I will now talk about the bragging the Liberals have been doing about infrastructure. Our regions, our cities, and our towns desperately need the government to invest in infrastructure, not only to stimulate the economy and economic growth, but also, quite simply, to help businesses move their goods, their services, and their employees.

As the parliamentary budget officer pointed out recently, although the Liberals made a big deal out of their \$13.6-billion announcement, only \$4.6 billion of that has actually been or is about to be invested. That means about 75% of the total was a figment. The people doing the work in public service and municipal government have not seen a penny of it. That money is not doing anything to create jobs or stimulate the economy. We need to take Liberal promises with a grain of salt.

I am very much looking forward to tomorrow's budget speech to see if there will be any new developments in this area. The Liberals will talk about innovation and training workers, but what they announce is likely to differ from what they actually invest. Unfortunately, there is a big difference between what this government says and what it does.

I would like to talk about the Conservative Party's opposition day motion. We do agree about one thing: privatizing Canadian airports is dangerous. I am surprised that the Liberal government is even considering this because there was no mention of it during the election campaign or in the Liberal platform. Maybe I should not be too surprised, because the Liberals often say something but do not do it. Electoral reform is a prime example of that. On other matters, they keep mum, only to spring unpleasant surprises on us, such as this airport business.

Right now, federal airports in Canada belong to everyone. They are public assets. Our airports are managed by airport authorities and non-profit organizations. They have to self-fund, which is why we have airport fees. Their purpose is not to turn a profit or generate a return on investment. They also pay rent to the government, a total of about one billion dollars a year.

Right now it feels like the federal government is in panic mode. It is trying to sell our belongings so it can gain control of its massive deficit. That is short-sighted. There are two ways for the airports to turn a profit: either make cuts to services, jobs, and the working conditions of airport employees, or increase fees. Passengers are going to end up paying out of their pockets. They are literally going to pay the price. All those who travel in the country or abroad will pay the price for the Liberals' nasty little surprise, its move to privatization. Will private foreign companies be allowed to buy our airports? Airports provide not just any public service. They are also

part of a very strategic infrastructure. At the risk of fearmongering, not only is this a bad idea, but it could also lead us down a path that we do not want to take.

• (1105)

The Liberal government has been skating around this issue for two months now. It refuses to answer questions and avoids the issue. We know that the Liberal government hired a firm to study the pros and cons of privatizing airports. Who was hired to conduct this study? A company called Credit Suisse, an international company that specializes in privatizing airports and ports. That gives us an idea of where they are going with this. I am sure that Credit Suisse will provide a fully impartial and neutral report. Yeah, right. The people in that company are extremely biased. It is their business. It is what they do for a living.

This fire sale might bring in \$8 billion, \$9 billion, or \$12 billion. That is a quick cash injection, but since airports are a source of revenue for the federal government, what will it do in year nine, 10, or 12? That is when the government will start losing money and then it will be too late. It will be over. It is the passengers who will pay the price.

[English]

To ensure that everybody understands the message, I will continue in English on the same issue of the privatization of our airports. The Liberals never said anything during their campaign. It was not in their political platform. Suddenly it is a bad surprise for everybody. There is an option that is probably on the table to sell our airports. Right now federal airports are the property of everybody in the country. It is a common good. It is a service for all travellers. Those airports are managed by non-profit organizations. They have to raise enough money to function, but they are not there to make profit. Therefore, what will happen if the Liberals sell off our airports?

The private company that will buy them will need to make money, and there are only two ways to do that: decrease the services, the quality of services, or the working conditions of the employees at the airports, or increase the fees that passengers pay to use the services at airports. At the end of the day, travellers will literally pay the price for a bad decision by the Liberal government. We do not have any clear answer on that, but the door is wide open right now.

We know the Liberal government asked a company to study the advantages and disadvantages of eventually selling and privatizing airports. Who did the government ask to do that? It was Credit Suisse. What does Credit Suisse do? It provides counselling for the privatization of public assets like airports. The conclusion is already quite clear.

Business of Supply

I want to point out that there is another part of the Conservative motion that New Democrats strongly oppose, which is forbidding the government to increase taxation on individuals or companies. The New Democrats do not think it is a good idea for the CEOs of the country, in big companies like banks and oil companies, not to pay their fair share for good public services, like taking care of seniors, health care, child care, and housing.

Right now, the average pay of the 100 highest-paid CEOs in our country is \$9.5 million per year. They are earning 193 times the average pay of Canadian workers. There are growing inequalities in the country. If we cannot raise taxes on big companies or eliminate some loopholes, such as the stock option deduction, for the richest in our country, we will not have the resources we need to take care of our neighbours, to create good jobs, or to take care of our environment and health care.

● (1110)

[Translation]

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. We are debating a Conservative motion that wants to set out the broad terms of the government's budgetary policy. I am really not very surprised that the NDP seems to agree once more with the Conservative Party's budgetary policy. During the last election, they said that the budget had to be balanced at any cost. However, when we took power we discovered the terrible economic legacy the previous government left us.

I am giving my hon. colleague the opportunity to reconsider, to rise, and to tell us, on behalf of his party, whether he regrets having said that the budget had to be balanced at any cost rather than helping the middle class and those in need in our country, as we are doing.

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice: Mr. Speaker, I will refute the premise of that intervention.

On a more serious note, we are extremely concerned that the Liberal government seems to be spending recklessly and not investing where it is really needed. I think that the case of social infrastructure and public infrastructure is a good example. Only 25% of what was announced was really spent. We are extremely concerned about this trend towards privatization.

I talked about airport privatization, but there is also the infrastructure investment bank, which is apparently intended to include private partners brought in on a massive scale to take care of our public infrastructure. This is completely contrary to the Liberal rhetoric during the election campaign. They said it was time to invest in our infrastructure because interest rates were low. They ranged from about 2% to 2.5%. It does not cost much to borrow money to invest, stimulate the economy, and create economic growth.

However, they are telling us that they want to include private partners, who are going to ask for 7% or 9% returns on their investment, while we could borrow that money at 2%. Why do we need to pay 7% or 9% returns to private companies, when we could have this money at only 2%? That does not make sense.

[English]

Ms. Dianne L. Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have one question. The member mentioned the review of the eight top airports: Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa, Winnipeg, and Halifax. He also mentioned that the Liberals were reviewing the ownership of 18 Canadian ports. They have said that any privatization or selling off airports would go to fund an infrastructure bank, which would provide a return on investment of 7% to 9%, which is unheard of.

I would like the member to comment on the fact that the Liberals are also reviewing 18 Canadian ports.

● (1115)

[Translation]

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

Indeed, ports are also included in this study, this Liberal government review. That has us concerned as well. It brings up the same fee- and security-related problems for the companies or individuals that use these port facilities. It feels like the Liberals are doing this to please their cronies, certain privileged friends and an elite group that has connections to the Liberal Party. This does not serve the public interest and neither does the Liberal Party's broken promise to close the tax loophole for stock options deductions that benefit a very small portion of the population. This loophole costs us \$800 million a year, and two-thirds of that money goes to only 75 people in the country. That is totally unacceptable.

[English]

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle (Windsor—Tecumseh, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today on the motion before us. As this motion is very much aspirational with respect to budget 2017, I will use my time today to talk about the things I believe Canadians need to see in it.

New Democrats have expectations for this budget that are entirely reasonable given the commitments the Liberals have made, either during the last election or since. We will welcome all concrete initiatives to address the many pressing issues facing Canadians today. Frankly, everyone has pretty much had it with rhetoric at this point. It is time to follow through.

A good way to start is by building a fairer tax system, closing loopholes for the wealthy, and cracking down on offshore tax havens. While most Canadians pay their fair share of taxes, our tax code is full of loopholes that allow the wealthiest among us to pay less. Altogether, our unfair tax system takes tens of millions of dollars from Canadians annually in lost revenues, money that should be spent to support services like health care.

Business of Supply

The Liberals campaigned on a specific promise to address a gaping hole in our tax code that costs the government more than \$800 million each year: the stock option deduction used by CEOs. They have since abandoned that promise in response to lobbying from corporate executives.

The government also curiously left untouched Stephen Harper's radically low corporate tax rates, which were slashed by a third and continue to cost the government more than \$12 billion each year. In spite of this giveaway, Canadians have not seen the promised increases in investments or jobs.

The Liberals could also use this budget to deliver on promised investments in public infrastructure, rather than selling off airports and pursuing their infrastructure privatization bank scheme. While selling off Canadian assets like airports to turn a quick buck may make short-term sense, from an accounting perspective, it will leave Canadians to pay the costs through increased user fees for many years to come.

Canadians are increasingly stuck in precarious jobs characterized by part-time, low-paid, and temporary employment without benefits or pensions. Let us also hope that this budget will make a priority of creating and protecting good full-time jobs for Canadians and of improving conditions for all workers. It can implement a \$15 federal minimum wage and restore promised small-business tax reductions.

Canada can also create good full-time jobs and be a leader in clean energy if the Liberals take the necessary steps to invest in home energy retrofits, to train workers for the emerging green economy, and to get critical infrastructure dollars out the door.

As Canada celebrates its 150th anniversary, it is unacceptable that indigenous people continue to face third-world conditions as a result of a long and indefensible history of chronic underfunding of services. They lack adequate access to housing, clean drinking water, mental health services, and education. The budget must make immediate investments to rectify this long-standing injustice by immediately investing the minimum required \$155 million to end discrimination in the delivery of child welfare services, as per the unanimously passed NDP motion last year.

It should also provide the necessary resources to end the dozens of boil-water advisories affecting indigenous communities and ensure that all communities have access to clean, safe drinking water. It should, likewise, make an immediate injection for mental health services for first nation and Inuit communities to address the tragic funding shortfalls for such services, shortfalls that have been acknowledged by department officials. It should also lift the punitive 2% gap in funding transfers that continue to apply to most of the base funding that supports indigenous communities. That was a key election promise.

These commitments were made to our indigenous brothers and sisters in a very public way. The fact that the government has yet to honour them shames and embarrasses us all to no end.

● (1120)

Following from this, it would be great to see stable, predictable funding for the many native friendship centres throughout the country. With over half our native population living off reserve, friendship centres provide an array of services to urban natives but

lack a regular funding formula. This has forced a number of these centres to close, while many others struggle from month to month to keep their doors open. On a yearly and grant basis, it is impractical to expect organizations such as our Can-Am friendship centres to consistently be able to strategize and provide these services.

It is crucial, as well, that this budget take the next steps to meet the health care needs of Canadians. Currently, one in 10 Canadians are unable to fill their prescriptions due to financial constraints. It is simply unacceptable that Canada remains the only country in the world with universal health care that does not include prescription drug coverage. It is time to fill this gap by committing to a universal pharmacare plan. This will not only make critical medicine more affordable for Canadians but will save provinces and our health care system billions in lower drug costs.

Despite lofty promises of a renewed co-operative federalism, the government has used a divide-and-conquer approach in provincial-federal health accords. It has forced deals on provinces that are, disappointingly, based on Stephen Harper's planned cuts to health care transfer increases. In fact, the Liberals, who I would like to remind this chamber were elected as a real change government, are giving only the same 3% escalator proposed by Harper for core health care funding, far short of the resources required to ensure the quality of care Canadians expect. More disturbingly, the Liberals have agreed to ignore violations of the Canada Health Act by accepting private clinics, such as MRI clinics in Saskatchewan, in order to cut a deal, another short-term gain that will result in more privatization and more costs down the line. As well, new funds for mental health and home care services are heavily back-loaded, with just 2.7% of new funds to flow in the first year. This will leave Canadians waiting for improvements and suffering.

Business of Supply

Lastly, the Liberals made a promise to civil society groups during the previous election, as part of their successful campaign to woo progressive voters, to establish, if elected, an office of the mining ombudsperson. The ombudsperson would operate independently of government and would provide much needed oversight of Canadian extractive industries operating abroad, oversight these industries are in dire need of, given the increasing number of well-documented human rights abuses, as well as violence, associated with their operations around the world. I would say to the current government that it wooed them, it got them, and now it needs to honour its word and create this office.

One of the main reasons the Liberals were trounced out of power 12 years ago was that Canadians had grown tired of a party that seemed willing to say and do just about anything to stay in power. It has unfortunately only taken a year and half for the Liberal Party to re-establish its reputation along these lines. However, with this new budget, all could be changed. The Liberals can show Canadians that when they make a solemn commitment, they intend to follow through, or not.

We will be watching.

• (1125)

Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are talking about possibly getting rid of our airports in Canada by selling them to the private sector. One only has to look back, as the hon. mentioned a few minutes ago, 10 or 12 years, when the Liberals were in government. They got rid of some 26 airports across Canada. They sweet-talked a lot of municipalities into taking over these airports and told them it was going to be great for them and would be given to them for a dollar.

I happen to have been a mayor of a community that took one of these airports, and I sat on that committee for many years. I think I know a thing or two about airports and privatization. I am also a commercial pilot and have put my wheels down in many airports across Canada. Of those 26 airports, a number closed. Many of them ran in the red year after year. They became white elephants.

Our airport was in the black because of the Conservative tax cuts that allowed businesses to grow in my area of northeast British Columbia. Businesses grew and supported the airport, and we could operate that airport in the black. We operated with four municipalities that worked together.

Does the member see a repetition possibly of what we saw in the early 2000s, with the 26 airports the Liberals gave away, and what might happen in the immediate future?

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Mr. Speaker, I too have insight and experience in how privatization has impacted airports, particularly in my area. My caucus has been sounding the alarm about privatization since we learned of the very cryptic wording “flywheel for reinvestment” and “asset recycling”. In my community, a town hall is planned for March 30 about that very issue, about what happens down the road when we privatize. Obviously, I am talking about it because I am in Ontario. This is about hydro. Though that is a provincial jurisdiction, why are we not learning lessons? Why are we not looking at this?

As politicians, it is part of our job to look, to learn, and to not operate in silos. It is really frustrating to see that we are going to follow this same pattern, and we know what will happen. It is exactly what is happening right now in Ontario. We are expecting that this will happen not just with airports but with other assets.

What exactly is the government's role in intervening? It is not to facilitate corporate profit, and that is exactly what privatization does. The way the Canadian infrastructure bank is being proposed is sounding even more alarms. Issues such as what my hon. colleague mentioned are going to be heightened. It is unfortunate that we are looking at this with a very narrow view for some kind of short-term gain so that somebody can look at a piece of paper and say that it was a good idea within a six-month period. How unfortunate for us, and what a disservice to Canadians.

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I tried earlier with my colleague and her party, and I will try again. We saw in the last election that the Conservative Party and the NDP were pretty lined up on fiscal matters. I know that the hon. member would have campaigned very hard on that platform. I would like to give her the opportunity to perhaps stand in her place and explain whether they have done some thinking about their commitment, like the Conservatives, to at all costs balance the federal budget, whatever the costs for middle-class Canadians.

• (1130)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Windsor—Tecumseh, in 30 seconds or less, please.

Ms. Cheryl Hardcastle: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that I have only 30 seconds to respond to a very simplistic argument. We have been watching and have been engaged and rethinking the campaign balanced-budget issue for a long time, and guess what? As I said earlier about making observations, nothing has changed. We can see the right thing to do for Canadians, and we can see the right thing to do with corporate taxation. People paying their fair share means that we would actually be able to invest in Canadians. This simplistic argument actually does a real disservice to Canadians who want a balanced budget and responsible services for Canadians, not this cop-out we have seen from the Liberals.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take the floor today following the Leader of the Opposition's motion on the budget that will be tabled tomorrow.

As is the case every year, the finance minister of some government or parliament or other stages what is called a photo-op in the business, meaning a photo session on the broad strokes of the finance minister's enthusiasm. All finance ministers of every party have participated in this kind of PR exercise. Of course, this is an opportunity for the minister to show off his new shoes, as British tradition dictates.

Yesterday, what caught my attention is that the Minister of Finance was in Toronto, which is a good thing, but he had children with him. What a nice way for him to show how kind and sensitive he is to children!

Business of Supply

However, knowing full well that our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren will have to foot the bill for the finance minister's poor fiscal mismanagement, the photo of him surrounded by children truly captures the harsh reality of this government's mismanagement.

We will have an opportunity a bit later to take a look at the Liberal government's record over the past 16 months, since the Liberals have already been in power for 16 months.

First of all, let us recall the facts. What was the state of Canada's finances at the time of the 2015 election? There was a surplus of \$2.9 billion, as confirmed by the parliamentary budget officer last October 24 at the Standing Committee on Finance.

[English]

We left a clean house, with a surplus. Yes, "surplus". This word existed under our government. It was not a deficit but a surplus, and our government had to address the worst economical crisis in the world since 1929. However, thanks to the Right Hon. Stephen Harper and those members of Parliament who supported him hard and strong, like the late Hon. Jim Flaherty, we came back as strong as possible. We came back as Canadians can come back. This was the signature of the Conservative government in the last 10 years. We left a clean house, and we were the first country in the G7 to get back on track. We were faster and better, which was Canada under the Conservative government.

[Translation]

Actually, we left the house in order with budget surpluses and the lowest tax rate that Canada has had in the last 50 years. All in all, Canadians had more money in their pockets at the end of the Conservative administration than in the previous 50 years. That, too, was signature Conservative.

We also had the best debt-to-GDP ratio in the G7, the most valuable legacy a government can bequeath to its constituents, and especially to the following government. Indeed, this debt-to-GDP ratio gives it the wiggle room it needs. Still, you need to know how to use it intelligently, contrary to what the Liberals have done.

Let us now remember the circumstances in which the Liberals were elected.

[English]

It was very surprising to see the successor to Paul Martin table a platform, which included a deficit. Paul Martin did a credible job as the minister of finance in the good old days of the Liberal Party when the Liberals were very afraid to have a deficit, and they fought for that. However, the successor of the Right Hon. Paul Martin, the actual Prime Minister, tabled a program in which he included a deficit. It is crazy.

What was this deficit?

• (1135)

[Translation]

Let us remember that the Liberals promised a very small deficit of \$10 billion a year for three years, and then a return to a balanced budget in 2019. Hogwash.

Last year, the Liberals were very proud to table a budget that had a deficit of about \$30 billion, three times higher than planned, and now they have completely lost control of public finances. We are not the ones saying it, Finance Canada officials are saying it, too. Indeed, two or three times a year, these officials conduct evaluations, assess our current situation and consider future prospects.

Now, on October 10, 2016, the Department of Finance gave the Minister of Finance a report that concludes that if nothing changes, Canada's debt will be \$1.5 trillion in 2050, and if nothing changes, we will return to a balanced budget in 2055, 36 years later than expected under the Liberal agenda.

This isn't coming from the Conservatives. Department of Finance officials, the people who deal with this every day, are saying it. They see exactly what is going on. Their conclusion was brutal.

[English]

There will be a zero deficit in 2055. The government missed the target by 36 years. This is totally unacceptable but this is totally Liberal. This is the same situation.

The minister was so proud of the report. What did he do with the report? He put it on his table, not for a day, not for a week, not for a month, but for a full two months. He did not look at it for 10 weeks and then finally published it. When?

An hon. member: Before Christmas.

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Just a few hours before Christmas, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

In French, there is a nice song by Beau Domme. When did they release it? On December 23.

December 23 "Merry Christmas, Mr. [Tanguay]!"

Take it easy, little buddy! See you again on January 7...

That is the song, but we actually did meet again on January 7.

[English]

On January 7, we finally had the report. The odious face of the government was shown to everybody. The Liberals had lost control of spending.

[Translation]

That is the signature of the Liberal government.

Today, we are just a few hours away, 26 or 28 hours away, from the budget being tabled, and Canadians are rightfully worried. They were promised many things in the last budget, as we recall. Even today, the overblown rhetoric drones on. The Liberals spout lofty principles and claim to be thinking of the children, that they have never been as generous as with the Canada child benefit.

Hang on a second. First of all, let us recall that this program abolished all sorts of programs parents could use to help their children. This government abolished the tax credits for fitness and arts activities, the purchase of textbooks for school. This government that spouts lofty principles about helping families has eliminated a number of tax credits.

Business of Supply

Worse still, the Liberals are all proud to say that they are spending \$2 billion more than the previous government. Of course they are, they are creating a deficit. They are sending the bill to our grandchildren; they will be paying for it. Which brings me back to the picture I spoke of at the start of my speech. The Minister of Finance, surrounded by children. Of course, he told them that he will be sending them the bill later and that they are the ones who will be paying for his mismanagement.

Let us not forget that this government overlooked one small detail in its new family allowances. It forgot to factor in inflation. This is just a small detail. This small oversight turned into a \$20-billion mistake. It is incredible. Any low-level accountant working for a small business, whatever it is, forgetting to factor in inflation would be quickly kicked to the curb. Now this government is patting itself on the back, pleased as Punch. They are the nice guys; they can do no wrong.

[English]

It is totally unacceptable. To forget the inflation rate when a budget of billions of dollars has to be tabled is the proof without a shadow of doubt. The Liberals have no control when it comes to spending money. This is a signature of the Liberal government.

[Translation]

It gets better, as the government's lofty principles do not end there. It claims Canadian workers pay less tax because it was good enough to think of the poor, hard-working folk and to punish the big bad one-percenters, those who make a good living, as if they were criminals. Come on, now! For my part, I dream of the day when the 1% will be the 10%, 20% or 30%. That is what we want. Why attack them from all fronts, on all sides?

Worse than that, these people say that they are the modern Robins Hoods, that they will make the rich pay for the less fortunate. What is the result of their tax changes, really? On Senator Larry Smith's initiative, the parliamentary budget officer was asked to assess the precise impact of these tax changes. The PBO revealed that 65% of Canadian workers saw no difference at all. Those earning \$45,000 or less get \$0. Those who earn \$60,000 have \$2 more in their pockets a week. Even worse, the biggest winners are those who earn between \$140,000 and \$200,000 a year. I admit to my conflict of interest, as I fall into that category of people, like every other MP. Indeed, MPs are paid handsomely.

• (1140)

That means this measure will benefit us the most. Those people are trying to tug at our heartstrings by saying they want to help the middle class. Well, I am sorry, but when the people earning \$199,000 a year are the ones benefiting the most from these changes, that is hardly the middle class.

That is what we, as parliamentarians, have been working with up to now, so we are very concerned about what the government has planned for the budget it will be tabling tomorrow. We are especially concerned about three issues: entrepreneurs, Canadian workers and the management of public funds, and the potential sale of airports. Let me go over those one by one.

The government has been hiding the truth from Canadian workers. False promises, bad management, and saddling our children and

grandchildren with crippling deficits is the name of the Liberal government's game.

Canadian workers who get up every morning only to watch half their paycheque drain away in taxes expect to get their money's worth. Eliminating tax credits for families, as we discussed earlier, does not help these people. Even worse are the new pension plan fees that will cost businesses an average of \$1,000 more per worker. That is classic Liberal government.

The same goes for the Liberals' coast-to-coast carbon tax, which will hit taxpayers right in the pocketbook.

[English]

Just to be clear with everyone, the best example of that is this. The government had a study done by the civil servant about the impact to the average Canadian of the Liberal carbon tax. I thank my colleague, the member for Carleton, who day after day in the House of Commons talked about the reality of the carbon tax cover-up. The government is not so proud of this study because, without a shadow of a doubt, it concluded there would be a lot of money to grab from the pockets of the people instead of helping them.

The carbon tax will have a real impact on the average Canadian. That is why this is totally unacceptable. I extend my thanks for the hard and good job of my colleague from Carleton who has raised the issue in the House of Commons day after day. We also had a debate on it a few days ago.

[Translation]

Canadian taxpayers therefore have good reason to be worried about the Liberal government's upcoming budget. Let us talk about entrepreneurs.

[English]

For us, the Conservative Party of Canada, entrepreneurs form the backbone of our economy. Those people create wealth. They create jobs. They are real actors for the wealth of the Canadian economy. We shall support them as far as we can. We do not want to make things difficult for them. We must help them.

[Translation]

For us Conservatives, small and medium-sized business owners are the backbone of our economy. Need I remind the members of the sad day barely two years ago when the current Prime Minister said quite seriously that, as far as he was concerned, small businesses were a means to save on taxes or even evade taxes?

I understand that he was looking at himself in the mirror when he said that, but I would prefer that he respect those who risk suffering huge consequences and who are creating real jobs and real wealth.

What did the government do for those people? First, it eliminated a number of tax credits that helped stimulate economic activity for businesses. This government is going to increase pension fund premiums for every worker. Not only do employees have to pay \$1,000 more for their pensions, but businesses also have to pay an extra \$1,000 for each employee.

Business of Supply

I would also remind the House that the Liberal carbon tax is going to penalize those who work to grow the economy rather than carbon producers. This is not the right approach, and we do not support it. This is why entrepreneurs ought to be supported, especially since the new American administration keeps saying that it plans to reduce fees and taxes for businesses.

Let us face facts: our Canadian businesses are going to go head to head with U.S. companies, which are both our main competitors and our main partners. They will be facing businesses that will see their taxes go down, while Canadian businesses will see theirs rise. That is not the right approach. We believe that the best way to help businesses is not to invent 36,000 programs, but to lower taxes.

● (1145)

Finally, let us look at airport privatization. This is worrisome because, to my knowledge, the Liberal platform did not include this measure. Every time the issue is raised, inside or outside the House, the government avoids giving a definitive answer: maybe yes, maybe no, maybe we will do this, maybe we will do that.

We are asking the government to take a firm position against this privatization. We must be vigilant. Let us keep in mind that starting on December 5, the Leader of the Opposition and I have asked about 20 questions in the House. The questions were about a possible tax on health and dental benefits. After he was asked twenty or so questions, the Prime Minister finally rose, here in the House, and said that the Liberals would not tax health and dental benefits. We were very pleased. Common sense had finally prevailed. However, six days after the Prime Minister said this, we had a vote on a motion that said exactly what the Prime Minister had said. What did he do? He opposed it. He voted against what he himself had said. What is the Liberal government's word worth? Nothing.

This is why we are concerned. When we hear the government say one thing, we know very well that it could do the opposite—not to mention that it got elected by promising to run small deficits, when in actual fact these are massive, colossal deficits, and the budget will not be back in balance until 2055. This is ludicrous, preposterous, and unacceptable.

What concerns us about airports?

Let us get one thing straight: airports are not corner stores. They are the gateway to Canada. The same goes for ports. There is an over-arching function to this kind of infrastructure that makes it different from the others. Moreover, Canadians have already paid, through their taxes, to develop the airports that we have today. If they are sold, the new owners will need to make money somewhere. This makes perfect sense in a market economy, of course. We have nothing against this principle, but can it be applied to airports? We do not believe so, because Canadians have already paid for airports with their taxes. By increasing fees and charges, this government will make Canadians pay twice for something they have already paid for. This is not the right thing to do.

We are not talking about jet-setters here. We are talking about average Canadians who go on pleasure trips with their families to see friends across Canada or abroad. Gone are the days when only the proverbial 1% travelled by air. Today all Canadians regularly travel by airplane. These are the people who will end up paying if the

government unfortunately goes ahead with this initiative. Why are they doing this? It seems that this would be to finance the infrastructure bank. Why does the government want to establish an infrastructure bank given that a private infrastructure investment tool already exists? It is called PPP Canada. Yes, it was created by the Conservatives. Is it because it is a Conservative creation that the Liberals are unable to use it? It is not some venereal disease!

We are asking the government what its motive is to create this initiative from scratch. Why do we need something else when the tool already exists? Even worse, creating a bank takes a fund. What will they do with the \$15 billion they are going to put in the fund? Will they freeze it just like that? The government is going to freeze billions of dollars at a time when the Canadian economy needs them today.

[*English*]

Do not get me wrong, Mr. Speaker. We do not disagree with the investment for infrastructure. When we were in office, the hon. member for Roberval was the head of the ministry that had tabled an \$80 billion budget for infrastructure for the next 10 years. It was a most ambitious program at that time, and we are proud of that. The main difference is that we would have done it with a zero deficit budget, compared to the current government, which spent without any control.

● (1150)

[*Translation*]

Today we are debating the sound management of public funds. This government has proven without a shadow of a doubt that it has no control over public finances, threatening to put Canada in a downward spiral without a return to a balanced budget until 2055. This is completely unacceptable. I call on all parliamentarians to vote in favour of this motion, which takes the government to task and takes to heart the interests of our entrepreneurs and, first and foremost, the interests of all hard-working Canadians.

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member is suggesting that we are a bit full of ourselves. The fact is that after 10 years of Conservative reign during which we observed the decline of the middle class, after nine deficit years in a row, after disasters like the Phoenix fiasco, and after years and years with no major military acquisitions, Canadians needed real change, and that is precisely what we are delivering.

The party across the way is once again attempting to write Canada's economic and fiscal policy from the opposition benches. The member is his party's finance critic, which is to his great credit, but there are 14 other people travelling across Canada promoting their visions and their versions of Canada's economic and fiscal policy.

Can my hon. friend assure us that, no matter the outcome of the interminable Conservative leadership race, the economic vision he is presenting today is the one that the future Conservative Party leader will espouse?

Business of Supply

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for drawing Canadians' attention to our leadership race.

In a leadership race, each person expresses their ideas and we debate them. If everyone sang the same song with the same instrument, the same song sheet and the same tone, it would not be a leadership race. It is a debate of ideas.

My colleague thought it was appalling that we were in a deficit for nine consecutive years, but I urge him to be careful, because it was not quite nine years. I am not sure where my colleague was at the time, but we were all on planet Earth, and the whole world was facing the worst economic crisis in history since 1929. That is why we ran such deficits.

However, thanks to the rigorous management of Mr. Harper and the late Mr. Flaherty, Canada was the first G7 country to emerge from the crisis. It had the best debt-to-GDP ratio and Canadians had more money in their pockets in over 50 years—so yes, we are proud of that record.

At the same time, it must be embarrassing for the government to talk about the Phoenix pay system. Must I remind the parliamentary secretary that, about a year and a month ago, when the Liberals were in power, they were the ones who authorized the implementation of the Phoenix pay system, although our ministers had warned the government about the associated risks? If the government wants to politicize the issue, I would say welcome to the big leagues, because this government is the one that pushed the green button at the wrong time.

Now the Liberals have the gall to talk about military procurement when they are the ones who just signed a \$5-billion cheque to buy the Super Hornet jets that no one wants and that serve no purpose. They have some nerve to raise that issue. I am very proud of the Conservative administration when I see the billions of dollars the government is shamelessly spending.

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague for his very lively speech. However, I would urge my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent, in the Quebec City region, to be cautious when he talks about *Beau Dommage*, which is very much a Montreal group. The words of the song *23 décembre* definitely talk about Mr. Côté, not Mr. Tanguay.

That said, my colleague also talked about Robin Hood and Liberal mismanagement. During the election campaign, the Liberal Party promised the moon and a small deficit. The campaign was led by people who did not think they would one day form the government. They wondered what they could do to stand out and they would say anything. Now, Canadians are left with nothing much.

Indeed, many Canadians travel, but I would not go so far as to say, as my colleague did, that all Canadians travel by air, because many of them are not well-off, and I see that in my riding. However, what is true is that Canadians are still the ones who will pay for the lies the Liberal government told during the election campaign.

I would like to hear what my colleague thinks about that.

●(1155)

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for adding to my musical culture, which clearly was lacking. I should have written down the lyrics, but the song *23 décembre* only came to mind this morning as I arrived in the House.

The member is quite right that not all Canadians travel. Let us agree, however, that air transportation is much more democratic today than it used to be. We totally agree on that.

I want to point out the guts and the sense of responsibility the NDP displayed during the last election campaign. That party had the courage to come clean with Canadians and tell them that it would not promise a deficit, because deficits are bad. That took a lot of guts and a huge sense of responsibility, so I commend the New Democrats.

Canadians are now realizing that the deficit has risen to \$30 billion despite the government's promise of a small \$10-billion deficit. Plus, the government was supposed to balance the budget by 2019, but now that will not happen until 2055. This government was elected on a promise that it would strike a balance and help business owners, but now it is doing exactly the opposite by creating new taxes and new fees.

As my NDP colleague put it so well, those people were elected by promising the moon to Canadians. It may be party time now, but our children and grandchildren will be left to pay for this Liberal government's gross mismanagement.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to reassure people in the House that my jurisdiction in Saskatchewan is the only jurisdiction in this country that does not support the carbon tax.

We know it is not revenue neutral. We know that. In fact, the agriculture minister paid a visit to my city of Saskatoon last week. He was welcomed with open arms by the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities. It had its annual meeting. The minister got an earful.

We know that south of the border they are cutting taxes. We compete with the United States. Here, there will be increased costs. Farmers and food producers are not happy. They are waiting for tomorrow in anticipation of the budget. They gave the agriculture minister an earful last week in Saskatoon.

Does the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent think farmers should wait, holding their breath, for the Liberal regime to finally recognize agriculture in the budget, not like last year when it was never mentioned once?

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I want to pay respect to my hon. colleague from Saskatoon—Grasswood who is representing his constituency with greatness and honour.

Yes, this was totally unacceptable. I think it was maybe the first time in Canadian history that a budget did not talk about agriculture. Worse than that, the throne speech made by the Governor General had no mention of it. This is totally unacceptable.

Business of Supply

We shall respect our agriculture and the people who work in farming. The farmers of Canada are part of the backbone of the Canadian economy. I am very proud to say that my family is involved in agriculture. My daughter is involved in the farm business, because my son-in-law is involved in a dairy farm. I am very proud of all the farmers in Quebec and all the farmers in Canada.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am always intrigued by the member opposite when he articulates his position.

It is interesting that the opposition made this particular motion. It is a reflection on budgets, obviously. I was surprised by the Conservative Party at the last budget, because what we saw was a substantial tax break for Canada's middle class. It was a tax break. The Conservative Party went out of its way to make it clear that it was voting against a tax break to Canada's middle class and those aspiring to join it.

Could the member explain to the House why the Conservatives voted against a tax decrease?

• (1200)

Mr. Gérard Deltell: Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of respect for my hon. colleague. I appreciate it every time he rises in the House, and it happens quite a few times every day. I appreciate his style.

In answer to his question, it is because the budget had a deficit and not a small deficit, as was promised during the campaign. It was a huge deficit, three times more than expected, three times more than what they had been elected for. Worse than that, there was no plan for a zero deficit.

What we are seeing, thanks to the civil servants in the Department of Finance, is that the government will get back to a zero deficit in 2055, missing its target by 36 years. That is why this was totally unacceptable.

More than that, the member is talking about a so-called tax break for the middle class, but may I remind him that the report made by the parliamentary budget office concluded that 65% of people will see no effect from the so-called tax break? The best winners were not exactly the middle class but those who earn between \$145,000 and \$200,000 a year, so we are not talking about the middle class. This is why we told the government that it was not the right way to get full control of the economy.

Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

Last fall, the Minister of Transport presented his vision for the future of transportation in Canada, also referred to as Transportation 2030. This vision reflects his extensive engagement with Canadians, stakeholders, provinces and territories, academics, and indigenous groups, following the release of the Canada Transportation Act review final report in February 2016.

Transportation 2030 emphasizes five main themes: the traveller; strengthening transport safety; green and innovative transportation; waterways, coasts, and the north; and trade corridors to global markets. During the consultations conducted by the Minister of Transport and his superb parliamentary secretary, Canadians were

very clear. They want lower-cost air travel and more opportunities for leisure and business travel. They seek more efficient processing at the border and airport screening with shorter wait times. They have asked for long-term, sustainable competition, which would allow the introduction of additional air services, improved air connectivity, and more choice. As competition increases and air carriers look for ways to reduce prices, Canadians also want a more consistent, transparent, and rigorous approach to passenger rights.

The Minister of Transport has listened, and is committing to achieving tangible improvements to the travel experience. He is taking action now.

[*Translation*]

The government believes that the rights of Canadian air travellers need to be made clearer and fairer for passengers and airlines. That is why the Minister of Transport is establishing more predictable and reasonable air passenger rights. To that end he will introduce a bill mandating the Canadian Transportation Agency to develop regulations that would create a new air passenger bill of rights.

Although the exact details are established by the Agency's regulatory process, the new bill of rights will establish clear standards for treating people travelling with children and travellers who end up in trying situations, such as flight delays or cancellations, which will also include compensation in some cases.

The bill of rights will also ensure that passengers are clearly informed of their rights and will allow Transport Canada to gather more data on airline performance. The government intends to take a balanced approach in this file by assuring the airlines that their ability to compete will not be compromised and that they will not be made to bear an excessive burden that could potentially affect the cost of air travel.

• (1205)

[*English*]

The transport minister will pursue legislative changes to allow international investors to own up to 49% of the voting shares of Canadian air carriers, which is up from the current 25%.

As some members may know, other countries have different approaches to international ownership of air carriers. It is important to ensure that Canadian carriers compete on a level playing field. To protect the competitiveness of our air sector and support connectivity, no single international investor or any combination of international air carriers will be allowed to own more than 25%.

Business of Supply

Liberalizing international ownership restrictions means that Canadian air carriers will have access to more investment capital, allowing them the opportunity to be better funded. This new measure is expected to facilitate more competition in the Canadian air sector, and lead to more choice and lower prices for Canadians, as well as benefits for airports and suppliers, including new employment opportunities.

In the interim, in December of last year, the minister granted exemptions to the current international ownership restrictions to two companies that are looking to establish new ultra-low-cost carriers: Canada Jetlines in Vancouver and Calgary's Enerjet. This action is intended to allow these companies to go ahead with their financing efforts while the new legislation is being developed.

[*Translation*]

Furthermore, as he announced in November 2016, the Minister of Transport remains determined to establish world-class service standards for aviation screening in Canadian airports.

Also, the government continues to improve the experience of air passengers by negotiating new and expanded air transport agreements with international partners, which will enable airlines to expand Canada's links to the rest of the world.

Air transport agreements provide Canadian passengers with access to more airlines, destinations, and flights.

Canada has signed air transport agreements with 120 bilateral partners. In recent months we have expanded our air transport agreements with key aviation partners such as Mexico, China, and Australia. These expansion efforts made it possible for Air Canada to launch daily service between Vancouver and Brisbane, Australia, in 2016.

In closing, I want to point out that the experience of Canadian air passengers is an important priority for the Government of Canada. The initiatives that I have just described contribute greatly to improving the experience of Canadian passengers. They will help lower prices, provide more choice, improve connectivity, and clarify the rights of air passengers while ensuring the viability and competitiveness of Canadian airlines.

[*English*]

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to change the subject from air travel and go back to the budget and the huge deficits that Canadian taxpayers are facing over the next decade.

The Conservatives cut corporate income taxes by over one-third over a six-year period. The parliamentary budget officer found that these cuts were costing the Canadian taxpayer \$12 billion a year. That is a lot of money and could go a long way to helping the government pay off its debts. What is more, there is no evidence at all that these cuts stimulated any industrial growth or jobs, and so they were a pure debt on society.

Right now, corporate income tax is well below that in the United States, our competitors. I am just wondering what the Liberal government is waiting for when it comes to making big corporations pay their fair share of taxes.

● (1210)

Mr. Greg Fergus: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and I were elected at the same time and we have equal experience in this House.

One thing which I certainly know would be very important for us to do, and it is a message that all Canadians would like to hear, is that we would want to make sure we do not raise the tax burden on Canadians. They are struggling enough as it is. We have seen the middle class having enough difficulties making it work.

I agree that the actions of the previous government did not lead to the desired economic growth. This is why we took the position we did when we were campaigning and why we have done what we have pretty much every day since we were elected in terms of the policies that we have pursued. We are making the necessary investments in infrastructure and providing relief for middle-class Canadians so they can feel the pressure is off of their shoulders for a little bit. Not only that, we are making the right kinds of investments which will spark and stimulate economic growth and leave behind the quality infrastructure that we need.

This is a very important approach to take. It is a balanced approach, and one that I am very proud to support as a member of the governing party. I know that many members on all sides of the House want to see the Canadian economy gather further steam, and it is the actions we are taking that will lead to that.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is related to some of the initiatives. The member made reference to the infrastructure program, the historic levels of infrastructure spending by this government.

I also want to pick up on two very important social points that were in the last budget which I would like to hear further comment on from the member. One of them is in regard to the guaranteed income supplement, a program which literally lifted thousands of seniors out of a poverty situation. We also had the increase in the Canada child benefit program, which lifted thousands of children out of a poverty situation.

I wonder if the member could provide some of his thoughts on the social impact of the previous budget and how we can anticipate that we will continue to see a good direction for Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it in the budget tomorrow.

Mr. Greg Fergus: Mr. Speaker, I am really glad that my colleague was able to ask me that question. Taking off our partisan hats, these initiatives that he mentioned, such as the increase in the guaranteed income supplement and the creation of the Canada child tax benefit are important initiatives that really help out Canadians.

Business of Supply

When I go door knocking in my riding, I see people who are struggling, who are just having a hard time making it. They are doing all the right things. They are working. They have kids. They are trying to contribute to their society, but the fact is it is hard to make ends meet. Housing is extremely expensive nowadays. Things are not getting cheaper. It is hard for people to get out from under that. Now with the Canada child benefit in particular, which helps out more than 12,000 families in my riding, this is a huge initiative that allows people to take advantage of these tax-free benefits and, if nothing else, to do no more harm. At its best, I think it helps them find some financial freedom so they can do the things they need to do to raise their families properly and give their kids great opportunities to play around, to take part in school activities and, as a result, to become better citizens. This is great and I am very proud to be part of a government that would bring forward this type of new social policy.

• (1215)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Vaughan—Woodbridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to say how pleased I am to speak in the House today on what our government has done and is planning to do for infrastructure in this country.

The Government of Canada knows that infrastructure provides Canadians with opportunities to get an education, to volunteer, to grow a business, to raise a family in a safe community. Infrastructure is the foundation of better communities. It strengthens our economy, and a strong economy starts with a strong middle class.

Investing in infrastructure creates good, well-paying jobs that help the middle class grow and prosper. By making it easier to move people and products, well-planned infrastructure can deliver sustained economic growth for years to come.

The Government of Canada is more than doubling infrastructure spending. We are investing more than \$180 billion over 12 years to support public transit, green and social infrastructure, and trade and transportation in rural and northern communities. We have already started by addressing our most pressing infrastructure deficits, making repairs to our aging pipes and roads, building and refurbishing affordable housing, and adapting buses to ensure seniors and individuals with disabilities have access to safe and reliable transportation.

Our plan is well under way in two key programs that I am proud of: the clean water and waste water fund and the public transit infrastructure fund. They are already making a difference in Canada and Canadian lives. More importantly, more than 1,100 projects have already been approved under these programs, and more than half of those projects are already under way. It is because of this progress that residents in many communities in Newfoundland and Labrador will experience fewer water shut-off requests and school closures caused by deteriorated service lines.

Commuters in Surrey, B.C., will get to spend more time with their families and enjoy a cleaner environment as a result of the expansion of key transit lines. These expansions will reduce travel times and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, something we all must applaud. In the north, residents of Iqaluit will benefit from a new secondary waste water treatment plant that will ensure cleaner water flows back into the environment.

Those are just a few examples of the outcomes we will see across the country.

With more than \$10 billion announced in budget 2016, infrastructure projects across the country are already making a huge difference in communities. These projects include nearly 550 public transit projects, including the expansion of more than 80 transit systems that will make it easier to get to work on time, reduce pollution, and ensure that public transportation is there when Canadians need it; more than 700 projects under the clean water and waste water fund that will improve access to clean drinking water and reduce pollution in our lakes and rivers; more than 1,000 projects to retrofit or renovate social housing to repair more than 48,000 social housing units, which will make housing more affordable for families and more energy efficient to live in; and more than 950 housing projects in indigenous communities, including 125 projects aimed at building and improving schools and 200 water and waste water projects.

We have also worked closely with partners to expand eligibility requirements and accelerate the funding being delivered under such legacy programs as the new Building Canada fund and to quickly move forward with new programs to support projects across the country from coast to coast to coast. These improvements respond to the feedback we have received from communities and stakeholders across the country. Broadly, these changes created greater flexibility for highway and road projects across Canada and expanded funding categories to include culture, recreation, tourism, civic assets, and passenger ferries. We are listening to stakeholders and responding.

Of these legacy programs, \$800 million was committed in the last year to new projects that are moving forward. The remaining \$30 million is being transferred directly into the federal gas tax fund so that Canadian communities can have immediate access to those funds.

This approach is generating results. For example, in Newfoundland and Labrador 20 projects were approved in the last year, whereas no projects had been approved in the previous three years under these legacy programs. As well, just last week three municipalities in Quebec received more than \$18.3 million in federal funding for much-needed recreational facilities that will greatly enhance the quality of life for residents. Without expanded program parameters, these important projects would not have been funded.

Business of Supply

•(1220)

We are also following through on our commitment to find innovative ways to fund infrastructure in Canada by announcing the creation of the Canada infrastructure bank. The bank will allow the federal government to “crowd in” private sector investment in infrastructure through loans, loan guarantees, and equity participation. It will create more options and opportunities for provinces, territories, and municipalities across the country to undertake transformative infrastructure projects, such as major public transit in our largest cities, energy transmission corridors, major corridor projects, and much more.

The bank's funds are over and above the commitment we made to double infrastructure funding to approximately \$180 billion over 12 years. By using private capital to build those new projects, public money is freed up to build more public infrastructure. Most importantly, it offers our funding partners a new tool to help meet their pressing infrastructure needs.

The Government of Canada recognizes that in order to compete globally, our communities need to be at their absolute best. That is why we are moving forward on the Smart Cities Challenge, which will challenge communities across Canada to develop integrated, innovative, evidence-based solutions to improve quality of life for their residents.

The challenge draws from similar competitions around the world and aims to accelerate the planning and adoption of innovative urban infrastructure. It will be an opportunity for communities to innovate, take risks, and think outside the box. Ultimately, the challenge is another tool that will help support long-term transformative changes across Canada.

In conclusion, the Government of Canada remains committed to building a fairer, more inclusive country that reflects the priorities of Canadians and reflects the priorities of the residents of my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge. The government understands that change must result in the kind of growth that benefits all Canadians at every stage of their lives—young Canadians, newcomers to Canada, working Canadians, seniors, veterans, and indigenous peoples.

We have made significant progress over the last year investing in projects that build healthier, more liveable communities, with cleaner air and water, and better care for our kids and grandkids. Budget 2017 is the next step in the Government of Canada's ambitious plan to invest in Canada's future, putting Canada's talented, skilled, and creative people at the heart of a more innovative future economy.

Ms. Dianne L. Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's speech was interesting because some of the information that he relayed in his speech is not quite accurate. I just wanted to make note of that and then ask a question.

He is saying that infrastructure projects are already making a huge difference in communities. I want to bring to his attention that as of today, 1,432 infrastructure projects have been announced and reannounced, and 1,344 of these projects have not been under construction.

My question is this. He referred to the infrastructure bank as a new tool to leverage private sector dollars. I am wondering if the member realizes that PPP Canada is already set up, is in place to leverage

private sector dollars, and has already generated billions in infrastructure projects across this country.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, our infrastructure program that we are ramping up and announcing projects for with the \$180 billion over 12 years includes the York-Spadina subway extension in the City of Vaughan, for which I had the pleasure of announcing a \$30-million inter-regional bus terminal. It is under construction, with shovels in the ground. I am proud to say that.

I will say this on the infrastructure bank. If we look around the world, we see the liquidity that is available from private investors to invest in a country like Canada. It is an opportunity for us to leverage those private capital dollars that are available to accelerate infrastructure and to build Canada. We have an infrastructure gap and we are addressing it.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as we are approaching budget 2017, it is clear that the Liberals are looking for a way to create some type of revenue. The NDP has provided them with a wonderful way to create some revenue in our country, which is to close the tax loopholes and eliminate the tax havens. That would bring money back into Canada that could support the system.

The Liberals have some out-of-control spending for which they will need to be accountable to Canadians and to people in their ridings. I am deeply concerned that what we will see is a privatization of our airports and ports. This will end up costing all Canadians more money when they travel and could cause potentially dangerous health and safety issues as well as issues at the airport.

Privatizing our public services is not the way to go. Our public airports currently send \$1 billion back to Ottawa every year. We cannot recoup that cost if we sell them off. In Ontario we have a prime example of the mistakes that the Liberals have made around privatization. We just have to look at what is happening to the cost of hydro here in Ontario.

Can the member speak to the mandate that he feels that he and the Liberals have from Canadians to privatize public services in Canada?

•(1225)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, our mandate is to invest in Canadians. Whether it is through the Canada child benefit, whether it is through the increased guaranteed income supplement, whether it is through middle-class tax cuts, whether it is through asking the 1% to pay for a bit more, our mandate is to help hard-working middle-class Canadians and Canadians who want to join the middle class.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge for his speech and in particular for his focus on infrastructure.

During my time in municipal politics, it was extremely frustrating over the last 10 years when municipalities would go to the federal government to look for infrastructure funding. It was a game of going to different conferences, sitting in front of ministers, and basically begging for money

Business of Supply

The system is quite different now. The government has a new direction, one that is focused on providing predictable, sustainable funding for municipalities so that they can plan their infrastructure needs for the future.

I wonder if my colleague would comment on how that will impact his community.

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Mr. Speaker, our government is a government that consults and our government is a government that listens. That is exactly what we have done with municipalities. We have sat down with them and we have listened to them. They know best what their needs are. That is what our government is doing: listening to them and responding, and ensuring that they have the resources available to continue to build up their cities so their citizens can get home earlier at night. They can take their kids to soccer and they can get to work faster.

That is what we will continue to do. We will continue to partner with all levels of government, whether it is provincial, municipal, and, in some areas, regional.

Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I will be sharing my time with the member for South Surrey—White Rock.

I am honoured to rise to speak to the opposition motion presented by the leader of the official opposition.

Tomorrow we will hear from the Minister of Finance the government's plan on the future of Canada's economy and for all Canadians. Our ask of the government is simple: no further tax hikes; measures to address youth unemployment; a plan to see the budget balance by 2019; no plan to sell Canadian airports that involve revenues to finance the Canada Infrastructure Bank; selling to investors influenced by foreign governments; and no hikes to user fees for our taxpayers and travellers.

In budget 2016, we heard a great deal from the government about how it was planning to grow the middle class and help families. However, what did we actually see and what were the end-user effects?

As I have said often in the House, I am the mother of five children. Issues such as the cost of post-secondary education, employment opportunities, affordable housing and taxes are commonly discussed. I want to know that my children have a chance at a good future and a chance to have the same opportunities that I have had.

In a report circulated by the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, we have seen statistics comparing 2012 and 2016 data. In 2012, 48% of respondents stated that they felt the next generation's standard of living would be lower. We have actually seen an increase in this number in 2016, and over 58% of Canadians now indicate that they feel the next generation's standard of living will be lower. That is a huge increase, especially when we see these elements that the government is pushing. This same document stated similar findings when asked, "Canadians are increasingly feeling left out of the middle class".

In 2009, 63.3% felt they were part of the middle class, with 28.9% indicating they were in the working class or poorer. In 2016, just

three months following the federal budget and changes to the Canada child benefit and to the tax rate, only 48% felt they were part of the middle class, and a hike to 44.3% felt they were part of the working class or poorer. To me, these are not good results. This document indicates that job insecurity is increasing, saving for retirement is harder, and the growth has not been inclusive.

I would like to focus on the future and on the future of our country. Tomorrow we will potentially hear about a plan focused on the national child program and social housing. We will hear from the Liberal government plans to create new jobs through innovation investments. We may hear how the Liberals are planning on selling capital assets to finance an infrastructure bank and we will hear that Canadians will be burdened with more taxes, whether it is today or in the future.

The 2016 budget introduced the Canada child benefit, while eliminating the universal child care benefit and the Canada child tax benefit. We saw the cancellation of important tax credits to families, including the child fitness tax credit and arts credit. We saw income splitting eliminated for families. While some families may be receiving more money through tax benefits, is the government making a plan to help families in the long term?

I am also proud to be from a riding with many smaller municipalities that rely on volunteers, volunteers who include firefighters. In this budget, I fear that important tax credits, including the tax credit for volunteer firefighters and search and rescue workers, will be eliminated. We have to think this. Without these credits, what will be the impact to municipalities like Central Elgin and the municipality of Bayham in my riding that have volunteer firefighters, who not only help with fires but as well the search and rescue missions on the shores of Lake Erie? What will these effects be?

There are also murmurs of the elimination on public transit tax credits, and extremely important in my community, the trades person tool deduction. At the end of the day, people will be paying more taxes.

Through the HUMA committee, we studied a poverty reduction strategy, and the committee is finalizing a report on the findings. Some witnesses clearly indicated that important factors such as skills development, high taxes and unreliable income were issues that were not being dealt with. When looking at some of the strategies that members of the government have spoken of in the past year, we see band-aid solutions. This will not lead the country to growth and prosperity. We need solid plans, not just more spending.

The government promised to remove the cap on post-secondary education for indigenous people. We know that education will provide important skills development and knowledge that will help those living on a reserve. However, we have not seen or heard anything about about this important issue in the past 18 months. When reviewing the "Pre-budget tour: The State of the Middle Class", PowerPoint presentation put out by the minister, it notes that certain groups remain particularly vulnerable to poverty, specifically indigenous peoples on-reserve. Therefore, will the government do the right thing and remove this cap?

Business of Supply

• (1230)

Youth employment is also a huge concern. In the 2015 election, the Liberal Party focused on youth employment, while scolding the Conservative government for its initiatives and belittling the efforts of the Canada summer jobs programs. Trust me, it happened in my own debates. However, in reality, increases to temporary work for summer students is all we have seen from the government. We need to ensure that we are looking at the labour force and matching it to the skills development. Has the government taken any of these steps to fill the gap in the labour force by ensuring we are graduating students from programs where employment opportunities exist?

I currently have two children in post-secondary education. I know the expenses that are incurred for each year of education, especially since we assist with some of those costs. Those costs include housing, tuition and food. My son pays \$950 a month in rent in the city of Toronto so he can go to George Brown College. Each year, costs for each of my children are approximately \$17,000. What are we doing to ensure that students have employment to assist not only in their current education, but down the road when they try to pay off these loans? Are we going to ensure that when our children graduate, there is actually going to be employment so they can get on their own two feet?

We know the best way out of poverty is a sustainable, reliable, and decent income. The most reliable method of gaining this income is through a job. We support job creation through tax breaks to small businesses, and avoiding needless government debt.

What is the government going to do to assist Canadians to get ahead? If we are looking at the government's record, we see the following: a decrease to disposable income through the Canada pension plan tax hikes; the cancellation of the small business tax rate; potential taxes on health and dental benefits; and potential user fees. The first three of the four points hurt employers. These employers are the people who employ Canadians in the private sector. It is the private sector that keeps our economy healthy.

According to a study published by the Fraser Institute, Canada has put itself at a disadvantage to attract and retain skilled labour, investment, and entrepreneurs, due to personal income tax rates that in response, truly failed to meet the expected increase in revenues to the government. Therefore, what we have seen is less revenue and more spending.

We have heard for months from the new administration in the United States that it will be focusing on lowering taxes and right now, we do not have a plan to compete with this new reality.

I live in a community with U.S. borders, both to the east and west of my riding, and along the 401 corridor. Over 500,000 vehicles per day travel this highway, with billions of dollars of goods transported through this corridor. My area is filled with agricultural producers and manufacturing facilities that rely on trade and export to the United States. If Canada cannot remain competitive, what will happen to these jobs and to the goods that cost more to produce in Canada?

We need to have a plan to be competitive, and I do not see the Liberal government creating a solid plan that can be implemented

immediately. The government must come forward with a low-tax plan to remain competitive that in turn will create high-paying jobs.

Just yesterday, I read a quote in the *National Post*. It said:

Middle-income Canadians may take comfort in the Liberal message, but this messaging hasn't yet resulted in policies to increase median incomes. At some point, middle-class Canadians may start to wonder when the Liberal message will finally be backed up with cash.

To me, this means income and employment opportunities. I am concerned that the government's plan does not consider any of these factors and we are jeopardizing the future of young Canadians, families, and indigenous people. We need to ensure there is job security, the ability for businesses to invest and grow, and for us to be competitive.

Will the budget do what is necessary for Canadians as a whole? I guess we will find out tomorrow what the government is planning for its future and the future of Canada. I am hoping it does not come with a \$30 billion price tag for the next generation.

• (1235)

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party is putting forward a document today that would have us essentially rewrite the fiscal and economic framework of the government. We know that elections have consequences. What the Liberal Party proposed to Canadians was relief for the middle class, looking after our most vulnerable in the form of the guaranteed income supplement, and looking after our manufacturing and innovative sectors with job training and an ability to grow our businesses in Canada. There is a renewed focus on families, with nine out of 10 families better off with the Canada child benefit, which they can now choose to spend as they wish. One would argue sometimes that this is a Conservative ideal, but I guess it is not something they can support because they voted against it.

My colleague is from southwestern Ontario. We have put all these measures in place that will help families in her very riding. Would the member not agree that these Liberal policies have been good for southwestern Ontario and for Canada generally?

Mrs. Karen Vecchio: Mr. Speaker, let me go back to the statistics I just read from the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development. We have seen a 10% increase in the number of families that feel they are no longer a part of the middle class. If this program is working, then people would not feel they were doing worse. These are documents from the member's own minister. We have to be aware of these things.

With respect to the child benefit, our party did not necessarily vote against the child benefit. We voted against a \$30 billion deficit. It is great for those members to sit over there and tweak out what they think we are pulling apart. The government talks about lowering taxes on the middle class, but it forgets that it has a \$30 billion price tag attached to this. It is going to be my five children and the children of all members and all Canadians who will be paying for this outrageous spending.

Business of Supply

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member is a mother of five children, with two in post-secondary education. Our Conservative government did more for post-secondary students in the history of our country. We believed in our kids. We gave kids a chance to get that first job through post-secondary education. The Liberal government has done the exact opposite. We have seen the numbers in the last year. They show that youth in our country have no hope at all.

My colleague comes from an agriculture area. Let us remember that a year ago the Liberals never mentioned agriculture once in their budget. Will the Liberals mention tomorrow that our food producers are important to our country? Does my colleague from Elgin—Middlesex—London think the word “agriculture” will be mentioned tomorrow?

• (1240)

Mrs. Karen Vecchio: Mr. Speaker, I have personally held five different agricultural round tables in my community. The agricultural sector currently employs about 20% of the people who live in my riding. Out of 111,000 people, 20% are employers or employees in the agriculture sector.

We have to be aware of the need to harmonize things. We need to recognize there are some important things we need to address, especially since many of our products, especially those in southwestern Ontario, are exported to the United States. If we cannot have trade and if we cannot be competitive, then those exports will not exist. If the cost of labour and the cost of everything that we do is higher in Canada, then we will not be competitive.

I recognize there are some great programs available for agricultural producers and we need to continue to support them. I have put forward a paper to the Minister of Agriculture. I want to ensure he hears the voices of the people from southwestern Ontario, especially those in my riding of Elgin—Middlesex—London, for all sectors, including supply management, our feathers and everything of that sort.

I am not scared by any of the woes and things over there. It is fine. I support the agricultural industry and I always will. I sure hope the government will be on side.

Ms. Dianne L. Watts (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak today to the Conservative opposition day motion that states:

That, given the failure of the government to achieve the economic and employment objectives presented in Budget 2016, and given the growing protectionist and competitive threat from the United States, the House call on the government to ensure that Budget 2017 includes: (a) no further tax hikes on Canadian families, businesses, seniors or students; (b) immediate measures to encourage companies to hire young Canadians and address the youth unemployment crisis; (c) a credible plan to return to a balanced budget by 2019 as promised to Canadians; and (d) no plan to sell Canadian airports that involves (i) using the revenues to finance the Canada Infrastructure Bank, (ii) selling them to investors or enterprises that are under the political influence of foreign governments, (iii) higher user fees for Canadian taxpayers and travellers.

I felt that it is important that we all know what the motion clearly states and what we are talking about here today. As we know, tomorrow the Liberal government will table its second budget, a budget that is expected to include tax hikes for Canadians, a budget that is expected to sell Canadian airports to foreign investors in order to raise funds to finance the Liberals' infrastructure bank even

though we have P3 Canada, which was specifically set up to leverage private sector dollars for infrastructure projects. In fact, P3 Canada has leveraged \$6.6 billion for infrastructure, which would not require the government to sell off our ports or airports.

As the official opposition critic for infrastructure, communities, and urban affairs, I have been following the Liberals' infrastructure plan very closely, and I use that term very loosely. I have several concerns around the continued announcements on infrastructure spending and the number of projects that are actually under construction.

Despite numerous announcements and re-announcements of infrastructure projects, the Liberals have actually failed to begin construction, create jobs, and grow the economy as promised to Canadians during the election. The only thing that is growing is the deficit. The Liberals are burdening Canadians in debt with no possibility of a balanced budget until 2055. As of today, there have been 1,432 infrastructure projects announced and re-announced by the Liberal government. Of these projects, 1,344 have not—I repeat, have not—started construction. That is 94% of the infrastructure projects. There are more than 1,300 projects not under construction, not creating jobs, and not stimulating the economy.

The Liberals like to claim that they are investing more money in infrastructure than ever before, simply because they like announcements, and of course we know they love photo ops, yet, they have announced more projects in their first year in office than any government previously—not built, not constructed, not growing, just announced. The difference here is this. The Conservative government actually managed to build infrastructure, not just announce it. In fact, under the Conservative government, we did announce 7,802 projects and we constructed more than 7,300 of those projects. Some 94% are complete, and that means jobs. In fact, that means 1.1 million jobs were created. We completed 94% of our infrastructure projects before we left office, while the Liberal government has not been able to start 94% of its infrastructure projects.

• (1245)

When the Conservatives came into power, the federal government had been spending approximately \$500 million a year on infrastructure. By the time we left office, we were investing over \$5 billion per year in infrastructure. We still managed to balance the budget and leave a surplus. I have provided these details today because infrastructure is directly related to today's opposition motion. Canadians need to understand exactly where their money has gone and how much is being spent to create a \$30 billion deficit.

Business of Supply

During the election, the Liberals promised Canadians that their small \$10 billion a year deficit would pay for unprecedented levels of infrastructure spending in their communities, would stimulate the economy, and would create thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of jobs. All of this would be over the first three years in office, and in the fourth year they would balance the budget. Instead, Canadians got a \$30 billion deficit in the first year and admittedly an unprecedented level of infrastructure announcements and no balanced budget. We heard from the Prime Minister numerous times that budgets balance themselves, but as every Canadian knows, budgets do not balance themselves. The Liberals failed to get infrastructure funding to communities in 2016, and in fact they have frozen nearly \$1 billion that, according to budget 2016, should have gone to communities last year. Instead, they have allowed it to lapse, one thing they said they would never do. In fact there are many things they said they would never do, but this is one. Instead of sending the money to communities through the gas tax fund, as they promised during the election and which is written in their platform, the Liberals decided to roll it over into next year's budget.

In receiving and reviewing the 2017 main estimates, the parliamentary budget officer stated in that report that \$2.5 billion worth of infrastructure projects cannot be located. This is money that according to budget 2016 should have gone to communities next year. Another parliamentary budget officer's report states that the Liberals' infrastructure plan has no way to measure performance, has virtually no transparency on how the money is being spent, has shortchanged communities billions of dollars for local infrastructure, and has failed to stimulate the Canadian economy. That is all from the PBO. There have been four independent reports citing the same concerns, including the latest Senate report.

We hear over and over again the Liberals' talking points of how they have cut taxes for the middle class, but they also ignore the fact that they have introduced numerous new taxes on the very same Canadians, like the new national carbon tax, new taxes on savings accounts, new taxes on children's arts programs, taxes on tuition and textbooks, taxes on children's fitness and sports programs, higher CPP taxes, higher EI premiums, higher small-business tax rates, higher taxes on campgrounds. Also, coming soon, capital gains taxes are on the table, airports and ports are up for sale, and we do not know yet about the health and dental benefits. The list goes on. This is what Canadians need to know when the Liberal government tells them it is growing the middle class and helping those who want to join it.

We need a plan that cuts taxes for Canadians. We need a plan that gets Canada's spending back under control and brings in a balanced budget. We need a plan that will support small businesses and encourage companies to hire and create jobs, especially for young Canadians. We need a plan that does not include selling off some of Canada's most valuable assets. Unfortunately, a solid, transparent, and accountable plan for Canadians' future is not what we can expect from the Liberals' 2017 budget tomorrow. Therefore, I urge my Liberal colleagues across the way to work with all parties in this House and come up with a real plan, a plan that puts Canadians first.

• (1250)

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

Mr. Speaker, the member across the way says she wants to see a plan. There is Bill C-2, a tax cut for Canada's middle class. How did the Conservative Party vote on that plan? The Conservatives voted against that plan.

Then we have Conservatives across the way talking about how they want to give advice to the government on balanced budgets. That has to be one of the weirdest things, because the Harper government never got it right. It had deficit after deficit, and it even created the deficit prior to the last recession coming into place. This government does not need to take any advice from the Conservative Party with respect to balanced budgets.

Why did the member vote against Bill C-2, which is a great tax decrease plan?

Ms. Dianne L. Watts: Mr. Speaker, I am always entertained by my colleague's questions.

We voted against a \$30 billion deficit. We voted against all of what I just spoke about, all of the tax hikes and the removal of tax credits. I will further explain to my colleague across the way that Conservatives talk about a plan that is needed for infrastructure and to help the Liberals get their spending under control, and so do the reports from the parliamentary budget officer, the Senate committee, the C.D. Howe report, and the Fraser Institute report. It is not just us. There are many people wanting the government to have a plan in place.

As far as the budget goes, our House was in order and we handed over a balanced budget. In fact, we handed over a surplus of \$2 billion. The member really needs to get caught up on what the actual facts are.

[*Translation*]

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

I wanted to talk about my community and Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, or more specifically the riding of Jonquière, which I am very proud to represent. The Conservative motion mentions unemployment and students, and earlier I heard my colleague refer to post-secondary education in his speech. If I am not mistaken, the topic was student debt. Full employment is a very important concern. We are seeing young people leaving. Every day, some of our young people leave because there is no full employment. We have nothing for them. We do not exactly have concrete plans. We just talked about plans, but initiatives and ways to keep our young people in the region are major concerns.

As was already mentioned, during the election campaign, the Liberals raised the stakes to invest in our infrastructure. Now, we do not even have anything concrete. We have not seen one red cent. We are not seeing any results.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about full employment and youth unemployment.

Business of Supply

•(1255)

[English]

Ms. Dianne L. Watts: Mr. Speaker, one of the things we take and hold so dear concerns creating the environment for job creation.

That means there are low taxes, access to post-secondary education, and access to training for students and for the younger population. It is absolutely key to create that environment. The more the job creators are taxed, the more Canadian families are taxed, the more people will leave. They will leave to find better opportunities. That is what the Liberal government just does not get.

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague for a great speech. When she mentioned in the lobby earlier that she was going to speak on infrastructure, I thought that would be a great opportunity for us to learn about the failed infrastructure program of the Liberal government. That is what we have here.

We know that tomorrow we are going to hear a budget that will be written in red ink again. We will be neck-deep in deficit. It will be another spend, spend budget, and yet the delivery of a lot of infrastructure, as the member pointed out, will not happen.

In the previous government, we saw the largest infrastructure program ever, the \$75 billion Building Canada fund. We saw those projects delivered. Today, in Alberta, for example, the Liberals have announced money for infrastructure where the province is now talking about taking the packet for municipalities and putting it into provincial general revenue. There is no infrastructure money getting down to the municipalities. There are no projects under way. There are no projects that are even really being planned in smaller communities.

Could my colleague comment on that type of program, a failed program of the Liberal government?

Ms. Dianne L. Watts: Mr. Speaker, as I alluded to before, it is not just the Conservatives, and me, as a critic, saying this. There are two reports, the parliamentary budget officer report and the Senate report, that clearly state that the infrastructure plan is not transparent. We cannot follow the money. The infrastructure dollars are not getting out the door to communities, where they should be. The Liberals are now looking at selling off airports and ports to pay for a bank, when we already have PPP Canada, which has leveraged private-sector dollars to the tune of \$6.6 billion.

Every time we turn around, we see different independent organizations clearly stating that the current government does not have a plan, and whatever plan it thinks it has is failing miserably.

Mr. Raj Grewal (Brampton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

It is always a pleasure to rise in this House regarding the Government of Canada's ambitious plan to make smart investments that will create jobs, grow our economy, and provide more opportunities for the middle class and those working hard to join it.

Over the past year, the government has put in place a plan to grow the economy in a way that works for the middle class and those working hard to join it. Our government has raised taxes on the wealthiest 1% so that we could reduce taxes for the middle class. We

have introduced a new Canada child benefit that gives more money to nine out of 10 Canadian families and lifts 300,000 children out of poverty. We have strengthened the Canada pension plan to help Canadians have a more secure and safe and dignified retirement, which they deserve.

We are supporting strong communities by using innovative solutions to help meet pressing infrastructure needs. We are investing in infrastructure that creates good, well-paying jobs that help the middle class grow and prosper.

By making it easier to move people and products, well-planned infrastructure can deliver sustained economic growth for years to come. We put in place an ambitious long-term infrastructure plan that will invest more than \$180 billion in federal funding over 12 years. This plan focuses on five key areas: public transit, green infrastructure, social infrastructure, trade and transportation, and rural and northern communities.

Under the first phase of this plan, budget 2016 invested more than \$10 billion toward public transit and social and green infrastructure projects. We wasted no time in rolling it out and have made considerable progress. This includes investments toward nearly 550 public transit projects that will make it easier for Canadians to get to work on time and will ensure that public transportation is there when Canadians need it the most; more than 700 projects under the clean water and wastewater fund that will improve access to clean drinking water and will reduce pollution in our lakes and rivers; and 1,000 projects to retrofit and renovate social housing to repair more than 48,000 social housing units. These projects are already making a difference in communities across our country.

To maximize the benefits of infrastructure investments and to ensure that more money flows into infrastructure, the Government of Canada is committed to finding new and innovative ways to fund infrastructure and mobilize private capital. As part of our fall economic statement, we announced the creation of a Canada infrastructure bank. We have consulted broadly with experts on the creation of the bank and will continue to work with our partners to ensure that the bank meets their needs and the needs of all Canadians.

Canada has a very mature market when it comes to infrastructure projects, and partnerships between the public and private sectors have always been a key to the success of infrastructure. Many key pieces of infrastructure, including the Edmonton light rail transit system, were financed in part by the private sector.

In terms of moving the yardstick even further, we believe that there is an opportunity for the federal government to crowd in private sector investment in infrastructure through loans, loan guarantees, and equity participation. The bank will do just that.

Business of Supply

The bank will also create more options and opportunities for provinces, territories, and municipalities across the country to undertake transformative infrastructure projects. The bank will invest \$35 billion in new projects across Canada, projects such as major public transit in our largest cities, energy transmission corridors, major corridor projects, and more. Of the \$35 billion planned to capitalize the bank, \$15 billion will be sourced from the announced funding for public transit, green infrastructure, social infrastructure, trade and transportation, and rural and northern communities. This \$15 billion is less than 8% of the total commitment of infrastructure funds under our long-term plan.

In addition, \$20 billion in capital will be available to the Canada infrastructure bank for investments that will result in the bank holding assets in the form of equity or debt. This \$20 billion will therefore not result in a fiscal impact on the government.

• (1300)

The bank will serve as a single federal government point of contact for the private sector and will employ private sector experts to enable the government to invest effectively with private capital. The bank's funds will be over and above the commitment this government has made to double infrastructure funding. Most important, it will offer our funding partners a new way to help meet pressing infrastructure needs. By using private capital to build those new projects, public money will be freed up to build more public infrastructure.

The bank will be a centre of excellence in infrastructure investment by the private sector. It will provide advice to project proponents to allow for better planning and procurement decisions. The vast majority of the infrastructure funding will still be delivered through traditional financial contributions through bilateral agreements or national programs. As such, many infrastructure projects will not need the bank.

I want to be clear. We will not impose the bank on any of our partners, but we will work with willing partners who think this can offer them additional value. The bank is just another tool in our tool kit that our partners can use to invest in the infrastructure they need.

The Government of Canada remains committed to building a fairer, more inclusive country that reflects the priorities of Canadians. We want to put an ambitious plan in place to grow the economy and to build healthier and more livable communities. We are already taking unprecedented action to invest in Canada, our communities, and Canadians. With these smart investments and a commitment to fairness, the government will ensure that Canada's best days are ahead.

• (1305)

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member referenced private sector funding of an LRT project in my hometown of Edmonton. It seems that even though the speech was probably written by somebody else in the back room over there, he does not have a clue that it is not up and running yet. It is not even going at the correct speed it was supposed to go about two years ago, when it was announced.

I would like to get the member's comments. Is this is going to be a trend in public sector funding that we have seen from this

infrastructure minister, who seems to have a real disconnect from what is going on on the ground in our communities?

Mr. Raj Grewal: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear that my reference to the LRT was used as an example of something that was funded through public and private infrastructure. I did not speak about the fact that it was ready to go completed. Attention to detail is something members opposite should pay particular attention to.

I also have a soft spot in my heart when it comes to Alberta, because I was born in Alberta. I have a lot of pride in that province.

I will say that we will take no lessons from the party opposite on job creation or economic growth. For 10 years, it had the worst record when it came to job creation and economic growth. It had low economic growth for 10 years. What has our government been doing? In the last six months, we have created 220,000 jobs. We have decreased unemployment. We have decreased taxes for the middle class, a middle-class tax cut the party opposite voted against. Why? It is because it wanted to reduce taxes for rich Canadians. Our government made a commitment to raise taxes on the wealthiest 1%. That is exactly what we have done. That is exactly what we are going to do in tomorrow's budget. We are going to keep fighting for the middle class. I encourage my colleagues on the other side of this House to support us.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today.

My colleague's partisan fervour is totally inappropriate.

Quite honestly, as the member for Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, I can safely say that very few people have benefited from these so-called middle-class tax cuts.

As for heritage and culture, we have been asking the Minister of Canadian Heritage to talk to the Minister of Finance for months now to get international players to pay the same taxes as everyone else and stop them from spiriting their profits away to tax havens in foreign countries. The Liberals should be ashamed of themselves for doing nothing about major issues like that. I am tired of hearing about their middle class.

I have a very simple question that relates directly to today's topic. The government says it plans to borrow money for major infrastructure projects because interest rates are so low, but it is approaching lenders that want returns on the order of 7%, 8%, or 9%. How does that make sense?

[English]

Mr. Raj Grewal: Mr. Speaker, my colleague across the aisle started his question by talking about tax fairness. Our government is extremely committed to tax fairness. The finance committee, of which I am a proud member, did a study on tax fairness and made 14 recommendations that were tabled in the House. I am pleased to announce that the government accepted all 14 recommendations to ensure that Canadians pay their fair share of taxes.

Business of Supply

When it comes to the Canada infrastructure bank, it will make sure that we make smart and wise decisions to ensure that not only are we leveraging private investment to build public transit and infrastructure projects across this country but also that these projects are creating good, well-paying middle-class jobs. That is a commitment our government has had from day one.

The member opposite and the entire NDP caucus keep talking about working-class Canadians. They keep using the rhetoric that they used in their campaign, but when the time came to vote in favour of a middle-class tax cut, they voted against it. I would like to ask them a question. How can they tell their constituents, when we on this side are helping the middle class by increasing support for families, that they voted against it? They should be ashamed of themselves.

● (1310)

[Translation]

Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in today's debate, which has been very lively.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk about our efforts to ensure that Canadian seniors enjoy a good quality of life. I am also pleased to note that my colleagues in the opposition do not want any burden to be placed on our seniors. I agree with them wholeheartedly.

During the last campaign and every time I go out and about in my riding, Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, I speak with seniors about their ambitions and their vast knowledge, which they so enjoy passing on. I believe that including our seniors is crucial to the well-being of Quebec and Canadian society.

As everyone knows, our government is doing everything it can to allow all Canadians, including seniors, to participate fully in society and in the economy.

Currently one in seven Canadians is over the age of 65. In 2030, which is soon, it is estimated that there will be 9.5 million seniors in Canada and that they will make up nearly one-quarter of the Canadian population. In 2030, I will be one of those seniors.

Seniors are among the most important members of our society. As we all know, they are very much engaged in their families and contribute actively to their communities and our economy. That said, seniors, particularly those with low incomes, are also among the most vulnerable members of our society.

We are proud to say that Canada is one of the countries with the lowest low-income rate for seniors. Indeed, the most recent data indicate that in 2014, only 3.9% of them were considered low-income. However, Statistics Canada tells us that some 212,000 seniors are still living below the poverty line. These important Canadians are struggling to make ends meet at a point in their lives when most of them can no longer work. I think we all need to agree that no one should have to grow old in poverty or in isolation. I cannot emphasize strongly enough the importance of this issue for our government.

Our government believes that all Canadians deserve to retire with respect and dignity. They should also have some peace of mind

knowing that the government will help them make ends meet. We are talking about Canadians who worked hard their entire lives and who contributed their fair share to the tax system. When they retire, it is up to us to give them the support they need in recognition of their contribution to Canadian society during their years of work. Budget 2016 included important measures that sought to do just that.

The previous government pushed back the age of eligibility for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement from 65 to 67. One of the first things we did was to correct that situation and bring the eligibility age back to 65 for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement.

We believe that someone who works their entire life and contributes to our economy and our society deserves a secure and dignified retirement. Seniors do not deserve to be told to keep working for two more years to qualify for their pension. Every Canadian should have the chance to live without worrying that they will not be able to make ends meet.

That is why we increased the guaranteed income supplement by 10% for low-income seniors living alone, which was very well received in Rivière-des-Mille-Îles. As we know, the guaranteed income supplement is an important tool for reducing poverty among seniors. It will give one million of our most vulnerable seniors almost \$1,000 every year. We believe that this measure will lift 13,000 of the most vulnerable Canadians out of poverty.

I would like to remind the House that pensioners and seniors are also fathers, mothers, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, grandparents, friends, and neighbours. No one wants their friends or family members to suffer and clearly no one wants to find themselves in a difficult situation in the future.

That is why we are also going to ensure that the old age security program will continue to provide adequate support for the most vulnerable seniors by indexing it to the cost of living. This was raised by groups in my riding and several other Canada-wide associations.

● (1315)

We will index the old age security and the guaranteed income supplement benefits to reflect the increase in the cost of living that seniors face. With respect to income security, our government is currently working to strengthen the Canada pension plan. I would like to assure the House that we will work with our provincial and territorial counterparts and that we will also honour the close relationship between this plan and the Quebec pension plan.

I am proud to say that we have kept our promises to seniors. Other key initiatives, such as the Canadian poverty reduction strategy, will also have a big impact. Last year's budget also included an investment of more than \$200 million over two years in support of the construction, repair, and adaptation of affordable housing for seniors.

Business of Supply

However, financial security is not the only measure of a happy life. We all hope to continue to be active and to contribute to our family life and to our community as we age. One way to succeed is through the new horizons for seniors program, which supports projects led or inspired by seniors who make a difference in the lives of others in their communities.

Not only do these projects promote volunteerism, which seniors in Rivière-des-Mille-Îles are quite involved in by the way, and mentoring among seniors, but they also help many seniors stay active and engaged as well as keeping them from the dangers of social isolation. To date, 7,000 projects across the country have been approved, and six were approved in my riding since I took office.

As well, in recent weeks, I announced two grants under this program in Deux-Montagnes to support two projects created by and for seniors. I can tell the House that our seniors are motivated to help their neighbours and to make our communities better places to live.

All this clearly demonstrates our commitment to seniors. I am proud to say that the important work we are doing for Canadian seniors will continue after the budget is announced tomorrow. Our government is taking important and decisive action to provide seniors with the support they deserve. We will continue to do so in the coming year.

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague about the importance of considering and supporting our seniors.

However, when we know that close to two thirds of Canadians oppose the privatization of our public infrastructure system, including ports and airports, I am absolutely certain that many of the seniors who contributed to creating the public infrastructure system we have in this country are against privatizing it.

How is the member taking into account this position, this opinion shared by two thirds of Canadians, in fact some of them in her riding, who are opposed to privatizing airports? What position will she be taking on that?

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's question.

Today, I chose to speak about seniors because they are very vulnerable people in our society. I believe my colleague across the way agrees with our measures that seek to help our seniors in Canada, particularly by boosting the guaranteed income supplement and returning the age of eligibility for old age security and the guaranteed income supplement to 65 years old.

• (1320)

Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to ask my colleague, whom I very much appreciate by the way, if she agrees with the fact that in the years including last year and the next four years, her government will have created a deficit of about \$100 billion.

How can she be okay with that? I would like her to explain why she supports creating a \$100-billion deficit in four years.

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

We are facing the same issues regarding official languages. I feel that he is eager and looking forward to tomorrow. I can understand this, but tomorrow is when we will see where we are going.

I would like to assure him, and the House, that our government remains committed to the well-being of all Canadians, including seniors, and we will continue to prove it with our budget, which will be tabled tomorrow.

[English]

Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I asked this question of one of the member's colleagues this morning. I wonder if she could tell me what her party means when its members talk about the middle class. Who is the middle class?

[Translation]

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question.

I am surprised that an MP who has been sitting in the House for several years is asking me what the middle class is. In my riding, the middle class is made up of couples who work very hard and find it difficult to make ends meet.

We are working for the middle class, and we will continue to do so. We will provide another good example of this tomorrow.

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

There has been a lot of talk about the middle class here; the government cannot stop bringing it up.

As I said earlier, the middle class is made up primarily of people earning about \$22 per hour, which adds up to \$45,000 per year. In its last budget, the government did nothing for those people, yet as I see it, they are the middle class because they make up about two-thirds of Canada's population. They are very hard-working people. The government, however, chose to give a tax cut to those who make more than \$90,000 per year.

The government goes on and on about the checks families are getting and all the benefits available to them. Once children turn 18, what happens to single moms and dads? How can they keep helping their kids and paying for post-secondary education?

Ms. Linda Lapointe: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Jonquière for her question about the middle class.

Budget 2017 will be tabled tomorrow. We are working hard for the middle class and those working hard to join it, and that is what we will keep doing. I am very proud to represent all the people of Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

Business of Supply

[English]

POINTS OF ORDER

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY SUPPLY BILL

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order concerning the draft supplementary supply bill that was distributed earlier this morning. In schedules 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5, the proposed bill contains provisions to pay a number of ministers of the crown through the use of an appropriation act. Specifically, payments would be made, and I believe have been made, to ministers without portfolio or ministers of state who do not preside over a ministry of state.

This initiative—raising all ministerial salaries—was part of the Prime Minister's efforts at gender equality in appointing female ministers with no portfolio responsibilities. Then he discovered, or the ministers discovered, that there was a significant salary variable.

The government subsequently introduced Bill C-24 to amend the Salaries Act to give statutory authority to these pay increases. Bill C-24 is still before the House of Commons, was debated at second reading on October 7 and October 19, 2016, but has not yet received approval in principle. It has languished on the Order Paper, neglected and unloved, and so we are confronted with the rule against anticipation.

It is long-established procedure that estimates cannot be used as a substitute or shortcut for legislation, and it is clear that the government saw the need for legislation when it introduced Bill C-24 to amend the Salaries Act. The House will appreciate the irony of a government that ran against omnibus bills using obscure wording in the estimates to hide and to expedite pay increases for ministers.

O'Brien and Bosc has this to say at page 869:

The Chair has maintained that estimates with a direct and specific legislative intent (those clearly intended to amend existing legislation) should come to the House by way of an amending bill. Speaker Jerome stated in a ruling:

...it is my view that the government receives from Parliament the authority to act through the passage of legislation and receives the money to finance such authorized action through the passage by Parliament of an appropriation act. A supply item in my opinion ought not, therefore, to be used to obtain authority which is the proper subject of legislation.

He also said in a further ruling:

...supply ought to be confined strictly to the process for which it was intended; that is to say, for the purpose of putting forward by the government the estimate of money it needs, and then in turn voting by the House of that money to the government. ... legislation and legislated changes in substance are not intended to be part of supply, but rather ought to be part of the legislative process in the regular way which requires three readings, committee stage, and, in other words, ample opportunity for Members to participate in debate and amendment.

I have a number of references in support.

The collected rulings of Speaker Lamoureux, at page 429, reference a proceeding on December 10, 1973. The issue is stated, "Should items of a legislative character be included in the Estimates?" The decision of the Speaker was, "No, they should not." A subsequent entry on page 430 contains this statement: "Parliament cannot legislate by Estimates."

In *Beauchesne's*, sixth edition, citation 941 at page 259 states:

If a Vote in the Estimates relates to a bill not yet passed by Parliament, then the authorizing bill must become law before the authorization of the relevant Vote in the Estimates by an Appropriation Act.

Reference is made to the 18th edition of Erskine May at page 364, where it is stated:

A motion must not anticipate a matter already appointed for consideration by the House, whether it be a bill or an adjourned debate upon a motion.

Here I respectfully remind you, Mr. Speaker, that debate on Bill C-24 has been adjourned since October 19, 2016.

In a similar manner to the ruling at page 69 of the *Journals* of January 25, 1973, I would suggest that at this point the House in its totality has not made a decision on the supplementary estimates except to study them. Bill C-24 has, however, been given first reading, and the House is now considering whether it should be read a second time. The bill to amend the Salaries Act would be the more effective way of securing spending authority, and the supplementary estimates ought not to anticipate the decision of the House.

In anticipation of a response from the government that this is not a new practice, I would make two points: first, disorder is not cured by repetition; second, in this instance there is a bill to amend the Salaries Act on the Order Paper. While the practice may have slipped through in the past and become law, this House should respect its own procedures for considering bills.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask that you remove all references to authority for ministerial salaries contained in these supplementary estimates.

● (1325)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as we know, the Prime Minister has made it a top priority to have a gender-neutral cabinet. The Prime Minister has also made it a priority, in a very clear statement, that all cabinet ministers are equal.

I will report a direct response with respect to the point of order that has been raised by the member back to the House in due course.

Ms. Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the point made by my hon. colleague in the Conservative caucus is one that we need to consider.

Very clearly, the government promised that it would be transparent, it would be different, it would be above board. We have some concerns in regard to this particular situation. I would indeed support the need to look at it carefully, in light of the fact that Bill C-24 is before the House.

● (1330)

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Perth—Wellington for bringing his legitimate point of order to the House's attention. To the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader and the hon. member for London—Fanshawe, I note that they will wish to come back to the House at a later time.

The House is aware that this is a matter that will be before the House fairly soon. Timeliness is of the essence here, but we will take the matter under advisement and act on it as quickly as we can.

*Business of Supply***BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

OPPOSITION MOTION—BUDGET 2017

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member of Parliament for Calgary Nose Hill.

It is always a pleasure to participate in this place. Before I begin to offer my comments, I would first like to state my belief that people offer themselves up for public service with a sincere belief and desire to build a stronger and more prosperous Canada. At times we may disagree on how best to achieve those goals, but I believe a democratic debate and a healthy democratic environment, like we enjoy in Canada, are all part of this. They are all part of what we collectively celebrate on July 1st of each year.

I mention these things because I believe that those members of the Liberal government who campaigned on a promise to run modest annual deficits and then return to a balanced budget in 2019 all did so with a sincere belief that these promises were true and accurate. I would like to believe that there was no intent to deceive Canadians, but here is the problem.

We know now that the Liberal government, in budget 2016, blew past these budget promises by saying that it would spend roughly \$30 billion in debt. How much has been spent in the last year alone? We do not know. Was it 50% above the Liberal election promise? Was it 100%? Was it double or triple or somewhere in-between? I am not talking about over the next three years that the government promised but just in this last fiscal year that is coming to a close. If we are honest, many on that side would support even more in the upcoming fiscal year. Worse, if we dig a little deeper, as the parliamentary budget office did recently, we would find that less than \$5 billion of that could be identified in real infrastructure projects. Where has the rest gone? We know from both the current and previous parliamentary budget officers that the balance is going toward increased spending.

To be fair to the Liberals, I would suggest they have a mandate for some of that increased spending on which they campaigned. However, they did not campaign on much of that other increased spending. Worse, if we read the Liberals' own budget documents, we would find that infrastructure spending eventually has to be increased to meet the Liberals' big spending promises. However, no matter how we cut it, we have a very real challenge now, when spending massively dwarfs revenue. That is why the Department of Finance, in a forecast report, warned that if the current Liberal government does not change course, Canada will not return to a balanced budget until at least 2050, and at that time Canada's debt will be well over \$1 trillion.

The finance minister first saw this report back in October. He then punted it, pushed it from the public eye, until Friday December 23. When I asked the finance minister in question period about this report, he threw his own department under the bus, trying to discredit its report. When I made mention of studying this report at finance committee, the Liberals on committee blocked it.

If this report is seriously flawed, as the finance minister contends, he would welcome this scrutiny as it would have surely backed up

his claims. Every person in the room knows the real reason the report was blocked. This leaves the question: How will the Liberals overcome what is basically a Liberal-created structural deficit and return to a balanced budget? In question period I have asked when the Liberals will return to a balanced budget. The finance critic for the Conservatives has asked numerous times.

An hon. member: Fifteen.

Mr. Dan Albas: I think it was fifteen times, Mr. Speaker. Surprise, surprise, the Liberal government refuses to provide an answer, here or even out and about. I would submit to the House that we may very likely have the first finance minister in Canadian history who believes the term “balanced budget” is dirty words.

● (1335)

I hope I am wrong about that. I hope that the finance minister will come to this place and tell Canadians that a balanced budget is important to Liberals, who of course campaigned on a promise to return to a balanced budget. However, more important, I hope we will learn exactly when the Liberals' fiscal plan will return to a balanced budget. Will it be in 2050, as the minister's own department contends, or when will it be? We do not know. Seriously, who knows? Does any member on any side have any idea when Canadians will see a balanced budget? That, of course, takes us to this motion today.

Here is the problem, as this motion summarizes. Spending continues to exceed revenue to at least the year 2050, unless the Liberals can show us otherwise. Spending, by the Liberals' own plan, is set to continue to rise. If the Liberals will not reduce spending, and we know they will not, then that leaves raising taxes. In effect, that is precisely what happens when the Liberals' national carbon tax comes fully online. Carbon taxes increase costs on businesses and hydro costs, and the businesses become less competitive overall. Increased CPP, let us not forget, increases payroll costs to employers, and that in turn makes Canadian employers less competitive against other jurisdictions.

Here is an interesting fact. Business investment continues to decline in Canada. In fact, it has declined basically every quarterly period since the current Liberal government was elected. I am going to give Liberal members of this place the benefit of the doubt to recognize the importance of business investment in Canada, and it is no surprise that if they make the business environment less competitive they lose investment. With Canadian business investment already in firm decline, how much longer can we continue to ignore that? If they are increasing costs onto our employers at the same time our competitors are decreasing them, as is the case in the United States, at the very least I would trust that Liberal members would agree that, if investment is already in decline—as is the case, the lowest since 1981—there is no fiscal capacity to further decrease Canadian competitiveness.

Business of Supply

Keep in mind that the minister's own department, in a different set of reports, warned that increasing the Canada pension would be a drag on the Canadian economy for decades. However, of course the current Liberal government—or at least those who run things when the Prime Minister is travelling elsewhere for whatever reason—does not seem to care about Canadian competitiveness. Where do we go from here? Increased taxes are already hurting Canadian competitiveness.

Liberals will not reduce spending, so it is suggested that they may do a one-time sale of some federal airports to raise some cash. This strikes me as being like a tradesman selling his tools in order to make the minimum payment on credit card bills. I am open to privatization, but let us have a conversation and not simply put the items out on eBay. Yes, it would get them through next month's bills, but it would not change the fact that, as long as spending exceeds income, they have a household headed for trouble. We should not lose sight of the fact that it will be Canadian families of the future who will be left to pay these bills. Again, with an aging demographic, it looks as if our children and grandchildren will have a lot of work left for them from us, and that is not a positive development.

Basically, that is what this motion is about: hoping that budget 2017 will help fix these challenges and not continue to make them worse. As the opposition, we are asking for the government to take this motion seriously and introduce a budget that does not ignore the fiscal and competitive realities. The fact is that we are currently not paying our way and we are leaving debt and other challenges behind for our kids and grandkids to pay for. I would submit that it is not investing in the middle class; it is mortgaging it. It is time we stopped the out-of-control spending that results in higher taxes and creates serious challenges for our future generations. That is why I will be voting in favour of this motion. There are some members across the aisle who may not support it, but I really hope they think and also speak to the finance minister, and if not in tomorrow's budget, I hope these concepts are in future budgets. It is in Canada's best interests.

• (1340)

Mr. Mark Holland (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the comments of the member opposite, and I am confused. The previous Conservative government ran deficits just about every year, and yet Conservatives are now saying that deficits are an awful thing.

Before they were in power, Canada had gone from the worst debt-to-GDP ratio to the best, and debt levels went from being called totally unmanageable to being the best in the G8. Having the best debt levels has been maintained through this process. In fact, when there are reviews of how strong the Canadian economy is relative to its peers, one of the key factors is the investment the Canadian government is making in the Canadian economy, saying that is one of the main factors in why the Canadian economy is doing so well.

Despite the fact that I have confusion about why the Conservatives have suddenly found religion on the issue of deficits after running so many of them when they were in government, my main questions are these. Where would they cut, how would it impact the

economy, and would he be willing to shut down the growth of this economy to get what he is looking for?

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, simply put, when we look at what the Conservative government did after coming into power, we see it put \$56 billion toward paying down the debt and cut taxes, which allowed the Canadian economy to be already ready when the financial crisis in 2006-07 and the subsequent great recession hit, the largest drop in demand since the great depression came. The domestic economy was prepared for a very tough time.

We are in a much different environment today. There are many people who question whether stimulating the economy works in a macroeconomic model when other countries like the United States are not doing so. Therefore, I would suggest to the member opposite that, if throwing money out today does not provide results and, ultimately, productive infrastructure to make our economy grow, what is the purpose? Are Liberals so addicted to throwing money out the door that they will use any reason—in fact, no reason—to do so?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the fact that the government wants to privatize airports. Instead of doing that, the government could get more than \$7 billion by tackling tax havens. That is a fact and something we talk about regularly. It is money that could easily be recouped and used to improve our health care system. Earlier, I was talking about post-secondary education and the huge tuition fees. Young people are going into debt in our regions.

It would be easy to get that \$7 billion. Instead, the government seems to be at an impasse and would rather privatize our airports and our ports. That really worries me.

In mid-May or June, Canada Post will be tabling its report. Will the government come up with yet another surprise and privatize Canada Post out of the blue in order to scrape up a bit of money? We have to look at the long term and preserve our public services, which are so important. They create good jobs.

I wanted to share my concerns with my colleagues in the House.

[*English*]

Mr. Dan Albas: Mr. Speaker, I do not hold the same ideological opposition to privatization. I believe it is a tool in the tool box and that, in cases where there are privatized airports throughout the world, there have been some very good results.

What I am concerned with is the rationale for doing so. Is the government putting these assets on fire sale simply to pay for the credit card? Second to that, is it doing so in a transparent and open way? It talks about consulting on every widget it comes up with, but when we ask questions in the chamber, all we hear is that it will do what is best for consumers. That is not good enough, and I expect better of any Canadian government.

Business of Supply

• (1345)

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise in this House, and specifically today to speak to this motion.

I have a good friend. She is a young woman who is just finishing her university degree. She sent me a Snapchat which said, “Do something to stop the Prime Minister from taking my money.” That is really why we are here today. We are debating a motion that would have the government commit to stop spending Canadians' taxpayer dollars in such a reckless and irresponsible way.

The motion in front of us today, which was proposed by the Conservative Party, would have the government agree that there should be no further tax hikes on Canadian families, businesses, seniors, or students. That is a no-brainer. We have not seen a lot of economic growth under the Liberal government's tenure to date. It seems reasonable to ask the government to show Canadians that it is willing to make a commitment, ahead of its disastrous budget tomorrow, to stop the haemorrhaging and to stop raising taxes on Canadian families.

We are also asking the government to take immediate measures to ensure companies hire young Canadians and address the youth unemployment crisis. We know that economic growth has slowed under the Liberal government's tenure, and that the people who are most affected by this are young Canadians. Certainly, in my home province of Alberta, that crisis has been magnified to a very large extent over the last year and a half.

We are also asking the government to vote for a credible plan to return to a balanced budget by 2019, as the Liberals promised Canadians in the election campaign. They have completely abandoned this promise, and they are expecting Canadians just to turn a blind eye to it. The Liberals have an opportunity with this motion today to support that.

In this motion, we are also asking the government to not sell Canadian airports. The analogy I used this weekend on a television talk show is that it is as though the Liberals went to Vegas on a drunken weekend bender, got this massive credit card bill, have nothing to show for it except a hangover, and now they are selling Canadian airports to pay for it. We are asking the government not to do that.

That is the form and substance of the motion. Why is it so important that the government do that today?

First, I need to point out the higher tax burden that Canadians are paying under the Liberal government. We want the government to agree to stop raising taxes. Why? Since the Liberals have formed government, and because they have put in place higher Canada pension plan premiums, each Canadian household will pay about \$2,200 more every year. That means \$2,200 coming directly out of the pockets of Canadian families. For most Canadian families, that is a lot of money and the government has taken that right out of their pockets.

With the Liberals' national price on carbon, which we know will not actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions and will not do anything to help climate change, that means up to another \$2,500 directly out of the pockets of Canadians.

The Liberals cancelled the family tax cut. We know that is about \$2,000 per household. They cancelled the arts and fitness tax credit. That is about \$225 a child. For a family that is trying to put their kids into hockey, that is a lot of money. The Liberals took that away, so effectively that is a tax increase. The other thing, which is especially for students, is that the government cancelled the education and textbook tax credits, which is another \$500 roughly per student.

The Liberals also increased the small business tax rate. That is an average of \$1,800 per company. They have also increased employment insurance premiums, which is another \$85 per worker.

What is even more important is that the Liberals, if they refuse to stand up and say, “Yes, we agree. It is common sense, and we are not going to increase taxes on Canadians”, and I am not optimistic about it, then they are going to provide Canadians some assurances on what we are hearing is going to actually be in their budget tomorrow. We are hearing that tomorrow's budget will increase the capital gains inclusion rate. What does that mean? The Liberals are pre-positioning this with editorials in the *Toronto Star* and whatnot saying that the capital gains tax only affects the wealthy.

• (1350)

However, in reality, there are 1.2 million Canadians who earn less than \$50,000 who take advantage of that tax credit. Many of them are low-income seniors. These would be seniors who had bought stocks in a company or something 20 or 30 years ago and are looking to divest some of that. They are going to have a huge tax burden. This is going to send a chill right across the economy. If this is in the budget tomorrow, my God. When we look at competitiveness with our neighbour to the south right now, this is just disastrous. It is not only disastrous for the economy, but it is directly disastrous for those 1.2 million people who want to become part of the middle class and are now not going to be able to afford to do it.

The Liberals are going to tax stock options for employees. We have heard about this. Ending the public transit tax credit is on the table, as is ending the volunteer firefighter tax credit. The Liberals have also been pre-positioning a tax on Internet services, like Netflix.

It is very simple for the Liberals to stand here and say, “We understand all of this damage that we have done to Canadian families, but we are going to give them a break tomorrow, and we are going to stand up and say that we are not going to increase taxes.” However, anybody who has been listening to the debate today will know that they are not going to vote for this motion. Why? The Liberals have mortgaged our future into oblivion.

Here is the problem. The Liberals have increased taxes on Canadians by a crazy amount, and members can do the math that I outlined at the start of my speech. This is a lot of money for the average Canadian family. What is even more important is that they have increased our deficits to the point where the parliamentary budget officer is saying that we cannot balance the budget for at least 30 years, and what do the Liberals have to show for it? Nothing.

Business of Supply

Here are some key economic metrics. Canadians are working less under the Liberal government. The hours worked are down by 0.3% over the last year. Canadians are earning less wages, down 1.3% over the last year, but the cost of living is up by 2.1%. I do not need to tell these statistics to Canadians, because they are feeling it in their pocketbooks, which is why we need to support this motion here today.

For us in this place, we have a fiduciary responsibility to Canadian taxpayers to be responsible stewards of their money. If we are going to spend into oblivion, as the government is doing, we better have some results from it. I will continue to tell members about what is not happening for Canadians.

This spending has failed to grow the economy. GDP grew by 1.4% in 2016, which is exactly what the federal government projected before last year's budget. If members remember, this time last year, the federal government was saying that it would be mortgaging Canada's future, and all of a sudden we were going to see a massive increase in growth. What did we see? Nothing. There was no growth.

The other thing I am going to point out is that the government was supposed to flow all sorts of money into infrastructure spending. I do not see any roads being built. I do not see the LRT in my riding being completed, especially in Alberta where we have so many people out of work, especially trades that could be getting back to work with some of these funds, but the government has done nothing. However, I will say that the infrastructure minister managed to find time to spend \$800,000 to renovate his office here in Ottawa, so that was a priority.

The other problem we have is competitiveness as we compare ourselves to the U.S. As we sink ourselves into a deeper hole, get no results from it, and take more money away from Canadian taxpayers, there is no bright future here whatsoever for Canadians, and that is wrong.

This is why we put this motion forward today. It seems very reasonable to me for the government to stand and say, "We oppose taking away more money out of Canadians' pockets, because we know that we have nothing to show for it."

It is very funny as I stand here and listen to the Liberals heckle me. They are uncomfortable because they know that I am right. They know there has been nothing to show for their reckless spending. They know that their campaign promises were abysmally improperly costed. It was just a massive sham. Now those chickens are coming home to roost.

I am proud to stand up for my constituents and hard-working Canadians to say that enough is enough. I will be standing up and voting for this motion to say that, no, we do not need to tax Canadians more. No, we do not need to grow government for absolutely no reason with absolutely no results, and that is the difference between this side of the House and that side of the House.

•(1355)

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the great things about coming to this House from municipal council is we have friends

right across the country who are mayors and members of city councils in places such as Calgary.

I remember talking to Mayor Nenshi specifically in the last year of the Conservative mandate about how the previous government had approved zero dollars in infrastructure projects for Calgary, and not just zero dollars in infrastructure projects for Calgary, but zero dollars for all of Alberta for two straight years.

The member opposite said that she wanted to see results from the federal infrastructure spend. I can tell the member that Mayor Nenshi has been more than glowing in his praise for the federal transfers that have gone through the provincial capital straight to the people of Calgary, including projects like the Green Line, the 17 Avenue transitway, the southwest transitway, the Stoney CNG bus storage and transit facility, the north crosstown bus rapid transit line, the south crosstown bus rapid transit line, the bus rapid transit line, and the Sirocco LRT parking lot expansion to accommodate all the growth and expansion.

If those projects are happening in the member's city, would she open her eyes, please, and acknowledge them?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague opposite for giving a laundry list of the infrastructure investments that were announced under our Conservative government. I thank him for mentioning especially the Green Line.

What is very interesting is that if my colleague from downtown Toronto, which is so congruent to understanding the needs of my riding in Calgary which is seeing a 10% unemployment rate right now, had any understanding of what is going on in Calgary, he would know that the municipal tax rate in Calgary is so high that businesses are closing their doors. I really want to thank him for reiterating the infrastructure investments that were committed under our government under a balanced budget with the lowest federal tax burden in 50 years. I would really like to thank him for that, and I would also like to take this chance to remind him that the particular mayor he mentioned has seen a very large increase in property taxes which nobody in Calgary appreciates.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her passionate and very interesting speech.

The Conservatives know that we agree with many points in their motion today, specifically their point on airports because that is absolute heresy. However, when it comes to freezing certain tax rates, we are not on the same page.

In a recent speech, I quoted the British finance minister, Mr. Osborne, who said that their corporate tax rate was among the lowest in the world, but England expects those taxes to be paid. I would like to know my colleague's thoughts on that.

What does she think about the government's inaction when it comes to online suppliers and their unfair competition with our retailers who operate a storefront, have employees, and pay their taxes here in Canada?

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, to be honest, I only heard part of my colleague's question. I heard him talk a little about corporate taxes.

What I wanted to emphasize to the House was that under our former government, while the federal tax burden was at its lowest level in over 50 years, we actually saw government revenue increase. Why was that? When we know that there is a competitive environment for job-creating companies to undertake investment, the economy grows and government revenue grows, because if we have more businesses creating more revenue, we have a bigger tax base that can go to government for programs and services.

That is the problem with Keynesian economics. Keynesians think they can spend their way into prosperity and they often forget the other side of the equation which is that what is spent has to be paid back. Both the Liberals and the NDP have no idea about this.

Certainly it is my pleasure to stand up for common sense and my constituents in the House to have a low tax burden and prudent common sense when it comes to government spending.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[English]

VIC DERMAN

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to rise in this place and pay tribute to people from my community of Saanich—Gulf Islands. However, it is particularly difficult when I am paying tribute to someone who has passed away far too soon.

Saanich councillor Vic Derman died this weekend. He had served on council since 2002, but before that he was a key community leader.

He founded the Saanich Community Association Network. He was a founder of the land conservancy. He was my friend. He was a community leader in every way one could imagine. He was a school teacher before he went into politics. He inspired many young people, who are now paying tribute to him, to give themselves to public service.

He leaves his wife, Lauraine, his daughter Michelle, and countless others like me who hold Vic Derman forever as a hero, a champion of climate action and sustainability.

Statements by Members

[Translation]

VALCARTIER VICTIMS

Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness, but also a sense of peace, that I rise today.

In July 1974, young cadets gathered at the Valcartier Cadet Summer Training Centre in Quebec. During a training exercise a grenade exploded, killing six cadets and injuring dozens more.

I was a member of the Royal Montreal Regiment cadets when we learned that some of our fellow cadets were among the victims.

[English]

For over 40 years, these cadets and their families did not see the fair treatment or compensation they deserved. This month, the Minister of National Defence offered a formal apology, along with providing compensation for the former cadets and their families whose lives were changed forever by this tragic incident.

[Translation]

The fight for justice for the Valcartier victims was long and stressful. It has been a very important issue for me for many years. I would like to thank the government for finally—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

* * *

PLESSISVILLE HUNTING AND FISHING ASSOCIATION

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, do you know the story about the fellow who went fishing and rented a tractor trailer to bring home a huge trout, or the one about a hunter who had to replace the door to his home to bring in the magnificent 12-foot rack of the animal he had watched for so long that his hair turned white?

Over the past 60 years, we have heard lots of these kinds of hunting and fishing stories in Plessisville. Today, I am proud to recognize the 1,400 members of the Association de chasse et pêche de Plessisville, which will be celebrating its 60th anniversary on March 28.

On my honour, the best hunting and fishing is in Plessisville, the most dedicated volunteers are those of the fishing and hunting club, and the best fishers and hunters in Canada live in the riding of Mégantic-L'Érable.

On behalf of all my constituents and myself, I would like to thank and congratulate the Association de chasse et pêche de Plessisville. Thank you to everyone who supports the association by volunteering and supporting a solid membership that will see the association through another 60 years.

Statements by Members

[English]

INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Alaina Lockhart (Fundy Royal, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a dedicated advocate for innovation in rural Canada. My beautiful province of New Brunswick remains one of the most rural provinces in Canada, and we are proud of it. Rural communities not only feed Canada, they develop and protect our natural resources, and in my opinion, provide an appealing alternative to urban life.

I am proud to be part of a government that understands what innovation looks like in rural Canada and has committed to investments in broadband Internet connectivity and other technologies that support resource-based industries, like agriculture and fisheries.

We are working to strengthen the workforce through immigration and investing in training and skills development, as well as growing the economic potential of tourism through infrastructure investments, like our own Fundy trail.

We all must be champions for rural Canada in the House, as we will continue to rely on tenacious and innovative rural Canadians for sustainability and growth. By continuing to look at innovation from a rural perspective, we can realize the full potential of our great country.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Ms. Tracey Ramsey (Essex, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize March 21 as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The 2017 UN theme is racial profiling and incitement to hatred, with a focus on how this impacts refugees and migrants.

The recent terrorist attack against the Muslim community in Quebec was a devastating reminder that Canada is not immune from hate crimes and racially motivated violence. Racial profiling of minorities continues on our streets. Systemic discrimination against first nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples continues across Canada. People are being discriminated against at our border by Trump's prejudiced immigration and travel ban.

There is no place in Canada for hatred or discrimination of any kind.

Teanna Ducharme, member of the Nisga'a Nation and Daughters of the Vote delegate, stood in the House and said, "I envision a Canada that is fierce in its leadership and shows just how much every person is equal."

We must challenge racist attitudes and behaviours if we hope to continue building a fair and equitable society, and to change the reality in Canada for racialized people and all who seek racial justice.

● (1405)

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS

Mr. Frank Baylis (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day of Forests. Protecting our forests is crucial, and this begins with the environment. Forests are the lungs of the earth, and they provide habitat for countless forms of life.

[English]

There is a wonderful parable by Dr. Seuss, called *The Lorax*. In it, the Lorax says, "I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues."

Today, I encourage all Canadians to speak for the trees through their actions: plant a tree, donate to a charity, or pick up a piece of litter. Finally, take a moment to go for a walk in the woods and contemplate how we are all one with nature.

* * *

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to inform members that today, March 21, marks World Down Syndrome Day, a day where Canadians celebrate people with Down syndrome and their families, from coast to coast to coast.

Today serves as a platform to share information about Down syndrome in order to debunk the myths and install the facts, facts that will help Canadians have a better understanding of Down syndrome.

The date March 21 is significant because it symbolizes the characteristics of 95% of the people living with Down syndrome, which is the triplication of the 21st chromosome.

I would also like to use this time to recognize the Canadian Down Syndrome Society and its board chair, Laura LaChance. They are here today, as they celebrate 30 years as Canada's only national Down syndrome organization.

I personally would like to thank the society for all the hard work and advocacy that it has provided to Down syndrome awareness in Canada over the past 30 years.

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THE PUSH FOR CHANGE

Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Joe Roberts, his wife Marie Roberts, and The Push for Change team.

In 1989, Joe Roberts was a homeless youth in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, struggling with substance abuse and homelessness. Thanks to the support of his mother and an OPP officer, he turned his life around and became a successful entrepreneur.

On May 1, last year, in St. John's, Newfoundland, Joe began pushing a shopping cart across Canada to raise money and awareness about the issues of youth homelessness that impact 35,000 young people each year.

Statements by Members

Today is day 325 of the 517-day walk and Joe has already walked nearly 6,000 kilometres. When he arrives in Vancouver on September 30, Joe will have walked 9,000 kilometres and engaged in over 400 school and community events.

Let us keep pushing for change. We thank Joe.

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS

Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, many Canadians are celebrating International Day of Forests.

With the third-largest forest area in the world and 37% of the world's certified forests, Canada's forest sector is ideally positioned to drive innovation, create jobs, and combat climate change.

Canada's forests also provide opportunities for all Canadians to enjoy the outdoors and natural experiences.

[Translation]

In my riding, Pontiac, the iconic white pine has formed the core of our rural culture and was an engine of economic growth for over 200 years. *Log Driver's Waltz* could be another Canadian national anthem.

The Canadian forest industry continues to embrace innovation by adopting clean technologies, producing green energy, and reducing its need for water.

[English]

Our government is proud that our forest industry is recognized worldwide for sustainable forest management, which is vital to securing the health and well-being of our nation's forests and forestry sector.

* * *

SYLVIA FLETCHER THOMAS

Mr. Gordon Brown (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to former Gananoque, Ontario, mayor and my friend Sylvia Fletcher Thomas, who passed away at home last week at the age of 68.

Sylvia, as she preferred to be known, was a fierce promoter and cheerleader for the town of Gananoque and the 1000 Islands, first as the executive director of the chamber of commerce, then as a councillor, and then as a two-term mayor. She led the community through several controversies that saw major commercial development, along with a new emergency services building required by the police and fire departments.

I had the honour of serving with her on council and the pleasure of working with her on many projects in town. I can say that she was very passionate about her work, both at the chamber and as mayor, but she also enjoyed a good laugh and could even poke fun at herself.

On behalf of all members, I offer condolences to her husband Jim Hector Thomas, her son Dwayne, who is now a town councillor in Gananoque, her daughter Cindy Wrong, her mother Elin Philips, her 10 brothers and sisters, and her extended family.

She will be missed.

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● (1410)

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Racism affects all our institutions and has a real impact on the lives of racialized Canadians every day. Indigenous and black communities are vastly overrepresented in our jail; 25% of those in federal prisons are indigenous men and women, and 36% of those in federal prisons for women are indigenous. Other vital statistics illustrate the deep historical impact of government policies toward our first nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

This year, we saw racism manifest in its deadliest form with a shooting in Sainte-Foy, Quebec. Reported cases of Islamophobia have more than doubled in the past three years alone. We see mosques and synagogues vandalized. We see girls and boys, women and men targeted for just being who they are.

On this day, we need to reflect on these startling facts and resolve to fight racism in all its vilest forms, right in Canada and around the world.

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POST-SECONDARY POLICY FORUM CHALLENGE

Ms. Filomena Tassi (Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our democracy thrives when each new generation produces thoughtful leaders and thinkers.

Today I am pleased to announce that five students from McMaster, which is a world-recognized institution in my home town of Hamilton, have won the Minister of Finance's post-secondary policy forum challenge. Their submission focused on reform and modernization of employment insurance.

The Minister of Finance called their submission innovative and bold. These talented young people will be on the Hill tomorrow and will be able to hear the minister deliver the 2017 budget, and will also have the opportunity to meet with him afterward.

I wish to congratulate these bright young minds for their innovation and creativity. They inspire great optimism in me, for Hamilton, and for Canada. Well done students; Well done McMaster University.

* * *

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I recently hosted a meeting in my riding of Parry Sound—Muskoka with local advocacy groups and the mayors of Huntsville and Bracebridge to discuss an alarming report in *The Globe and Mail*.

Statements by Members

The report revealed one in five sexual assault claims in Canada is dismissed as unfounded by the police. My riding has some of the highest numbers in the country, with more than half of sexual assault allegations being dropped. We must work together to address these disturbing and unacceptable statistics.

We should be looking at alternative models of addressing sexual assault allegations, including the Philadelphia model. This model was implemented 14 years ago, and allows front-line groups, which understand trauma, to review reported sexual assault cases directly with police.

I am encouraged that communities and advocacy groups in Parry Sound—Muskoka and across the country are working together and learning from one another to find effective solutions to support sexual assault victims. Let us all help our communities to reduce and eliminate sexual violence, and bring perpetrators to justice.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, 914, that is the number of lives lost last year in British Columbia to the opioid crisis, which has ravaged families and communities across British Columbia. Zero is the number of deaths that occurred at any supervised consumption site last year.

These numbers are important and they tell a story, that harm reduction saves lives. After over a decade of inaction by the previous government, this government has taken swift and immediate action to not only save lives, but make evidence-based decisions that will allow for more supervised consumption sites, including in my riding of Surrey Centre.

Surreyites deserve access to the very best of health care, and Bill C-37 will do exactly that.

I want to extend my personal thanks to the paramedics, firefighters, police officers, and all front-line workers who have not only worked long and difficult hours to save lives, but who have also put their own lives at risk while doing so.

* * *

• (1415)

[*Translation*]

ACTON VALE REGION

Ms. Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of the month, I once again had the pleasure of visiting a number of businesses in the Acton Vale region. I had the opportunity to meet workers at the Burnbrae Farms liquid egg plant, workers who manufacture forestry mulchers at DENIS CIMAF, and workers who produce high-quality pet food at Food for Pets. Their products are popular here and around the world.

I also visited Ferme Clovis Gauthier, whose eggs are sold throughout Quebec. I had the pleasure of visiting Apolline boutique and the Upton general store, which are both filled with amazing treasures. I also went to Laliberté Moto Sport, which is an excellent example of a family business where multiple generations share a passion for what they do.

It was such a pleasure for me to converse with my constituents, including the residents of Maison Saint-Amour and Domaine Rousseau, as well as the staff who take care of our seniors with such grace and dedication, and other people I met all over town.

* * *

[*English*]

TAXATION

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, tonight the Liberals have a chance to right a wrong for a group of soldiers who feel like they have been kicked in the stomach by their own government. Since September, a small group of Canadian soldiers stationed in Kuwait in the fight against ISIS have been losing up to \$1,800 per month because of a new tax on their danger pay. When the minister said he would make sure there was more equity for our troops, I never thought this new tax would be extended by the Liberals to an additional 300 soldiers. On this side of the House, we understand that our troops deserve better.

Tonight we will be voting on our Conservative motion to reverse this cold-hearted tax grab from the brave men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces and their families. The defence minister has indicated that only a small group will have their tax relief restored, while nearly 300 stationed in Kuwait will continue to pay the Liberals' tax for fighting ISIS. I urge all members of this House to stand tonight, on behalf of every member of the Canadian Armed Forces and their families, to ensure that they receive all the benefits, danger pay, and respect they deserve.

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2017 GLOBAL TEACHER PRIZE

Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we all know that some of the best people in the world come from Atlantic Canada. Last week, Maggie MacDonnell, a teacher from Antigonish, Nova Scotia, proved this to be true. Maggie was recently selected as the recipient of the prestigious Global Teacher Prize from among more than 20,000 applicants in 179 countries. This prize comes with an award of \$1 million and the right to claim the literal title of world's best teacher.

Though Maggie was born out east, it was her extraordinary work in Salluit, Quebec, a remote village in Canada's north, that puts her in a class of her own. Her contributions to the school and community include establishing a fitness centre, a community kitchen, healthy eating programs, and a life skills program for girls. Maggie plans to use her prize winnings to further enhance her community. She hopes to create an NGO that will focus on environmental stewardship and physical activity through kayaking to help enhance physical and mental health among indigenous youth.

Maggie's prize may have been a million bucks, but we cannot put a price on the real value of the work she continues to do. I can tell her that we are some proud of her back home.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[*Translation*]

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, each and every person here was elected to represent the people in their riding, and together we represent the Canadian people.

Far from a mere inconvenience, the Prime Minister appearing in the House every day to answer questions is a critical tool for him to provide accountability to each and every Canadian.

How can the Prime Minister justify his willingness to show up in the House only once a week? Why is he attempting to shirk his responsibilities?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be here today and as often as necessary to answer questions from members of the opposition.

That said, I would like to point out that our government is different from the previous government. We have an amazing cabinet. Our ministers are very capable of directly answering questions regarding their own actions in their own portfolios. That is how a government by cabinet operates. That is how a government operates when it is accountable to its citizens.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

[*English*]

The Speaker: Order. Let us not start off with a noisy question period.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

• (1420)

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has announced that he wants to change the rules of Parliament to make his life easier, and no one's life will be easier than his. If he gets away with this, he will only have to show up to work once a week. He also wants to strip the opposition of its power to hold him accountable.

We know that the Prime Minister says China is a dictatorship he admires, and he certainly had a bizarre infatuation with Fidel Castro.

Can the Prime Minister at least agree that he, the Prime Minister of Canada, should be accountable to the House of Commons and to Canadians more than once a week?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have put forward a discussion paper, that we have published and shared with all Canadians, to talk about how we can improve the functioning of this house of democracy, how we can make sure that Canadians are better heard, that the opposition has the

Oral Questions

opportunity to ask tough questions to hold the Prime Minister to account and to hold this government to account.

That is why, among the many proposals we have made, we have talked about the model of the British prime minister's questions that devotes an entire question period to the prime minister answering questions.

We are open to all sorts of discussions about how to improve the functioning of this Parliament, because we know Canadians expect a modern workplace out of this place so we can better serve them.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Modern, Mr. Speaker? Efficient? Efficient like the Chinese dictatorship that he thinks is so efficient? We do not live in China. Those are the Prime Minister's words.

We do not live in China or Cuba. We live in Canada, and we have a parliamentary democracy that is accountable to Canadians. We think the Prime Minister should show up every day.

Here is a thought. We could have question period with the Prime Minister every day. He could answer all of our questions every day.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to every opportunity to stand up and talk about the great things this government is doing.

Tomorrow we will be presenting a budget that will create growth for the middle class, opportunities for Canadians, investments in the future of this country that we know, after 10 years of slow growth under the Conservative government, will turn our growth path around. This is about giving opportunities to Canadians.

I am always happy to talk about the important things the Canadian government is doing for the middle class.

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FINANCE

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Let us start with facts, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that the middle class grew by 30% over the last 10 years.

Here is an interesting fact. The Prime Minister's Office has already spent more on polling than the previous Conservative government spent in eight years. Millions of tax dollars are being spent to track Canadians' views for the political benefit of the Prime Minister.

I have a really simple question for the Prime Minister. Has the Prime Minister polled Canadians on whether or not he should keep his promise to balance the budget in 2019?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite wants to talk about facts. The fact is, the very first thing we did in government was lower taxes on the middle class and raise them on the wealthiest 1%. Unfortunately, the fact also is that that party voted against raising taxes on the wealthiest and lowering them on the middle class. That, unfortunately, demonstrates that they still do not understand that Canadians need investments in the middle class and support for the middle class, not for the wealthiest, like they did for 10 years.

*Oral Questions***TAXATION**

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what Canadians want tomorrow is a break from the Prime Minister.

In the last budget, he hiked taxes on small businesses, on families, and on students, and then we got the national carbon tax and a payroll tax hike, but that is not enough. Now the Prime Minister needs to cancel more tax credits. He wants to raise user fees. He is even considering putting GST on Netflix.

Does the Prime Minister realize that Canadians are tired of being nickel-and-dimed to death?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past year and a half, we raised taxes on the wealthiest 1% so we could lower them on the middle class. We delivered a Canada child benefit that gives more money to nine out of 10 Canadians by stopping the sending of child benefit cheques to millionaire families, which the previous government did.

The fact is, on the tax cut for the middle class and more money through the CCB, that party voted against both initiatives. Shame on them.

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[Translation]

SMALL BUSINESS

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister really likes slogans and sound bites, such as the one about 2015 being the last election under the current system.

I see this is still a sore point for the Prime Minister, but what happened to his promise to cut small business taxes? Well, in committee, his minister responsible for small business said that this promise was, and I quote, a sound bite to get elected.

Why is the Prime Minister turning his back on his promise and at the same time going ahead with a privatization bank that he never mentioned during the campaign?

● (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know what our small businesses need: economic growth.

Following 10 years of a government that failed in this area, we are working to put more money in the pockets of the middle class and create opportunities for our small businesses.

By connecting our small businesses to global markets, especially through the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, which the previous government was unable to conclude but we managed to do so, we know that we are creating opportunities for small and medium-sized businesses every day. That is our government's focus.

[English]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister conveniently forgot to mention that his platform promise does not look anything like the privatization bank he is now proposing. In fact, the word "privatization" does not ever appear in the Liberal campaign platform. Neither do "user fees", "tolls", or "private profit on public property".

Will the Prime Minister admit that he never campaigned on privatizing infrastructure?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite remembers well the campaign, because we committed to invest in infrastructure, while he committed to balancing the books, at all costs, on the backs of Canadians. Canadians made a different choice. Canadians knew that investing in our communities, investing in infrastructure, whether it is social housing, whether it is child care spaces, whether it is public transit, is necessary for the future of our economy, for the future of Canadians. That is what we are doing. We are looking to leverage as much public infrastructure as we possibly can for the benefit of Canadians, and that is what the infrastructure bank is going to help do.

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TAXATION

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here is something that did appear in the Liberal campaign platform: "set a cap on how much can be claimed through the stock option deduction". We know a little about that, because it was actually in our platform long before the Liberals discovered it. Tomorrow the Liberals have an opportunity to put the interests of every Canadian above those of wealthy insiders. Last week they actually voted for it and said they were going to do it.

Will the Liberals keep their promise to close the stock option loophole, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting how the member opposite talks about doing more for the middle class and less for the wealthiest, because he voted against lowering taxes on the middle class and raising them on the wealthiest 1%. If he were serious about helping the middle class, he would make sure that his party stood with us as we lower taxes on the middle class and raise them on the wealthiest 1%.

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JUSTICE

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the NDP voted for increasing taxes on the wealthiest Canadians, but he is right, we did oppose a plan that did nothing to help the middle class.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

This morning, the government dropped gangsterism, trafficking, importation of narcotics, weapons possession, kidnapping and other charges against 36 individuals arrested during a major anti-Mafia sweep.

My question for the Prime Minister is as follows: why?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is important that we ensure that our justice system works to keep Canadians and their communities safe. We are always working to improve our justice system so that criminals are prosecuted and face the consequences of their actions. There is still work to do to improve the system.

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THE BUDGET

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I can understand why someone would borrow to invest in an RRSP. However, when they borrow to buy groceries, there is a major problem. This is what the government is currently doing.

The government promised to create thousands of jobs through various programs. However, it seems that these jobs have not been created. Today, people will have to pay to bring the deficit down as low as possible.

Tomorrow we will find out which segment of the population will end up paying the price. Will income splitting for seniors be taken away to pay for the government's out-of-control spending?

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

We are the party that committed to investing in the middle class and growing the economy. We are the party that committed to helping our seniors. We are the party that brought in a 10% increase to the guaranteed income supplement for low-income single seniors. Lastly, we are the party that lowered taxes for the middle class.

We support our seniors and we are moving forward.

• (1430)

Hon. Denis Lebel (Lac-Saint-Jean, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the member just said, the government made promises, but it has broken many of them. This is just one of many.

The government cobbled together a plan to sell our airports, which would put money in its pocket and make it look not quite so bad.

What will be in tomorrow's budget for the forestry industry and softwood lumber? How will the budget secure the future of our regions? A lot of people are very worried. Tomorrow, who will have to pick up the tab for the Prime Minister's out-of-control spending?

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

Budget 2017 will build on our commitment to support the middle class and grow our economy. Our government is the one that introduced measures to ensure the middle class gets some support. We are the ones who gave members of the middle class a tax cut. We

created the Canada child benefit, which has lifted hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty. We have also helped our seniors—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Carleton.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, how about a riddle? According to Finance Canada, the federal government had a balanced budget in 2015. Now, Finance Canada says we will have deficits until 2055. In just one Liberal budget, we added four decades of deficits. After a second Liberal budget, in approximately what century will we be projected to balance?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for far too long, middle-class Canadians have had a hard time getting ahead, with the decisions that were made by the previous government. We have a plan to grow the economy and strengthen the middle class. Our plan is working. If we look at the numbers that came out just two weeks ago, we see that we have created more than 220,000 full-time jobs and part-time jobs. We can also see that our unemployment rate has gone down from 7.1% to 6.6%. Our plan is working, and it is good news for Canadians.

* * *

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, speaking of news, Bloomberg news quoted the following: "Feelings Are Worth Spending For"—finance minister on the eve of budget. The Prime Minister would agree. He was feeling pretty good when he spent \$127,000 in tax dollars on his visit to billionaire island. That was a real middle-class adventure, by his definition. Do the Liberals know who is not feeling good, though? It is the tomato farmer in my riding, who had to pay \$6,200 in one month for a carbon tax. When will the government realize that its feelings are not worth hammering taxpayers with more costs?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are committed to taking action that will grow the middle class and create good jobs. Action on climate change is estimated to grow the world economy by \$19 trillion through investments in renewable power and energy efficiency. We understand the need to trade good jobs to protect our environment, grow the middle class, and ensure a more sustainable future for our kids.

* * *

[Translation]

THE BUDGET

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister wants to limit his own speaking time. I would suggest he find something interesting to say, first.

Oral Questions

Let us remember that, just two years ago, the Prime Minister said that budgets balance themselves. In just a few hours, the government will table its second budget.

After promising an initial deficit of \$10 billion and ending up with a deficit of \$30 billion and a return to a balanced budget in 2055, how will the Prime Minister go about ensuring that the budget will balance itself tomorrow?

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

I say again that it was our government that committed to investing in the middle class and growing our economy. It was our government that introduced a tax cut for the middle class, while raising taxes for the wealthy.

It must also be said that the official opposition party voted against the motion.

• (1435)

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us not forget that 65% of Canadians were not affected by these so-called tax breaks, and that those who benefited the most from these so-called tax breaks are people who earn between \$140,000 and \$200,000.

If that is what this government calls the middle class, I can understand why it is incapable of managing the country's finances properly and balancing the budget, and above all, why it is constantly punishing the middle class.

Will there be any good news for the middle class in tomorrow's budget?

Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, budget 2017 will build on our commitment to support the middle class and foster economic prosperity.

It was our government that introduced the Canada child benefit and finally lifted thousands of children out of poverty. It was also our government that increased the guaranteed income supplement by 10% to help low-income seniors. We have a good plan, and we will continue moving forward and supporting Canadians.

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STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals want to change the rules of the House under the guise of making Parliament more efficient.

That party, which obtained only 39% of the vote in 2015, now wants to change the rules unilaterally. To hell with sunny ways.

As a show of good faith, why do the Liberals not drop their plan, like they did for Motion No. 6, and create a committee whose membership is representative of the popular vote to look into the matter?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign, we promised to modernize Parliament and bring it into the 21st century.

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

I know that we can work together. That is why it is a discussion. I encourage all hon. members to take part.

[English]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it was Stephen Harper who broke the record for shutting down debate in Parliament; yet in his darkest dreams, he never tried to stifle the voices of the opposition the way the Liberals are trying to do right now.

It is the Liberal Prime Minister who wants to automatically limit debate on all government bills, and it is the Liberal Prime Minister who says he only has to show up one day a week to answer questions Canadians have for him.

Newsflash: this House does not belong to the Liberal Party. It belongs to all Canadians, so will the Liberals step away from this disastrous and undemocratic plan, and work with us to make Parliament work again?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was I who released the discussion paper. I shared it with all members in this place as well as the public.

The member is correct that we are here to serve Canadians. Each of us is elected. The discussion paper provides many ideas, and it is a conversation, a discussion. We have asked the committee to do the important work that it does to modernize this place and to bring it into the 21st century.

This government recognizes that members of Parliament do work in this place as well as in their ridings. As the member of Parliament for the riding of Waterloo, I am proud to have some of my constituents here. I will work for them in this place as well as in my riding as, I am sure, all members of Parliament do.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Mr. Speaker, how disingenuous can the member be? As we speak, the Liberals are trying to ram this through and force these rules on all of us.

We all saw the Prime Minister try to elbow his way in this House last year, trying to get his way. That was not a pretty sight. Now once again he does not want to be here answering questions, so the Liberals are trying to force these changes on this House.

Does the House leader or the Prime Minister commit that no changes will be made unless all of us agree, or are we to see elbowgate, act two?

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, order. Most members in all parties are able to sit and hear things they do not like to hear. However, the test of course is for adults to be able to do that quietly, on all sides.

The hon. government House leader.

Oral Questions

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to rise in this place and to remind all members, as well as Canadians, of the important work that members of Parliament do.

Yes, there is a discussion paper. The discussion paper is available to all members as well as the public. The committee is doing the important work it does. The committee has the opportunity to look at ideas, bring in experts, and really consider a better way to do Parliament.

We believe that all members on both sides of this place should have the opportunity to have meaningful discussion, and that is why I think it is an important conversation to have.

• (1440)

[Translation]

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, when I was elected in October 2015, my constituents expected that I would work very hard defending their priorities. Since then, I have worked countless hours to do a good job as an MP.

How can a responsible government consider reducing the number of hours of work we do here in Ottawa? Why does the Prime Minister not want to answer members' questions? It seems to me that the Prime Minister is not taking his job seriously.

Can the Prime Minister tell us the truth and explain the real reasons for this new reform?

[English]

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know that the previous government's approach was very different when it came to discussions and conversations.

We believe that we can have discussions. We believe that these conversations are important conversations to have. I agree with the member that it is not about counting hours. Every single Canadian across this country, from coast to coast to coast, works very hard.

We will continue to work hard for Canadians. We made a commitment to modernize this place and to bring it into the 21st century. That is what that discussion paper is about. I encourage the member not only to read the parts he chooses to, but to read the document in its entirety, because part of the suggestions I have offered are actually about looking at ways to improve this place.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals want to cancel Friday sittings, cut off debate in committees, eliminate debates on committee reports, and severely limit debates in this House.

Now the Prime Minister only wants to show up for question period once a week. Maybe the Liberals can get one of those cardboard cutouts to fill in for him.

The Liberals are diminishing Parliament and reducing accountability. They should not be changing the rules of the House to make this a safe space for the Prime Minister. When will the Prime

Minister end his constant attack on the ability of MPs to hold the government accountable?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was this Prime Minister and this government that took unprecedented levels of consultations with Canadians. We will continue to work hard for Canadians. We will continue to work hard for members of Parliament.

I know it is very difficult for the member opposite to understand, but our objective has always been to ensure that Parliament is relevant to Canadians and that the House becomes accountable, predictable, efficient, and transparent. I know we can work better in this place.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I remind members that it is not helpful to decorum to suggest that members are unable to understand things.

Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as members of Parliament, we are just temporary occupants of these seats in the House of Commons. They do not belong to us. They belong to Canadians. They do not belong to political parties or the Prime Minister.

The Liberals are proposing drastic changes to Parliament that will permanently damage the ability of MPs to hold the government to account. Why are the Liberals willing to cause collateral damage to the House of Commons in their attempt to damage the opposition, and when will backbench Liberal MPs stand up to the Prime Minister and defend the right of all members of Parliament to hold the government accountable?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a discussion paper. It is true this place does belong to the people of Canada. That is exactly why I shared the discussion paper with all members of Parliament, as well as the public.

This is a conversation that we want Canadians to participate in. We want Canadians to be part of this place and to help us make the important decisions that we make.

I encourage all members to be part of the conversation. I encourage all members not only to listen to their views but to listen to opposing views and differing views. That is why I am encouraging us to have this conversation.

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INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are appalled by the government's attitude towards human rights. This week, the Attorney General will argue that the Human Rights Tribunal does not have the power to enforce its own orders.

Instead of questioning the authority of the tribunal, the government needs to say whether or not it intends to respect the human rights of first nations children in this country. That is the real question.

Oral Questions

When will the government respect the human rights of first nations children?

[Translation]

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are committed to completely overhauling child and family services for first nations. We believe that we are abiding by the tribunal's decision. We will now pursue our efforts with first nations and the provincial and territorial governments through the established tripartite process in order to work on real reform that focuses primarily on the well-being of children.

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● (1445)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Vladimir Yakunin, a member of Putin's inner circle, is on the U.S. sanctions list, but is still not on Canada's list.

When she was in opposition, the member for University—Rosedale asked the Conservative government: "When will the government match its actions to its rhetoric and sanction Sechin and Yakunin?"

Now that the member is the Minister of Foreign Affairs, my question for her is this: when will the government walk the talk and sanction Mr. Yakunin?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the member that it was the Conservatives who did not sanction Mr. Yakunin in 2014 and 2015.

Now Mr. Yakunin is no longer in power, just like the Conservatives. This is an important reality. As for our position vis-à-vis Russia, I think all members in this House would agree with me when I say that our government's opposition, as well as my own as Minister of Foreign Affairs, remain very strong.

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[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the recent session at the UN commission on the status of women was attended by the Minister of Status of Women and several members of the standing committee. Two of my constituents from Truro, Linda MacDonald and Jeanne Sarson, made presentations there on the need for appropriate laws.

These two women are tireless advocates for human rights and women's rights in particular. Could the Minister of Status of Women outline what progress was made at these UN meetings?

Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was truly an honour to lead the Canadian delegation of over 200 Canadians at this year's UN commission on the status of women. People like Linda and Jeanne are truly at the heart of the movement to advance women's and girls' rights domestically and around the world.

Canada has made significant progress since I was last there in 2013, and we will remain at the forefront of global efforts to ensure that women and girls everywhere can reach their full potential.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the reeve of Emerson, Manitoba, says another 29 asylum seekers illegally crossed into his community on Sunday night alone. We also know that refugees are illegally crossing into Quebec with American visas issued at the U.S. embassy in Saudi Arabia.

Canadians are tired of the Liberals' inaction and denial. Where is the plan? When will the Liberals finally take action and regain control of our borders?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman and Canadians can be absolutely assured that every Canadian law is being properly enforced and applied by both the RCMP and the CBSA. We are monitoring the situation very carefully.

It is true that the numbers over the last number of weeks and months have risen compared to where they were before, but the RCMP and the CBSA have assured us that they have the resources at the present time to deal with the situation adequately and appropriately. If they require additional resources, they will certainly let the government know.

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one could argue that the time for monitoring has passed and the time for action is now, because we know that illegal border crossings are increasing with no end in sight.

What is of more concern right now is we are going to see this trend increase as warmer weather increases. Affected communities are very concerned. Families are concerned. Border enforcement issues are concerned. What is more concerning is that we are seeing and hearing concerns about international gangs and criminals taking advantage of the Liberals' inaction to begin organized shuttling of illegal migrants to the Canadian border. What is the minister doing to stop this particular issue?

Hon. Ralph Goodale (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no tangible evidence of the issue that the hon. member has raised. However, this was a subject that was discussed between myself and the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security. We are concerned about the pattern of people arriving at the border, particularly those who, in the last number of weeks and months, have actually risked their lives in very severe weather conditions in transportation.

This is an issue that is under very close scrutiny by both our government and the Government of the United States.

Oral Questions

•(1450)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians get really tired of waiting for the Liberal government to do something about securing our borders. They are also really tired of seeing the Liberal government tax our troops who are in the fight against ISIS.

This has to stop right now. These men and women in uniform were promised up to \$1,800 per month in danger pay, yet halfway through their mission, the Liberals pulled away these benefits. Trying to pinch pennies on the backs of our troops and military families is wrong and it is immoral.

Will the defence minister support our Conservative motion to give back the danger pay, and will he give these benefits to all our troops who are putting their lives on the line in the fight against ISIS now—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of National Defence.

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is great to see the passion from the member opposite. I just wish he had the same passion when he sent the troops to Iraq without the tax-free benefits.

In February 2016, working with the finance minister, we put in the tax-free exemption. I ask for the members to take politics out of defence, but it would be great if the member opposite told me about the rules that they placed in 2014 that brought the benefits down.

It is okay. I gave directions to the chief of the defence staff to take a look at this, and we will fix this problem.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that is false. It has already been shown that the danger pay was brought in by us.

We know that the Liberals are big spenders. Their generosity consists of cutting off funds to our soldiers sent to Iraq to fight ISIS. The Liberals cut off the \$1,800 per month to military spouses, who have to get by until the end of the mission. It is shameful. However, there is a but: but the Liberals seem open to fixing their mistake.

Will they support our motion, fix their mistake, and retroactively restore the danger pay to all soldiers sent to fight ISIS?

[*English*]

Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I stated, the previous government was the one that actually sent our troops to Iraq without the tax-free benefit. In February 2016 we corrected this problem, but rules that were placed in 2015 by the previous government brought the benefits back down. Now they realize what those rules have replaced. We are looking at it, and the CDS will be making recommendations so that we can fix this problem once and for all.

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TAXATION

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, at committee the Minister of Small Business said that the Liberals' promise to reduce taxes on small business was "a great sound bite" and "a great headline", but at the end of the day, they were not really

going to do it. My goodness, the old Liberal arrogance is alive and kicking. First they steal an NDP policy, then they abandon that promise in their very first budget, and now the minister is bragging about it.

Will the Liberals do the right thing tomorrow and reinstate the tax break for small businesses, yes or no?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected our government on a plan to grow the economy and strengthen the middle class, and we are delivering on that commitment. Over the last six months, almost 220,000 jobs were created, the majority of which were full-time and the majority of which were created by small and medium-sized enterprises. This is the strongest six months of job growth in almost a decade. This is evidence that our plan is working.

We will continue to make the necessary investments in budget 2017 to continue to strengthen the middle class and to grow the economy.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, many were shocked by the announced cuts to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, including severe cuts to bilateral commitments on the Great Lakes. Canadians will be further concerned to learn how the Liberal government also intends to make cuts to water protection. The minister likes to talk about her deep commitment to the Great Lakes, yet not only is her government continuing the substantial cuts put forward by the Harper regime but they are going even further.

Will the Liberals restore funding to these vital initiatives or will they continue to be all talk and little action for our treasured waters?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was in Washington last week on Great Lakes Day where I made it perfectly clear to Americans, to my counterpart, that we need continued American investment in the Great Lakes, that we need to be working together because 40 million people rely on the Great Lakes for clean drinking water. It is an engine of the economy. We cannot have things like Asian carp come and destroy our Great Lakes and we are going to continue pushing with the United States to work to clean up our Great Lakes.

Oral Questions

●(1455)

ETHICS

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, more details have now emerged about the Prime Minister's New Year's vacation. Taxpayers now know they are on the hook for over \$120,000, and that is not even counting whatever the numerous ethics investigations are going to cost. The Prime Minister made a conscious decision that it is the responsibility of the taxpayer to pay for his luxury travel. When did the Prime Minister forget that it is his job to serve Canadians and not the other way around?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as has been the case for previous prime ministers, including the previous one, for security reasons RCMP officers always accompany prime ministers, whether for personal or business travel. One of the first things we did after taking office was to ask the Clerk of the Privy Council Office to develop guidelines surrounding the reimbursement for travel by sitting prime ministers, their families, and guests. Prior to our government taking office, no such policy existed.

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, lots of Canadian families travel by plane on a special getaway once a year. On these flights, one could buy a sandwich or maybe a diet Coke and a bag of chips for a snack. It is not great, but it is certainly reasonable. What is not reasonable is over \$1,700 worth of food and drinks for a three-hour flight between Canada and the Bahamas, which is how much the taxpayer was billed by the Prime Minister getting to his private island vacation.

My question is simple. Just what in the world was the Prime Minister eating on that plane ride?

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the work that we do in this place and for Canadians we take very seriously. As I have mentioned, and as has been the case for previous prime ministers, for security reasons, RCMP officers have always accompanied prime ministers, whether on personal or business travel. One of the first things we did when we took office was to ask the Clerk of the Privy Council to develop guidelines surrounding the reimbursement of travel by sitting prime ministers, their families, and guests. Prior to our government taking office, no such guidelines existed.

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*[Translation]***CANADIAN HERITAGE**

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC): Mr. Speaker, according to media reports, the majority of projects in Quebec funded through the Canada 150 fund, 87% to be exact, just happen to be in Liberal ridings despite the fact that only half of Quebec ridings are represented by a Liberal member.

Can the Minister of Canadian Heritage confirm to the House that 87% of allocated funds have been earmarked for the ridings of her Liberal friends? If so, does she find that acceptable?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canada 150 vision is rooted in our communities and

designed for families right across the country. We are proud to have invested more than \$130 million in projects of national significance, which will have an opportunity to stop in a number of communities in all the regions. In addition, they will have a significant impact on every riding in the country.

Of course our goal is to achieve equitable regional distribution; 2017 will be a big year. Of course we encourage all Canadians to celebrate regardless of their political stripes.

* * *

*[English]***SMALL BUSINESS**

Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, high-growth companies and small to medium-sized enterprises are key drivers of Canada's economic growth. In January, our government launched accelerated growth services, a pilot program in Atlantic Canada to help coordinate access by high-growth companies to the innovation, trade, finance, and other support services that are available across various government departments.

Can the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development please update this House on how accelerated growth services are already updating—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Innovation.

Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for St. John's East for his question, his hard work, and his leadership. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all 32 MPs from Atlantic Canada for their leadership and hard work, and for really driving the Atlantic growth strategy.

As part of this strategy, we have expanded the accelerated growth strategy. This is a one-stop shop that will help small businesses grow and expand in that region. We have identified 28 companies as part of this pilot initiative. This is very important for Atlantic Canada. This is very important for growth and jobs.

* * *

●(1500)

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians were very hopeful that the inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women and girls would lead to a brighter future, but families are losing patience. It has now been eight months, and we now hear that the commissioners only have 90 names in their database, yet hundreds and hundreds of families are waiting to hear from them.

The minister needs to take action. There are some very simple fixes to this issue. She needs to break down bureaucratic barriers and ensure that the inquiry gets the necessary information to do its job.

Oral Questions

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this ongoing national tragedy, we are confident that the commission has the tools, resources, and networks to provide the families with the support they need. I can confirm that government officials are scheduled to meet with the commission to discuss how best to utilize the information resources already provided.

We remain steadfast to our commitment and will continue to work collaboratively with all parties to ensure the commission is ready to hear from families this spring.

* * *

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, *La Presse* reported that, since 2010, the percentage of bilingual employees at security checkpoints in almost all major airports in the country has dropped dramatically.

This information is consistent with a report submitted just today by the Commissioner of Official Languages that reveals the provision of bilingual services in our airports leaves much to be desired.

What does the Minister of Canadian Heritage intend to do to promote bilingualism and to ensure that our official languages truly enjoy equal status in airports across the country?

Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, bilingualism and the Official Languages Act are extremely important for our government.

Federal services must then be provided in both official languages. We take that very seriously. We are of course responsible for safety in our airports, but we insist that it be done with respect and courtesy, and in accordance with the Official Languages Act.

* * *

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada understands how important mining exploration companies are to supporting middle-class families and indigenous communities and to building a clean, green economy.

Can the Minister of Natural Resources tell the House about what the federal government is doing to ensure that Canada remains a top destination for exploration and mining?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Nickel Belt for his excellent question.

I recently announced that our government will extend the 15% mining exploration tax credit for an additional year. The credit helps exploration companies finance their projects and contributes to creating good jobs in remote and indigenous communities.

[English]

VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, many veterans struggle in finding meaningful employment after leaving the service on transitioning to civilian life. The Liberals promised to engage with stakeholders like Monster.ca to use military skills translators to help our vets find work, including jobs in the public service.

The U.S. uses this same algorithm to help its soldiers find jobs, but we have heard nothing from the Liberals on this campaign promise.

Could the minister explain, with a real answer for veterans, why the Liberals are dragging their feet on this campaign promise?

Hon. Kent Hehr (Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his commitment to veterans across Canada. We are committed to finding veterans more work in both the public sector as well as the private sector.

Since the passing of the Veterans Hiring Act in 2014, we have brought on board a mandate, through me, to the rest of my cabinet colleagues, as well as the deputy ministers, to look at more ways to hire more veterans. We are also investigating opportunities with the private sector to build those bridges and get those opportunities for our veterans and their families to better their lives. We will continue to do that in our department.

* * *

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ): Mr. Speaker, President Trump wants to axe spending on cleaning up the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes flow into the St. Lawrence, the source of drinking water for millions of Quebeckers.

Mayors of communities around the Great Lakes and along the St. Lawrence and environmental groups have reminded us that protecting water should be considered an essential service, but time is running out.

Will Ottawa turn its back on Quebec and sacrifice our water, or can the minister assure us that American cuts will not threaten the waters of the St. Lawrence?

● (1505)

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while in Washington last week, I met with representatives of both U.S. parties, mayors, and environmentalists. I made it very clear that Canada recognizes our obligation to protect the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence.

That is what I told my American counterpart. I was very clear about how vital it is to work with the United States to ensure that the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence remain environmental priorities.

*Business of Supply***SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we have met with people in forestry, and it is clear that the softwood lumber dispute will resume in a few weeks.

The last time, the federal government was to blame for the loss of 15,000 jobs in Quebec in one year. That means a lot of people and families, and many villages and regions are emptying out.

Among other things, our workers need loan guarantees to deal with the next dispute.

Will Ottawa let our people down once again?

Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize the importance of forestry in Canada. We have started a very good conversation with the provinces that may be affected by new measures. We will most assuredly take coordinated measures to protect jobs in this country. Canadians can count on us.

Mr. Mario Beaulieu: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent for the following motion. That this House, while recognizing the importance of debating matters of public interest, voice genuine outrage over the disparaging prejudices and stereotypes used in a column in *Maclean's* magazine published on March 20 to cast aspersions on the Quebec nation and that it condemn the rise of “Quebecophobia” in Canada.

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

Some hon. members: No.

* * *

[*English*]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. During question period, I believe the Minister of National Defence misspoke, and I would like to give him an opportunity to correct the record, when he said that we sent troops to Iraq without any support. I can tell members there was danger pay. He has an Order Paper question that he has tabled in the House under his signature, and I would like to point out for him that if he would look at Question No.—

The Speaker: This is a matter of debate. I do not think it is appropriate. This can be carried on in debate at another time, but it is debate, not a point of order. I am sorry.

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY SUPPLY BILL

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the point of order raised earlier today, I listened with interest to the member's intervention and his allegation that the government was seeking to legislate Bill C-24 through the supply bill for the supplementary estimates (C). Nothing could be further from the truth. Let me explain.

Remuneration amounts for a payment are established in the Salaries Act—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order, please. Members are concerned. Apparently they are not aware there was a major point of order raised earlier and this member indicated he would come back to the House to respond to that point of order, which he is now doing, on a substantive point. I would ask members to either listen carefully or involve themselves in whatever other activities they may have to be involved in.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons has the floor.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, remuneration amounts for payment are established in the Salaries Act for ministers with a portfolio, ministers of state who preside over a ministry of state, and the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons. This statute does not authorize remuneration for either ministers without a portfolio listed in the Salaries Act or ministers of state who do not preside over a ministry of state. Therefore, the vote IC wording contained in the supply bill for certain organizations provides the authority to make such payments.

Using a supply bill to authorize such payments is a long-standing arrangement going back at least to 1995. At that time, the authority appeared only in the program expenditures vote on the Privy Council Office. Since 2007-08, the authority appears in the program or operating expenditure vote of each department that could potentially support a minister without a portfolio or a minister of state who does not preside over a ministry of state.

With respect to Bill C-24, with the exception of the Minister of La Francophonie, the individuals appointed on November 4, 2015, to positions of Minister of Science, Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, and Minister of Status of Women are remunerated under vote IC.

When Bill C-24 receives royal assent, it will authorize payment under the Salaries Act and vote IC will no longer be used for this purpose in future estimates.

The payment under vote IC not only respects the supplementary estimates process, it is also fully within the legal mandate and authority of the government.

The Speaker: I thank the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. I will be coming back to the House with a decision on this point of order.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1510)

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—BUDGET 2017

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am excited to speak to this today—

The Speaker: Order, please. I have not recognized anyone yet. As I understand it, the next speaker is the parliamentary secretary to government House leader.

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre—Lanigan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Being only a few feet away from my colleague, I distinctly heard him start speaking first before you recognized any member on the government side. Therefore, since my colleague, the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands, did speak first, I move:

That the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands be now heard.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: Call in the members.

• (1550)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 222*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultiaf	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Ashton	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Bezan
Blaikie	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Block	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brassard
Brousseau	Brown
Calkins	Cannings
Carrie	Chong
Choquette	Christopherson
Clarke	Clement
Cooper	Cullen
Davies	Deltell
Donnelly	Dubé
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	Dusseauit
Duvall	Falk
Fast	Finley
Fortin	Gallant
Garrison	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Hardcastle
Harder	Johns
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kwan
Lake	Lebel
Lukiwski	MacGregor
Maguire	Malcolmson

Mathysen
Motz
Nantel
Nicholson
Pauzé
Poilievre
Ramsey
Rempel
Saganash
Saroya
Stanton
Stetski
Thériault
Trost
Van Loan
Warawa
Waugh
Weir
Zimmer — 97

Business of Supply

McCauley (Edmonton West)
Mulcair
Nater
Paul-Hus
Plamondon
Quach
Rankin
Ritz
Sansoucy
Sorenson
Ste-Marie
Strahl
Tilson
Trudel
Vecchio
Watts
Webber
Wong

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Berthold
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Boissonnault
Bossio	Bratina
Breton	Brisson
Caesar-Chavannes	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Drouin	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Fergus	Fillmore
Finnigan	Fisher
Fonseca	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Garneau
Gerretsen	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Hardie
Harvey	Hehr
Holland	Housefather
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Joly
Jordan	Jowhari
Kang	Khalid
Khera	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Lemieux	Leslie
Levitt	Liepert
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
May (Saamich—Gulf Islands)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinity
McKenna	McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Érables)
Soeurs	
Monsef	Morneau

Business of Supply

Morrissey
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Trudeau
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid— 175

Murray
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

PAIRED

Members

Foote

Moore— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for Davenport.

It is a happy day today. Tomorrow we are going to be witnessing part two for Canada's middle class and how the middle class of Canada is going to be further advanced.

Let us talk about part one. When we think about part one, what comes to my mind is the middle-class tax break that was given to Canada's middle class. That was really important, I believe, and very well received by—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I would ask members to take their conversations out into the lobby. In fact, I am giving them a moment or two as I say this to do so. Perhaps they could quiet down a bit.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons has the floor.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, when I think of the first budget, there are a number of elements in that budget that should be repeated and reinforced. Number one for me, as I have indicated, was the tax break for Canada's middle class. Another really important aspect was the additional special tax created on Canada's wealthiest 1%. It is a redistribution of wealth to ensure that there is a higher degree of equality.

Mr. Mark Warawa: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am trying to listen to the member and I am hearing a lot of chatter from the other side. Perhaps the member could ask his colleagues to calm down so we can all listen.

The Deputy Speaker: I do notice, as is sometimes the case after votes and other things when many members are assembled, that there is a lot of noise in the chamber. I now see that members are making their way to their respective lobbies, so I will invite the hon. parliamentary secretary to continue.

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, one of my colleagues across the way suggested that I start over. I would love to start over. I would only ask that they reset that clock, the 10-minute clock.

I want to emphasize, as I did when I started my speech just a minute ago, the importance of the first budget, because tomorrow we will be witnessing part two of the first budget, and I am anticipating that Canadians as a whole will welcome that budget, much as they have expressed so much appreciation for the first budget. This is the reason why I believe that first budget was one that really benefited Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be a part of it.

I have made reference to the tax break for Canada's middle class. I have made reference to the special tax that was created for Canada's wealthiest one per cent, which is a redistribution of wealth, which I believe is really important to the constituents in the riding I represent.

There was so much more in that budget. The Canada child benefit program and the increase that this government has provided that program will literally lift tens of thousands of children out of poverty. Many of those children are residents and call Winnipeg North their home.

It does not stop there. Think of Canada's most vulnerable seniors. If seniors are receiving a guaranteed income supplement, that means that their annual income is significantly low and they face many hardships. One of the biggest increases was given to the guaranteed income supplement, much like the Canada child benefit. As a direct result, tens of thousands of seniors will be lifted out of poverty. Again, we are talking about many residents whom I represent.

There is so much more to be optimistic about. We now have a government that genuinely understands that, in order to build a great, strong country, we need to invest in infrastructure. We have a government that has made a historical commitment in terms of the billions of dollars we are putting into Canada's infrastructure. It does not matter what region of our great nation. There is a commitment to work with municipalities, provinces, and other stakeholders to make sure we realize, in a very tangible way, infrastructure projects that will create jobs, that will build Canada's infrastructure, which will assist us into the future. That is good news.

Business of Supply

We hear about what else is happening even beyond the budget. The opposition members talk about the creation of taxes, and they are somewhat misleading. They should be looking at what the government was able to accomplish, things at which the previous Harper government failed miserably. Let me give two or three examples of that. The first example is the price on pollution that was created. The vast majority are very supportive of that. People are concerned about our environment.

The Prime Minister went to Paris, along with other stakeholders, including provincial representatives. When they came back from Paris, a discussion and dialogue took place. Imagine the premiers working with the Prime Minister, and the different governments came up with an agreement where there will in fact be a price on pollution.

I think Canadians were so pleased when they saw the type of support there. Governments of all political stripes got behind it. Even some of the former Conservative leaders are behind the price on pollution. Only the Conservative Party, the party that has genuinely lost touch with what Canadians want, is in opposition to having a price on pollution.

The Conservatives try to say that Ottawa is getting all this money as a result of it. That is just not true, and they know it is not true.

● (1555)

All of the revenue that will be generated by a price on pollution is going to provincial governments, and it is up to those governments to determine what they will do with that revenue.

This is about a vision for Canada. For the first time in many years, we have a Prime Minister who has a long-term vision for this country, a country that is going to deliver in tangible ways to Canada's middle class and the many others aspiring to be a part of it, and in fact to all Canadians.

The price on pollution file is not the only file. There are others.

For the first time all premiers have come to the table, have come to an agreement with respect to the CPP. The CPP is about ensuring that our workers of today have the finances for tomorrow when they retire.

The Conservative Party across the way has lost touch with what Canadians really think. Those members do not support the CPP. However, once again, provinces of all political stripes have come together, worked with this government, and ultimately came up with a historical agreement that will ensure we are providing that much more to individuals who are working today for their retirement in the future.

The good news does not stop there either. There is, for example, the issue of health care, an issue with which Canadians most often identify. I had this discussion with my daughter just the other night. We talked about the importance of health care to the constituents we both represent in the north end of Winnipeg. I can assure the House that, whether provincially or federally, both of us have a role to play. The Minister of Health has done a phenomenal job of reaching out to the provinces. We now have an agreement with all provinces, with the exception of one, and I will not say which one, but I am hopeful that province will join the agreement.

Why do I raise these three issues in particular? It is primarily because I want Canadians to know that not only does our government take a proactive approach to building our country and providing support for Canada's middle class, but it is prepared to work with other levels of government to get the job done. This government has demonstrated that time and time again.

Tomorrow will be a good day for Canadians. The Minister of Finance will deliver on the decisions that have been made through our caucus, through cabinet, and through the Prime Minister's Office. Canadians will see a reflection of what they really want to see. I say that because our Prime Minister has consistently told not only Liberal members of Parliament but all members of Parliament that he wants them to represent here in Ottawa the interests of their ridings. He does not want them to represent the interests of Ottawa in their constituencies. I take that challenge from the Prime Minister seriously. It is one of the reasons why I always take the opportunity to share my thoughts with ministers and other members of this privileged chamber. The budget we are going to see tomorrow will be a continuation of what was in the 2016 budget. That is why today is also a good day.

I thank the House for allowing me a few minutes to share the many wonderful things that we can be happy about in Canada. It could have easily been an hour-long speech, because there are so many wonderful things to be happy about in Canada.

● (1600)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my colleague's speech, and he spoke a number of times about putting a price on pollution. One of the first actions the environment minister took upon her election in 2015 was to allow the City of Montreal to dump eight billion litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence River. I wonder if my colleague could tell me what the price of pollution was on that. A year later the minister authorized Quebec City to dump another 86 million litres of raw sewage into the St. Lawrence River. Could the member tell me what the price was on those acts of pollution that severely polluted our waters?

Here is my second question. We were promised a maximum \$10 billion deficit, and it has now gone up to \$30 billion. The really disturbing part is that the interest costs alone on this deficit are increasing by \$15 billion per year, and that is added to the budget. I wonder if we can count on another \$15 billion being added because of tomorrow's budget.

● (1605)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, first, in regard to the price on pollution, the most important thing for Ottawa to demonstrate is its ability to work with the many different stakeholders and to demonstrate very strong leadership.

The leadership we have seen on the environmental file has come not only from the minister responsible for the environment but, I would suggest, right from the Prime Minister of Canada. We have made a genuine commitment to work with others, demonstrating strong national leadership, something that was missing in the previous 10 years.

Business of Supply

In regard to the deficit, I would put it up as a cautionary note that members across the way need to realize that Stephen Harper had a higher deficit than any other prime minister. It was well over \$150 billion. Stephen Harper took a budget surplus and converted it into a budget deficit, even before the recession kicked in.

The reason I point it out the way I have is that the Liberal Party would be best advised not to take advice from the Conservatives on deficits.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about how we should get ready for part two of the middle-class budget.

I am hoping that this time the Liberals will actually include the middle class, the 17.9 million Canadians who got nothing from their middle-class tax break, those who earn \$23 an hour and work full time and who got left out last year in the so-called middle-class tax break.

The member also said other parties are out of touch with Canadians. This is a party that could not be more out of touch with working-class people. In the last budget, the Liberals forgot about working-class people. People in my riding have high unemployment. In the Alberni Valley, mills are closing. In Qualicum and Parksville, seniors cannot afford medicine. In Courtenay, people cannot get a livable wage and cannot find a well-paying job.

They talk about a 1% tax break for the rich. What about closing CEO tax option loopholes? What about ending tax havens and tax deals for the super-rich? Talk about getting out of touch. Hopefully tomorrow we will have a real budget for middle-class Canadians, and it will include the 17.9 million Canadians who are working and who were totally left behind last year. It is their turn. I hope the government actually follows through with the promise of real change, including the middle class, and helping those who are not in it to join the middle class.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member across the way is factually wrong. That is as simply as I can put it.

The member needs to realize that the New Democratic Party voted against—and this is a fairly long list—a special tax on Canada's rich, a middle-class tax break, a substantial increase to the Canada child benefit that would have delivered tens of thousands of children out of poverty, and increasing the income of Canada's poorest seniors, once again which would have delivered tens of thousands of seniors out of poverty.

The NDP has done something I would never have thought it would do. Here, last year, we had one of the most progressive budgets in our country's history, and the NDP actually voted against it. I suspect it has something to do with the mentality that the NDP had during the last general election when it said it would balance a budget at absolutely all costs.

We know that if the New Democrats had to revisit that decision, they would probably back away, but they do not have the courage to admit that they would back away from it.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is such a pleasure to rise in the House this afternoon to speak on the opposition day motion on budget 2017, a budget that is to be

announced tomorrow by our hon. Minister of Finance, Bill Morneau, at 4:00 p.m. Oops, sorry.

One part of the opposition motion being debated—

● (1610)

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I think we have been here over a year and a half now, so certainly the protocol around mentioning member's names should be adhered to.

The Deputy Speaker: I thank the hon. member. I note that the hon. member for Davenport did catch her error on that. I think it is useful to remind all hon. members that we try to avoid, in fact should avoid, the use of proper names or any references to other hon. members in the House.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, I apologize.

It is such a pleasure to rise in the House this afternoon to speak to the opposition day motion on budget 2017, a budget which is to be announced tomorrow at 4 p.m., by our Minister of Finance.

One part of the opposition motion being debated in this venerable House today focuses on youth. It asks that the 2017 budget provide immediate measures to encourage companies to hire young Canadians and address the youth unemployment crisis. I want to thank my fellow member for her concern for Canada's young people. I want her to know that this is also an issue of great importance for the residents of my riding of Davenport, and especially for the Davenport youth council, which has identified youth unemployment as a key issue for them.

In the time I have today, I will be relaying how youth has been a key focus for our government, outlining key initiatives introduced over the last year and indicating that there is no doubt that youth will continue to be a key focus for our government moving forward.

One of the things our government understands clearly is that Canada's prosperity will increasingly depend on young Canadians getting the education and experience they need to prepare for the jobs of today and tomorrow. One of my very favourite quotes from our Prime Minister is that if we do not give everyone a chance to succeed, we do not live up to the potential of Canada. Now more than ever all governments at every level need to do all they can to help our youth, to set them up, to get them started, to support them. We need to do all we can to give them the best start on the road to achieving their potential.

Young Canadians need to have access to meaningful work from the beginning of their careers. A large part of our success as a country rests on our youth, but unfortunately, they still face barriers to employment. As such, I am pleased to let members know that we have been taking concrete measures to help young Canadians enter the workforce and contribute to our country's economy.

Business of Supply

One of the initiatives we launched was the expert panel on youth employment in October 2016. We launched it as a way to improve job opportunities for all youth. The panel's findings are key in identifying future investments, including ways to enhance the youth employment strategy, also known as YES.

In budget 2016, funding for the youth employment strategy was increased by almost \$300 million. That funding is being used in four very specific ways. One is to create new green jobs for youth. These are occupations that are involved in preserving or restoring the environment and jobs in renewable energy, or energy efficiency. The second way the funding is being used is in increasing the number of youth who have access to the skills link program. This is a very important program that is available particularly for youth that are disadvantaged in a number of ways. The third way the funding is being used is to increase opportunities for young Canadians who want to work in the arts sector, a sector that is very popular, rich, and diverse in my riding of Davenport. Last, the funding is being used to increase the number of summer jobs offered through the Canada summer jobs program.

I am very proud that both last summer and this summer our government has more than doubled the number of jobs available through the Canada summer jobs program. It is important to highlight that because that increases the mentorship for our youth. It increases their job experience. It helps them to more quickly get started in their future careers.

There are also many youth initiatives that fall under the umbrella of skills and employment that support all Canadians. After extensive consultation with experts, employers, and labour and service providers, we have finalized amended agreements with each of the provincial and territorial governments to provide an additional \$175 million in labour market training for youth, for a total of close to \$3 billion. Included in this amount is \$125 million in funding for labour market agreements and \$50 million in funding for the Canada job fund.

Turning our attention to the trades, one of the most promising career paths for young Canadians today is in the skilled trades. Tradespeople play an important role in our economy and our society. We all depend on the work of skilled trades, and we want to encourage more youth to take advantage of good, well-paying jobs in skilled trades. Therefore, the federal government is providing support to Skills Canada to actively promote careers in skilled trades and technologies to Canadian youth by working with local organizations, educators, and governments right across Canada.

• (1615)

We are making significant investments in apprenticeship through the Red Seal program, and we are offering numerous federal supports, including grants, loans, tax credits, and EI benefits during in-school training. In addition, our government is providing more than \$800 million through grants to individuals for the progression and completion of their apprenticeship training. Our government is working with provinces and territories to make apprenticeship training more consistent across the country. This will help support apprentice mobility, help apprentices complete their training, and give employers access to a larger pool of workers.

Our government and, indeed, the nation recognize that unions play an important role in training their members for careers in the trades. As such, to support their efforts, budget 2016 provided \$85.4 million over five years starting in 2016-17 to develop a new framework to support union-based apprenticeship programs. In Davenport, there are a lot of union workers. Most of them are in the building trades. There are a lot of youth who are very interested in a career in trades because they provide good-paying jobs, which will help them to support their families and communities in the future.

The federal government is also addressing the importance of demand-driven education and training through the student work integrated learning program. I am specifically talking about training and funding for training because I think they are equally important in terms of setting up our youth for the future, their future careers, and achieving their future potential.

Budget 2016 announced an investment of \$73 million over four years to support partnerships between employers and willing post-secondary educational institutions. The program will help ensure students develop the foundational, entrepreneurial, and business skills required to secure meaningful employment in high-demand occupations in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and business. We need to continue to work with colleges and universities to prepare the next generation of Canadian youth for the highly skilled jobs that are out there. We need to ensure that Canadian employers can bring about and benefit from co-op and work-integrated learning opportunities.

There are so many companies and businesses in Davenport that are very excited about this. More and more of our companies are working with post-secondary education to make sure that the right training and education is provided to our youth, and that it sets them up to more quickly enter the workforce and start to develop their careers. I think we are going to see more of this in the future.

Indigenous youth is another key focus for the Davenport youth council in my community. Everyone in this House is aware of this government's commitment to restoring fairness and opportunity to indigenous people, including indigenous youth. One way to help indigenous youth receive training and find jobs is through the aboriginal skills and employment training strategy, also known as ASETS. It is through this program that we have been working with indigenous organizations to further strengthen their capacity to provide job training and wraparound supports. Our government has engaged with indigenous stakeholders to see how we can improve and strengthen the indigenous labour market programming for a future longer-term strategy.

Our government has provided quite a bit of support for Canada student loans and grants because we know how expensive that education and training actually are. We are doing everything we can to make sure that low-income and middle-class youth are not going to suffer, that they have access to the grants they are looking for and the education they seek so that they can set themselves up in terms of education and skills training for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Business of Supply

We have accomplished a lot, but we know there is a lot more to do. We know that the job market is evolving and changing, and that is true particularly for young Canadians. That is why we are making such historic investments in skills training and education.

I look forward to the budget announcement tomorrow. I am sure we will continue to support our youth in the future.

• (1620)

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the debate throughout the day, and I have not heard the government address in any terms what is a significant issue. The significant issue is the fact that the Liberals took what was a surplus, promised a \$10-billion deficit, and turned it into a \$30-billion deficit, with no end in sight. I do not know if my colleague has young children, but it is her children and her grandchildren who will be forced to pay for the Liberals' inability to spend within their means.

Certainly, the economy is stronger than it was last year when there was a surplus budget. Does the member agree that the minister must include a path back to balance in the budget that would fulfill the government's commitment to getting back to balance in 2019?

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, when I was canvassing in the last election, I spoke to many families and many youth. They told me that education is expensive and that life is expensive. They were very much attracted to the Liberal team, which is now the government, because of its desire to invest in the middle class, to invest in youth, and to invest in our future. That is why we have introduced the Canada child benefit. It is why we have provided a tax break for the middle class. It is why we have provided all of the programs and investments that I spent 10 minutes highlighting today.

I want the residents of Davenport and all Canadians to know that we are spending Canadian money in a responsible way. I think we will be hearing more about that spending tomorrow when our Minister of Finance makes the announcement with respect to budget 2017.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we know that in Canada the real job creators are small business people. They are the people who drive our economy. They sit on our volunteer boards and our local governments. They are struggling to make ends meet. When we talk to small business people in our communities, they are having a hard time paying their rent and paying their employees' wages.

What we have seen over the last 25 years is a significant tax reduction for Canada's largest corporations. We have seen a reduction from 28% to 15%. Under the Conservative government we saw it go from 22% to 15%. We did not see the job creation that was promised. Instead, what we saw was Canada's largest corporations having record profits, hoarding tons of money, CEOs earning more money than ever before, and corporations shipping money to tax havens out of the country to avoid paying taxes here in Canada.

Canadians expect more. They want to see us invest in our local communities and our small business people. Why are we choosing Canada's largest corporations and CEOs over small business people, the people who are building our communities? What is the Liberal government waiting for when it comes to making big companies

assume their fair share of the tax burden? Will the Liberals provide relief to small business people and make them a priority? Canadians expect us to take care of the people who are building and serving our communities, and they are our small business people.

Ms. Julie Dzerowicz: Mr. Speaker, it is such a pleasure to answer that question. I do not agree with the member's premise that we are trying to favour large corporations over small businesses. What we are trying to do is create a strong economy in Canada so that it is beneficial for all businesses. We are also trying to create a strong middle class, and those who are trying to join it, because the stronger they are, the stronger our overall economy will be. That is the reason we introduced our middle-class tax cut, which we have talked about quite a bit in the House.

I also want to let the member know that the small businesses in my riding really love the summer jobs program. It allows them to hire local students. It helps them support their own businesses, as well as support jobs. They are very excited about that.

There is another thing that our small businesses are excited about. I represent the largest Portuguese community in the country. They are really excited about CETA. Many of the small businesses in my riding are doing business in Europe, and they like agreements like CETA that will provide benefits not only to small businesses in Canada but also abroad.

Finally, I have mentioned the Davenport youth council a couple of times. That council is very active. One of its key concerns is small businesses in Davenport. The council wants to be active in ensuring that the Canadian government continues to support not only small business but our overall economy in general.

• (1625)

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Edmonton Manning.

Today my Conservative colleagues and I are calling on the Liberal government to take four very simple and very concrete steps going forward. These actions will benefit everyday Canadians.

One, we call for no further tax hikes on Canadian families, businesses, seniors, or students. Two, we call for immediate measures to encourage companies to hire young Canadians and address the youth unemployment crisis we currently face in our country. Three, we call upon the government to put a credible plan in place to return to a balanced budget by 2019, as was promised to Canadians. Four, we call upon the Liberals to halt all plans to sell Canadian airports to finance their reckless spending.

Today my Conservative colleagues and I are doing what we do each and every day in the House: we are standing up for Canadian taxpayers. We are standing up for those who work hard to make ends meet, to pay their mortgage, to put food on their table, to fuel their car, to care for their children, to enjoy life.

Business of Supply

We are taking a stand for those who do not have a job but desperately desire to have one. We are taking a stand for the students who have invested countless hours of time and energy into earning a degree and who are now looking for meaningful employment. We are taking a stand for business owners who have taken risks for the sake of pursuing a dream and by doing so have created jobs and contribute to the well-being of our economy.

Today we are taking a stand for the young and the old and all of those in between. Not only that, we are taking a stand for the generations that are still to come after us, because when all is said and done, we recognize that the decisions we make today will impact those tomorrow. We must do all that we can to ensure a vibrant future for those who come after us.

Today we are calling on the government to join us in this endeavour, an endeavour that will serve each and every Canadian.

Although all points of the motion before us today are certainly worthy of attention, I will focus the majority of my time advocating on behalf of Canada's young people.

Since being elected by the people of Lethbridge 17 months ago, I have had the privilege of travelling from coast to coast to talk to young people across our country, and without exception, they have made one thing very clear to me: despite the finance minister's damning position on job creation for young Canadians, calling it "job churn", it will not be tolerated by the rising generation. They are insisting that things can and should be different, and I agree.

Allow me to home in on my home province of Alberta for just a moment. It is no secret that Alberta is facing a jobs crisis. From 2015 to 2017, the unemployment rate doubled, going from 4.4% to 8.8%. Today 220,000 Albertans are out of work. Youth unemployment sits at 13.5%.

During November and December, I held six round tables throughout my province, where I talked to young people with regard to their job prospects. Overwhelmingly they reported feeling discouraged by the labour market and the lack of opportunities that are available to them. Many have worked hard to earn their degrees, and they would like the opportunity to use them. Others are seeking to save for their education, for travel, for a house. Others are looking for a job in order to provide for their families, and still others are just simply looking to pay the bills and get by.

The state of Alberta's economy makes it extremely difficult for young professionals. With a significant cohort of unemployed skilled workers who are now flooding entry-level positions, young professionals are actually faced with a huge disadvantage because there are qualified competitors now who are competing for a very small number of jobs. Meanwhile, statistics show that students who gain experience related to their area of study are 66% more likely to find a job after graduating, but unfortunately they are finding it extremely difficult to find co-op placements, paid internship opportunities, and summer student positions.

Although I have zeroed in on Alberta, the reality is that these problems plague Canada's young people in every corner of our great country.

In the fall I had the opportunity to meet with members of the students' union at the university in P.E.I. and with another student organization in Fredericton. Like those in Alberta, these students are also faced with very few job prospects, and they are feeling overwhelmingly discouraged.

Today more than 190,000 Canadian young people are unemployed and looking for work. As we all know, higher education comes at a cost. I believe it is good for students to invest in their training and education. We know that investment spurs greater responsibility and ownership. That said, I also recognize that students are graduating with increasingly large amounts of debt and need meaningful, well-paying jobs in order to be able to pay it off.

● (1630)

However, what concerns me just as much as the youth unemployment rate is the number of young people who are having to settle for part-time or precarious work. The Minister of Finance told Canada's young people that they will just have to get used to "job churn". I disagree. By creating an environment of economic prosperity, the government can and should support businesses in their desire to grow and create meaningful and stable employment for those who are starting out in the labour market.

The Prime Minister promised to create "40,000 good youth jobs" each year from 2016 to 2018. Sadly, like most of his other promises, this one has not materialized. According to the final 2016 job numbers published in February, only 9,000 jobs were created last year for workers between the ages of 16 and 24. This is the net number after we account for the 40,000 full-time jobs that were lost from Canada's economy and the 49,000 part-time jobs that were created. In other words, all of the jobs that were gained by young people in our country were in the sphere of part-time work only.

The Prime Minister also promised to create 35,000 summer jobs for students through the summer jobs grant, as mentioned by our member who previously spoke. At the end of August 2016, Statistics Canada reported that when employment rates were compared year over year, there were 48,000 fewer jobs for young people than the year before. Coincidentally, the year before—when there were 48,000 more jobs—was when the Conservatives were in power.

Liberals also promised to invest \$160 million to create co-op placements for students in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and business programs. Shortly after making that promise, however, the Prime Minister relented and brought that number down to only \$73 million, which is half of what he originally promised.

The federal government has two main responsibilities. One is to keep Canadians safe and the other is to facilitate an environment of economic prosperity. Today, my Conservative colleagues and I are calling on the Liberal government to live up to its mandate.

During our travels across Canada, one of the things Canada's youth have recommended to me is that the federal government provide a tax incentive to employers who are willing to hire young people. This, of course, makes sense, because it would empower job creators to do just that—create jobs. Specifically, these jobs would be targeted at those who are just entering the workforce.

Business of Supply

Furthermore, when it comes to looking out for the economic well-being of Canada's youth, we are calling upon the government to champion our oil and gas sector, as this has significant economic benefit for young workers from across Canada.

Finally, we are calling on the government to balance the budget, as we know that sensible fiscal management is absolutely essential to secure long-term prosperity for Canadians from all generations, and especially for those who will inherit the outcomes of today's decisions.

My colleagues and I on this side of the House are calling on the Liberal government to act today and to act responsibly for the sake of those who inherit this great nation tomorrow.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is an issue that Conservative members across the way like to raise, and that is the issue of the deficit. I wonder if the member can explain to me that while Stephen Harper was the prime minister, in budget after budget there was a significant deficit, to the degree that, in total, over \$150 billion accumulated. The best-case scenario for the opposition is that it is debatable whether or not the country was left in a deficit situation. We would argue that it was left in a deficit situation.

Therefore, my question to the member is this: when did the Conservatives have this road-to-Damascus revelation that all of a sudden deficits are bad? Every year that Stephen Harper was the prime minister, the country had a deficit, but now the Conservatives seem to feel that deficits are bad. I do not quite understand. When did that conversion take place?

• (1635)

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, when the Conservatives were in government, the world was facing a bit of an economic crisis. That said, it would be fair to compare economies from around the globe. Canada fared at the very highest point, so with regard to the hon. member's question, let us compare apples to apples here. At the end of the day, we left the current government with a surplus, and the Liberals took that surplus and let it spoil. They wasted it.

Now, today, my generation and the generation that comes after me is going to have to pay for the indecisions of the current government.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, maybe we should get a little more factual.

When Stephen Harper took office, he was left a multi-billion-dollar surplus. That was not in question at all. He had a multi-billion-dollar surplus. Before the recession even began, he turned that billions of dollars in surplus into a deficit. I would ask the member across the way to explain how the Conservatives can say today that deficits are bad when Stephen Harper had a deficit every year, even during good times.

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his theatrical question.

There are a couple of points here. Number one, when the Conservatives became government, it should be pointed out that the Liberals were the former governing party and had just cut back drastically in spending on provincial transfers, particularly around health care. They may claim to show fiscal management, but what

they really did was gut the money from the provinces that was rightfully theirs.

The second thing that should be noted is this. Within the Conservatives' first few years of government, we paid down over \$40 billion of the national debt. That was done on behalf of the generations that were to come after us. That was done on behalf of the youth of this nation, and that is responsible leadership.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's responses to what have been very fact-free questions in terms of the record of the Conservative government.

I would like the member to compare and contrast the situation facing us now, as opposed to when deficits were necessary, at which time the Liberals indeed asked Conservatives to spend more than we were. There are very different circumstances. I would like the member to comment on why different solutions are needed for different times.

Ms. Rachael Harder: Mr. Speaker, we certainly are looking at a very different time than when the right hon. Stephen Harper was leading government. At that point in time, of course, as I mentioned briefly before, the economy of the world was facing a downturn. We struggled through that, which meant that yes, a deficit was created in this country.

At this point in time, we are not facing that same downturn on the world stage. We are not even facing a downturn within our own country, so there is absolutely no reason that the government should be taking on the amount of debt load or deficit that it is.

I should also note that the Prime Minister made a promise to Canadians to only incur \$10 billion of deficit, and that number has grown quite significantly, now being over \$30 billion. That is worth noting.

• (1640)

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 Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, Canadian Heritage; the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, National Defence; and the hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith, Status of Women.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last fall I travelled with the Standing Committee on Finance across the country as part of the pre-budget consultations. We heard from academics and business leaders, from farmers and trade unions, and from students and senior citizens. One thing they had in common was a concern about the direction of Canada's finances.

When the previous Conservative government left office, the nation's budget was balanced. We had come out of a difficult recession, when the government had been compelled to put billions of dollars into economic stimulus measures. That sort of spending was no longer necessary in 2015. The Conservative government had the economy in good shape. We had weathered the recession, and Canada had been praised internationally for the soundness of its banking system and the economic policies of its government.

Business of Supply

What a difference 18 months can make. Now we have a government that has not a clue about fiscal management, led by a Prime Minister who believes, in some magical way, that budgets balance themselves. If he truly believes that, then we can expect no new taxes when the Minister of Finance rises in the House of Commons tomorrow to table his new budget. Canadians who are already struggling as the government has increased the tax burden on the middle class will have nothing to fear. There will be no carbon tax on seniors and students. By the way, that carbon tax is raising the price of almost everything Canadians do or touch.

Those of us who live in the real world know better. We know that the current government has a spending problem and not a revenue problem. There is not a trendy program at home or internationally that is not supported by the current government with huge chunks of taxpayer dollars. No one on the government side ever asks if Canada can afford this reckless spending. No one on the government side asks how the endless borrowing will be repaid. The Liberals expect the Conservatives to clean up after their fiscal mess when we win the next election in 2019.

Will the Minister of Finance admit to this House that the problem is not one of inadequate government revenues? They can ask anyone, as I had the opportunity to do as the finance committee travelled the country. People will tell them that taxes are already too high and that the government wastes the money it receives. Will the minister commit to not raising taxes on hard-working Canadians until he is able to get his fiscal house in order? Can the minister tell this House when he expects he will be able to bring government spending under control and balance the budget, or will he continue to pretend that borrowed money never has to be paid back? How can the government promote thrift and savings to Canadian citizens, when it refuses to lead by example. Where is the credibility in that?

Before the people of Edmonton Manning asked me to represent them in this House, I was a business owner, an entrepreneur. I can read a balance sheet. I understand about profit and loss. I know about the need for a return on investment if a business is to be successful. In the early years of a business, as a company is getting established, it is not surprising if operating costs are high and the business does not turn a profit. There are capital expenditures up front, perhaps, or extra personnel costs in launching a new venture, but after a few years, if the business is well run, it starts to turn a profit, and that profit makes up for losses in the early years.

Government is not the same thing as a business. There is no profit and loss in serving the public, but some of the principles are the same and are supposed to be the same. A business that is always in the red does not stay in business very long.

• (1645)

When we always have to borrow money to stay afloat, it is a sure sign of bad management, and eventually no one will loan us any more money and we will have to shut down.

When a government runs deficit after deficit, always borrowing money to pay for its spending, the cost of borrowing goes up each year. Eventually lenders are unwilling to extend any more credit unless there is a plan to repay the money, not just a theoretical plan but something the government is actually required to stick to.

Those people who lend money, especially the major international lenders who deal in the billions, know very well that budgets do not balance themselves. Someone has to take charge and reduce spending. Will the Minister of Finance be the person who says, "Enough", to fiscal insanity, to deficits three times their election promises? I really hope so, but given his track record and the track record of his party, I am not very optimistic.

I am the proud father of two sons, young men just beginning to make their place in the world. I know how difficult it can be to get established in the workforce. At times it seems like employers want to hire young people only if they have 20 years' experience. It is tough to get started in a career in this world.

When the minister presents his budget tomorrow, I hope he takes that into account. Canada has an abundance of smart, educated young people who are unemployed and underemployed, through no fault of their own. The job market is tough, especially as businesses are reluctant to expand because of the ever-increasing tax burden they face. No one is tougher than Canada's youth. Whether they have just finished their education or are taking time off school to save money for it, young Canadians are having difficulty finding meaningful work.

Given such a situation, one would expect the government to address the youth unemployment crisis, to take immediate measures to encourage companies to hire young Canadians. This is the sort of thing we would expect governments to do, one of those areas where profit and loss are not measured the same way they would be in a business. Money spent on such a program would have long-term benefits for the health of the country. It would provide young Canadians with that all-important first job in their chosen field.

I would not be surprised if the Minister of Finance includes something like that in his budget. It would be the right thing to do. People would praise him and the government for their actions.

What he will not tell young Canadians, what they will have to figure out for themselves, is that he is merely loaning them this money to get them started. The government, due to reckless spending decisions already made, does not have the money to support our youth. If it wants to do anything to deal with youth unemployment, it will have to borrow the cash. It will use that money with no plan for how to pay back. It will be left to future generations, those just starting in the workforce now and those yet to come, to pay this bill, plus interest. So it is with anything this government does. We do not need to pay now, but we will pay later, much later and much more, once we add all the compound interest.

It would be nice to see fiscal sanity return to this House when the minister tables his budget. Is that too much to hope for?

Business of Supply

• (1650)

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of serving for a very brief time in the last Parliament, so I have a bit of a living memory of the previous government's economic record. There was a recession we were charting and following as the Conservatives tumbled out of economic distress into economic chaos. I remember nine years of trade deficits. I remember \$150 billion added to the federal debt. I remember the only way we could get close to balancing the budget in the last year of the previous government was by selling GM shares at a discount, effectively selling the furniture to pay the rent, advice we are told not to follow by members of that party.

When the hon. member talks about having to pay back deficits and pay back debt and respond to young Canadians, how are we to pay your \$150-billion debt? What program should we scrap to pay the \$150 billion you saddled young Canadians with, \$150 billion that must be paid back before we even start talking about paying back our situation?

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would just remind hon. members, when they find themselves repeatedly using the “you” word, not in a rhetorical fashion but particularly directed to other hon. members in the House or on the other side, that it is usually the first indication that we are getting out of the third person mode and into something that is not really desirable in terms of comportment in the House.

We will go to the hon. member for Edmonton Manning.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif: Mr. Speaker, bad memories or good memories, the one thing the government needs to remember, the one lesson in economics 101, is not to borrow money one cannot pay back. Do not spend what one does not have, and look after Canadians before looking outside Canada. That is the best recipe to control spending and balance budgets and to keep the economy in the right place at the right time.

What the government is doing now is the opposite of all the good things we learn in our memories in our classrooms in school. That is my message to the government, and that is my answer to the hon. member.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his comments. Like all parents, we want our children to do well.

When we look at the economic budget issue, there are many aspects to consider, one of which is that the Conservative government, for six years in a row, lowered the corporate income tax for big corporations. The Conservatives are probably proud of that, but let us just put the figures on the record and analyze them for a minute.

The corporate income tax went down from 22% to 15% over the course of six years. That meant that \$12 billion in revenue was lost for Canadians and for the government. That is money that could have been invested in a variety of fashions.

The evidence indicates that these cuts actually did not stimulate investments or deliver the promised job creation. Barbados and the

Bahamas, two countries that are tax havens because of their lower tax rates, have unemployment rates of about 12%. In the context of that, would the member agree that there should be a redirection with respect to the corporate income tax and that those monies be regained and invested for Canadians where they need it the most?

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif: Mr. Speaker, again, I will go back to economics 101. We need to lower taxes on the job creators. That is exactly what happened. That is not only on large businesses but also on small businesses. We are the pro-small-business party. That is what we believe in.

I am a small business owner. I am not sure about the hon. member. We created 1.1 million full-time jobs for Canada's economy. That reduction in the business tax helped us create jobs and bring more money into the economy. That is a smart measure. That is a smart step to take in doing business anywhere, and we are very proud of our record.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Beloeil—Chambly, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on the eve of the budget presentation, I am pleased to speak to an opposition motion that deals with the budget. In a way, we are beginning the budget debate a day early.

We agree with many of the Conservatives' proposals, particularly regarding the problems related to privatizing airports. Of course, we also agree that the Liberals are completely out of touch with today's reality and the inequality that Canadians currently face. They talk about helping the middle class, but on the ground, that is definitely not what is happening.

Nevertheless, we unfortunately cannot support this opposition motion. One reason for that was addressed by my colleague from Vancouver East. This does nothing to tackle tax problems, such as the tax rate for large corporations. These issues are very important to us.

Despite the heckling we heard during the question and despite the tax cut from 22% to 15%, not only did the federal treasury lose money, but the jobs that were promised never materialized. On the contrary, businesses that were supposed to benefit from the tax cut for large corporations left Canada and set up shop elsewhere.

That being said, I heard the hon. Conservative member, in his response to the question, talk about the importance of small and medium-sized businesses and his own experience as an entrepreneur. We agree on this. Although we would like to see corporate tax rates go up, which, by the way, would still keep us competitive with the United States, a neighbouring economy that is our biggest competition, we want to lower the tax rate for small and medium-sized businesses. It is important to mention that in the context of the opposition motion and especially in the context of the budget that will be presented tomorrow.

Business of Supply

During the last Parliament, in the last Conservative budget just before the election, the Conservatives promised to lower the tax rate on SMEs over the coming years. That was good, but not quite fast enough for our liking. We wanted it to be done right away. The Liberals remained mum on the issue. During the election campaign, we heard the Prime Minister claim that if this tax cut went through it would lead to tax havens. He did all sorts of intellectual backflips. Now we realize that he does not seem to understand what real tax evasion is, because he is doing nothing about it. That is another topic we will come back to shortly.

During the election campaign we promised to lower the small business tax rate. So did the Conservatives. Then the Liberals finally decided to follow suit and they promised the same thing. They recognized, as all of us do, or at least I hope so, that small businesses are the engine of our economy at the local and national levels. They are also the main creators of jobs and we rely on them for that.

However, we have to look at the current situation. Lowering taxes for small businesses is just another broken promise.

Unfortunately, we are becoming increasingly accustomed to broken promises. We are very optimistic, but for a Liberal government, whether this one or those of the past, renegeing on promises is commonplace. What is really mind-boggling is hearing the Minister of Small Business and Tourism say in committee that, in any event, the promise was just meant as a television clip or a good newspaper headline. Not keeping a promise is shameful, but admitting that they never intended to keep it is even worse. The Liberals did not give reasons for not being able to keep their promise, did not say that they had done something else, or that it would wait and they would keep their promise the next year. There was nothing of the kind. There was no honesty, or perhaps they were being too honest. They decided to look us in the eye and tell us that they never intended to do it. That is very unfortunate.

It will soon be six years since I became a member of Parliament. When I look at the chambers of commerce, particularly the Bassin de Chambly chamber of commerce and industry or the Vallée-du-Richelieu chamber of commerce and industry, I see some very dynamic chambers of commerce and a lot of young entrepreneurs renowned worldwide. I am thinking for instance of the Mobux company from Mont-Saint-Hilaire, which will go to Berlin for the G20 meeting as one of the Canadian and Quebec companies representing Canada.

● (1655)

We are very proud to see people and companies from home at the G20. These companies need the federal government's help. They need it to reduce their financial burden so that they can continue to grow, to succeed, and to thrive both at home and abroad. In so doing, they will set an example for other entrepreneurs in Canada. This creates a nice cycle that leads into the next generation of entrepreneurs.

However, this is not just about the tax rate for small and medium-sized businesses. The issue of infrastructure and the privatization of airports is also raised in this motion. One of the biggest problems in this file is that the Prime Minister refuses to answer certain questions that he has been asked for several months, maybe even a year now.

Almost one year ago, we heard something about consultations with Credit Suisse. We did not hear from the parties who really need the federal government's help, but rather from the Minister of Finance's economic council and from individuals such as Credit Suisse representatives, who are experts in privatization. This caused a great deal of concern.

We heard rumours that they were going to sell off our airports because they were no longer able to manage the finances and meet their election promises, such as using public funds to finance public infrastructure, which by the way we support. However, this is not what we are seeing here.

As for selling off airports, we asked the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance if that was going to be on the table. This was a concern for the presidents of the country's airport and port authorities. The Minister of Transport simply replied that consumers would always be their priority, in order to get the best prices and avoid overcharging. One might say that you cannot turn down a good thing, but this is not what we are dealing with.

Experts believe that airport privatization will result in higher prices and fees. We are going to let the private sector take over our public infrastructure and charge more fees to consumers. This will also have a significant impact on airlines.

My riding is on Montreal's south shore. My constituents can go to Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau, or they can go to U.S. airports to avoid paying what they see as sky-high prices. Many people choose the latter. Airport authorities and airlines say that privatization will make things even worse. Instead of departing from Canadian airports, thereby helping to fund Canadian airport infrastructure, travellers will go elsewhere. That is a problem.

The government is doing this to keep a promise that was not even in the Liberals' campaign platform. They never mentioned selling airports. With all due respect, it seems to me we have a serious problem when even the Conservatives think privatization is going too far. The Liberal government needs to reconsider.

Privatization is not just about prices and fees. It is about safety too. Airport safety is extremely important.

Look at rail safety. When the government privatized our railroads, it went on and on about how great privatization was and how much it would benefit consumers. Serious rail safety problems have emerged since then. I may be speculating, but it is an easy conclusion to reach.

● (1700)

Given the threat of airport privatization raised by the government, there is cause for serious concern over airport security, supposedly an issue the government is very concerned with.

Business of Supply

I do not want to draw conclusions that are too far-fetched, but Bill C-23, for example, would increase the powers of U.S. pre-clearance officers on Canadian soil, in the interest of safety, of course. At the same time, the Liberals want to privatize airports and potentially risk compromising security. What an odd approach to take. It shows this government's inconsistency and failure to properly manage the affairs of state.

The issue of privatization does not just concern airports. There is also the infamous infrastructure bank, another file that we have been asking the government about for many months. We asked the government about the bank's structure, what terms and conditions it would operate under, and what would be the impact on small rural municipalities that would be adversely impacted by such a bank. Clearly, the private sector will have little or no interest in investing in infrastructure projects that are not very profitable even though they would be of great benefit to our towns and to the rural communities that really need them.

Incidentally, all those questions remain unanswered. The Prime Minister always gives us the same answer with a bit of a smile, and we have heard other Liberal members say the same thing, that is, we should just wait and see what is in the budget, which will be presented tomorrow. However, this has left the municipalities and Canadians feeling very uncertain, which is very problematic.

Although the government is boasting about public investments spread over 12 years, this a bit of a charade. In fact, we now realize that most of that money will not be spent right away, but rather over a much longer period than initially planned. We also note that the government will use some of that money to open the door to the private sector.

This poses a number of problems because I firmly believe that taxpayers feel very strongly that their money should be used to finance public infrastructure that is properly managed. I firmly believe that, and I think my constituents would agree with me.

Certain things do not sit well with taxpayers, and we saw this in the debate on the Champlain Bridge, for example. If we are asking taxpayers to accept a huge deficit run up by the federal government to fund public infrastructure, not only must that infrastructure remain public, but people must not be asked to pay twice for that infrastructure through user fees and tolls. That is very important.

Many of my constituents come to see me and tell me that they are unsure where they stand on tolls and user fees, because they have to do with road conditions and public transit, which is another very important file for a suburban community like mine.

When we look at the proposals, or what we can make of them, we are given none of the details because there is no transparency, as I said. I tell my constituents that when we look at the proposals, it is not so much about whether the federal government is going to provide funding for public transit. I explain that the federal government is spending their money to fund public infrastructure and an infrastructure bank that is looking for private investment. The company investing in infrastructure will then charge tolls and user fees. None of that will fund a public transit system that will help people get to work more easily and reduce greenhouse gas

emissions. That is going to create a profit margin for private companies that invest in these projects.

The private company does not want to be reimbursed just for the capital it spent on the bridge, road, or whichever project is on the table: it wants a return on its investment. It is not enough to be able to tell the people of Beloeil, Carignan, or Chambly, who are stuck in traffic on highway 112, that they can now get to Brossard or downtown Montreal using a light rail system. That is another very important file that we will come back to in the coming months and years.

● (1705)

The private company is not in it to finance a project, but instead to make a profit.

The Liberal Party made these commitments during the last election campaign. We are seeing that it has broken its promise to use public funds to better manage public infrastructure than the previous government.

It turns out that the Liberal government intends to use public funds to privatize our public infrastructure so that private businesses can make a profit and, in effect, subject Canadian citizens to double taxation through tolls and user fees. That is a problem.

Other questions concerning the infrastructure bank remain unanswered. For instance, who will sit on the bank's executive? Where will it be located? How will consultations take place? Someone has already been appointed to help the government create a team to set up the bank. The individual in question comes from Ontario politics and knows the Prime Minister's friends quite well; they work in her office. She was already involved in starting the process of privatizing Hydro One, for which the residents of Ontario are now paying the price.

We have serious questions about the interests that will be represented. Will municipalities have a seat at the table? The municipalities are wondering. How will we make sure that Canadians and those who really need federal infrastructure help will be at the table? We need to ensure that we have public transit, infrastructure, bridges, highways, and wastewater treatment systems that meet the public's expectations in a country such as Canada in 2017.

Once again, all these questions remain unanswered. Will we have answers tomorrow? In a way, I hope so, because we are finally going to see whether the government is heading toward disaster for our public infrastructure or whether it has finally seen the light and realized that this is the wrong direction. However, perhaps I hope not, because I am quite concerned about finding out what the end result will be. We are not the only ones who are concerned, because as I said, Canadians have been talking about this for quite some time.

Sadly, our position and the Conservatives' are far enough apart that we cannot support the motion, but I want to close by talking about one other point in the opposition motion that we do agree with, a point that merits our attention. That point is youth unemployment, which was of particular interest to me in the previous Parliament as the NDP's youth critic. Of course, young people are not the only ones without jobs.

We also need to talk about precarious work. Many young people with excellent education are underemployed. They have jobs that pay less than they should be earning with their professional qualifications. They are overqualified for their jobs. This is a major issue, and once again, we look forward to seeing what the government has to say about it tomorrow.

The Prime Minister is happy to take pictures with young people. The government is happy to talk about the youth council despite the lack of transparency that my colleague from Salaberry—Suroît has pointed out. What we do know is that the Minister of Finance, and therefore the Prime Minister, somehow thinks it is acceptable to tell young people to be okay with this reality.

Those of us in our twenties know that no matter what decisions the government makes today on our behalf and on behalf of all citizens, we are the ones who will have to live with the consequences of those decisions whether they have to do with our infrastructure, our environment, or our jobs. So far, the government has let us down tremendously.

My optimism allows me to hope that the disappointment will end tomorrow, but so far nothing leads us to believe that this will be the case. I am, however, open to the idea.

* * *

● (1710)

POINTS OF ORDER

SUPPLEMENTARY SUPPLY BILL—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I am now ready to rule on the point of order raised earlier today by the hon. member for Perth—Wellington concerning the supply bill that was distributed with Supplementary Estimates (C) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017, which will be called for debate later today.

I thank the hon. member for Perth—Wellington for raising this important issue, as well as the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and the hon. member for London—Fanshawe for their observations.

● (1715)

[English]

In his arguments, the member for Perth—Wellington indicated that the parts of the draft appropriation act concerning the salary of certain ministers were already before the House in an amending bill, Bill C-24, an act to amend the Salaries Act and to make a consequential amendment to the Financial Administration Act. He contended that, as such items of a legislative character should not be included in the estimates, the Speaker should remove from the estimates all references to authority for ministerial salaries.

Business of Supply

As the member has indicated, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, second edition, states at page 869:

...estimates with a direct and specific legislative intent...should come to the House by way of an amending bill.

However, as the member also noted, this situation is not new. In fact, members may recall that during the current Parliament, Bill C-8, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016 and Bill C-9, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017, had the exact same provisions regarding ministerial salaries. Both bills were adopted by the House without any concerns being raised either beforehand or afterwards.

As has been pointed out by the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, this procedure has been used consistently since the mid-1990s.

In reference to the specific arguments raised by the member for Perth—Wellington, the Chair would be remiss if it did not point out an important nuance, namely that outlined by Speaker Parent in his ruling November 25, 1997, found at page 2209 of *Debates*, when he said:

...what was objected to in the past and what different Speakers have ruled out of order were attempts to amend existing acts or legislate new programs as part of a legislative measure granting supply.

Clearly, the draft supply bills currently available to members on this last supply day are not amending existing acts or legislating new programs. Accordingly, the Chair is satisfied that the form or content of the bills is not at issue in this case.

The Chair is therefore prepared to let the estimates, and the supply bills that flow from them, proceed today in their current form.

I thank hon. members for their attention.

* * *

● (1720)

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—BUDGET 2017

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 5:15 p.m., and today being the last allotted day for the supply period ending March 26, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

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

Business of Supply

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1750)

[*English*]

And the bells having rung:

The Speaker: The question is the following one. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

● (1800)

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

(*Division No. 223*)

YEAS

Members

Abouttaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Arnold	Barlow
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Block
Boucher	Brassard
Brown	Calkins
Carrie	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Cooper	Deltell
Diotte	Dreeshen
Eglinski	Falk
Fast	Finley
Gallant	Généreux
Genuis	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Harder	Hoback
Jeneroux	Kelly
Kent	Kitchen
Kmiec	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Lebel
Liepert	Lukiwski
MacKenzie	Maguire
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz	Nater
Nicholson	Paul-Hus
Poillievre	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Ritz	Saroya
Schmale	Shields
Shipley	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tilson
Trost	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vecchio
Viersen	Warawa
Warkentin	Watts
Waugh	Webber
Wong	Yurdiga
Zimmer— 83	

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Ayoub	Bagnell
Bains	Barsalou-Duval
Baylis	Beaulieu
Beech	Bennett
Benson	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boissonnault	Bossio
Boudrias	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Bratina
Breton	Brison
Brosseau	Caesar-Chavannes
Cannings	Carr
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	Casey (Charlottetown)
Chagger	Champagne
Chan	Chen
Choquette	Christopherson
Cormier	Cullen
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
DeCoursey	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Donnelly	Drouin
Dubé	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseau	Duvall
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fraser (West Nova)	Fraser (Central Nova)
Freeland	Fry
Fuhr	Garneau
Garrison	Gerretsen
Gill	Goldsmith-Jones
Goodale	Gould
Graham	Grewal
Hajdu	Hardcastle
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Johns
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Julian
Kang	Khalid
Khera	Kwan
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
Laverdière	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lefebvre
Lemieux	Leslie
Levitt	Lightbound
Lockhart	Long
Longfield	Ludwig
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Malcolmson
Maloney	Marcil
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
Mathysen	
May (Cambridge)	May (Saarnich—Gulf Islands)
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Érables)
Soeurs	
Monsef	Morneau
Morrissey	Mulcair
Murray	Nantel
Nassif	Nault
O'Connell	Oliphant
Oliver	O'Regan

Business of Supply

Ouellette
 Pauzé
 Peterson
 Philpott
 Plamondon
 Quach
 Ramsey
 Ratansi
 Robillard
 Romanado
 Rudd
 Rusnak
 Sahota
 Sajjan
 Sangha
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Serré
 Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
 Sikand
 Sohi
 Spengemann
 Stetski
 Tabbara
 Tassi
 Tootoo
 Trudel
 Vandenberg
 Virani
 Whalen
 Wilson-Raybould
 Young

Paradis
 Peschisolido
 Petitpas Taylor
 Picard
 Poissant
 Qualtrough
 Rankin
 Rioux
 Rodriguez
 Rota
 Ruimy
 Saganash
 Saini
 Samson
 Sansoucy
 Scarpaleggia
 Schulte
 Sheehan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Simms
 Sorbara
 Ste-Marie
 Stewart
 Tan
 Thériault
 Trudeau
 Vandal
 Vaughan
 Weir
 Wilkinson
 Wrzesnewskyj
 Zahid— 220

PAIRED

Members

Moore— 2

Footnote

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

[Translation]

OPPOSITION MOTION—CANADIAN FORCES TAX BENEFIT

The House resumed from March 9 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: Pursuant to order made Thursday, March 9, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman relating to the business of supply.

The question is on the motion.

• (1805)

[English]

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

(Division No. 224)

YEAS

Members

Aboultayf
 Albrecht
 Alleslev
 Ambrose
 Anderson
 Arseneault
 Ashton
 Bagnell
 Barlow
 Baylis
 Beech
 Benson
 Berthold
 Bibeau
 Blaikie
 Blaney (North Island—Powell River)

Albas
 Aldag
 Allison
 Amos
 Arnold
 Arya
 Ayoub
 Bains
 Barsalou-Duval
 Beaulieu
 Bennett
 Bergen
 Bezan
 Bittle
 Blair
 Block

Boissonnault
 Boucher
 Boulterice
 Brassard
 Breton
 Brosseau
 Caesar-Chavannes
 Cannings
 Carrie
 Casey (Charlottetown)
 Champagne
 Chen
 Choquette
 Clarke
 Cooper
 Cullen
 Dabrusin
 Davies
 Deltell
 Dhillon
 Diotte
 Dreeshen
 Dubé
 Duclos
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Dusseault
 Dzerowicz
 Ehsassi
 Ellis
 Eyking
 Falk
 Fergus
 Finley
 Fisher
 Fortin
 Fraser (West Nova)
 Freeland
 Fuhr
 Gameau
 Généreux
 Gerretsen
 Gladu
 Goldsmith-Jones
 Gould
 Graham
 Hajdu
 Harder
 Harvey
 Hoback
 Housefather
 Hussen
 Iacono
 Johns
 Jordan
 Julian
 Kelly
 Khalid
 Kitchen
 Kwan
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
 Lebel
 Leboutillier
 Lemieux
 Levitt
 Lightbound
 Long
 Ludwig
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacKenzie
 Maguire
 Maloney
 Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
 Mathysen
 May (Cambridge)
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 McDonald
 McKenna
 McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
 Mendès
 Mihychuk
 Soeurs
 Monsef

Bossio
 Boudrias
 Boutin-Sweet
 Bratina
 Brison
 Brown
 Calkins
 Carr
 Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
 Chagger
 Chan
 Chong
 Christopherson
 Clement
 Cormier
 Cuzner
 Damoff
 DeCoursey
 Dhaliwal
 Di Iorio
 Donnelly
 Drouin
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
 Duvall
 Eglinski
 El-Khoury
 Erskine-Smith
 Eyolfson
 Fast
 Fillmore
 Finnigan
 Fonseca
 Fragiskatos
 Fraser (Central Nova)
 Fry
 Gallant
 Garrison
 Genus
 Gill
 Godin
 Goodale
 Gourde
 Grewal
 Hardcastle
 Hardie
 Hehr
 Holland
 Hughes
 Hutchings
 Jeneroux
 Joly
 Jowhari
 Kang
 Kent
 Khera
 Kmiec
 Lake
 Lamoureux
 Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
 Laverdière
 LeBlanc
 Lefebvre
 Leslie
 Liepert
 Lockhart
 Longfield
 Lukiwski
 MacGregor
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Malcolmson
 Marci
 May (Saaneich—Gulf Islands)
 McCrimmon
 McGuinity
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McLeod (Northwest Territories)
 Mendicino
 Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Érables)
 Morneau

Business of Supply

Morrissey	Motz
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nassif
Nater	Nault
Nicholson	O'Connell
Oliphant	Oliver
O'Regan	Ouellette
Paradis	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Peschisolido
Peterson	Petitpas Taylor
Philpott	Picard
Plamondon	Poilievre
Poissant	Quach
Qualtrough	Ramsey
Rankin	Ratansi
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Rioux
Ritz	Robillard
Rodriguez	Romanado
Rota	Rudd
Ruimy	Rusnak
Saganash	Sahota
Saini	Sajjan
Sanson	Sangha
Sansoucy	Sarai
Saroya	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Schmale
Schulte	Serré
Sheehan	Shields
Shipley	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
Simms	Sohi
Sopuck	Sorbara
Sorenson	Spengemann
Stanton	Ste-Marie
Stetski	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Tabbara
Tan	Tassi
Thériault	Tilson
Tootoo	Trost
Trudeau	Trudel
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vaughan	Vecchio
Viersen	Virani
Warawa	Warkentin
Watts	Waugh
Webber	Weir
Whalen	Wilkinson
Wilson-Raybould	Wong
Wrzesnewskyj	Young
Yurdiga	Zahid
Zimmer— 303	

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Footnote

Moore— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (C), 2016-17

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

That the Supplementary Estimates (C) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017, be concurred in.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.**Some hon. members:** No.**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.**Some hon. members:** Yea.**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.**Some hon. members:** Nay.**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.*And five or more members having risen:*

● (1815)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 225)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland
Fry	Fuhr
Gameau	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mendicino

Business of Supply

Mihychuk
Soeurs)
Monsef
Morrisey
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Oueltette
Peschisolido
Petipas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Trudeau
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesniewski
Zahid— 171

Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-
Morneau
Murray
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

Poilievre
Rankin
Rempel
Ritz
Sansoucy
Schmale
Shiple
Sorenson
Ste-Marie
Stewart
Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Warawa
Watts
Webber
Wong
Zimmer— 131

Ramsey
Reid
Richards
Saganash
Saroya
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warkentin
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

PAIRED

Members

Foote

Moore— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Scott Brison moved that Bill C-40, an act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017, be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

Hon. Scott Brison moved that the bill be read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: The hon. Chief Government Whip on a point of order.

[*English*]

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you would find agreement to apply the result from the previous vote to this vote.

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 226*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultatif
Albrecht
Ambrose
Arnold
Barlow
Beaulieu
Bergen
Bezan
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
Boucher
Boulerice
Brassard
Brown
Cannings
Chong
Christopherson
Clement
Cullen
Deltell
Donnelly
Dubé
Dusseau
Eglinski
Fast
Fortin
Garrison
Genuis
Gladu
Gourde
Harder
Hughes
Johns
Kelly
Kitchen
Kwan
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary)
Lebel
Lukiwski
MacKenzie
Malcolmson
Mathysen
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Motz
Nantel
Nicholson
Pauzé

Albas
Allison
Anderson
Ashton
Barsalou-Duval
Benson
Berthold
Blaikie
Block
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Calkins
Carrie
Choquette
Clarke
Cooper
Davies
Diotte
Dreeshen
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Falk
Finley
Gallant
Généreux
Gill
Godin
Hardcastle
Hoback
Jeneroux
Julian
Kent
Kmieciak
Lake
Laverdière
Liepert
MacGregor
Maguire
Marcel
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Mulcair
Nater
Paul-Hus
Plamondon

Aldag
Amos
Arya
Bagnell
Baylis
Bennett
Bittle

Alleslev
Arseneault
Ayoub
Bains
Beech
Bibeau
Blair

Business of Supply

Boissonnault	Bossio		
Bratina	Breton		
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes		
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)		
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger	Aboutaif	Albas
Champagne	Chan	Albrecht	Allison
Chen	Cormier	Ambrose	Anderson
Cuzner	Dabrusin	Arnold	Ashton
Damoff	DeCoursey	Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Beaulieu	Benson
Di Iorio	Drouin	Bergen	Berthold
Dubourg	Duclos	Bezan	Blaikie
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Block
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi	Boucher	Boudrias
El-Khoury	Ellis	Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Erskine-Smith	Eyking	Brassard	Brousseau
Eyolfson	Fergus	Brown	Calkins
Fillmore	Finnigan	Cannings	Carrie
Fisher	Fonseca	Chong	Choquette
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)	Christopherson	Clarke
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland	Clement	Cooper
Fry	Fuhr	Cullen	Davies
Garneau	Gerretsen	Deltell	Diotte
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale	Donnelly	Dreeshen
Gould	Graham	Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Grewal	Hajdu	Dusseault	Duvall
Hardie	Harvey	Eglinski	Falk
Hehr	Holland	Fast	Finley
Housefather	Hussen	Fortin	Gallant
Hutchings	Iacono	Garrison	Généreux
Joly	Jordan	Genius	Gill
Jowhari	Kang	Gladu	Godin
Khalid	Khera	Gourde	Hardcastle
Lametti	Lamoureux	Harder	Hoback
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Hughes	Jeneroux
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Johns	Julian
Lefebvre	Lemieux	Kelly	Kent
Leslie	Levitt	Kitchen	Kmiec
Lightbound	Lockhart	Kwan	Lake
Long	Longfield	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)	Lebel	Liepert
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Lukiwski	MacGregor
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)		MacKenzie	Maguire
May (Cambridge)		Malcolmson	Marcil
McCrimmon	McDonald	Mathysen	May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
McGuinty	McKenna	McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Motz	Mulcair
Mendès	Medicino	Nantel	Nater
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)	Nicholson	Paul-Hus
Monsef	Morneau	Pauzé	Plamondon
Morrissey	Murray	Poilievre	Ramsey
Nassif	Nault	Rankin	Reid
O'Connell	Oliphant	Rempel	Richards
Oliver	O'Regan	Ritz	Saganash
Ouellette	Paradis	Sansoucy	Saroya
Peschisolido	Peterson	Schmale	Shields
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott	Shiple	Sopuck
Picard	Poissant	Sorenson	Stanton
Qualtrough	Ratansi	Ste-Marie	Stetski
Rioux	Robillard	Stewart	Strahl
Rodriguez	Romanado	Stubbs	Sweet
Rota	Rudd	Thériault	Tilson
Ruimy	Rusnak	Trost	Trudel
Sahota	Saini	Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Sajjan	Samson	Vecchio	Viersen
Sangha	Sarai	Warawa	Warkentin
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke	Watts	Waugh
Schulte	Serré	Webber	Weir
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)	Wong	Yurdiga
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand	Zimmer — 131	
Simms	Sohi		
Sorbara	Spengemann		
Tabbara	Tan		
Tassi	Tootoo		
Trudeau	Vandal		
Vandenbeld	Vaughan		
Virani	Whalen		
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould		
Wrzesnewskyj	Young		
Zahid — 171			

NAYS

Members

Albas
Allison
Anderson
Ashton
Barsalou-Duval
Benson
Berthold
Blaikie
Block
Boudrias
Boutin-Sweet
Brousseau
Calkins
Carrie
Choquette
Clarke
Cooper
Davies
Diotte
Dreeshen
Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Duvall
Falk
Finley
Gallant
Généreux
Gill
Godin
Hardcastle
Hoback
Jeneroux
Julian
Kent
Kmiec
Lake
Laverdière
Liepert
MacGregor
Maguire
Marcil
May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Mulcair
Nater
Paul-Hus
Plamondon
Ramsey
Reid
Richards
Saganash
Saroya
Shields
Sopuck
Stanton
Stetski
Strahl
Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warkentin
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

PAIRED

Members

Moore — 2

Foote

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Business of Supply

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Mr. Bruce Stanton in the chair)

(On clause 2)

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Chair, can the President of the Treasury Board please assure the House that the bill is in its normal form?

• (1820)

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Chair, the form of this bill is in fact the same as that passed in the previous supply period.

I greatly appreciate the continued interest of the hon. member in this important and pressing issue before the House, and for his hard work on this file.

The Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 6 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 7 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 1, the short title, carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Preamble agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Title agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Bill agreed to)

The Chair: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Bill reported)

Hon. Scott Brison moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you would find agreement to apply the results from the vote on the motion for second reading to this one.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 227)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Amos
Arya
Bagnell
Baylis
Bennett
Bittle
Boissonnault
Bratina
Brison
Carr
Casey (Charlottetown)
Champagne

Allelev
Arseneault
Ayoub
Bains
Beech
Bibeau
Blair
Bossio
Breton
Caesar-Chavannes
Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Chagger
Chan

Business of Supply

Chen	Cormier	Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Cuzner	Dabrusin	Beaulieu	Benson
Damoff	DeCoursey	Bergen	Berthold
Dhaliwal	Dhillon	Bezan	Blaikie
Di Iorio	Drouin	Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Block
Dubourg	Duclos	Boucher	Boudrias
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi	Brassard	Brosseau
El-Khoury	Ellis	Brown	Calkins
Erskine-Smith	Eyking	Cannings	Carrie
Eyolfson	Fergus	Chong	Choquette
Fillmore	Finnigan	Christopherson	Clarke
Fisher	Fonseca	Clement	Cooper
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)	Cullen	Davies
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland	Deltell	Diotte
Fry	Fuhr	Donnelly	Dreeschen
Garneau	Gerretsen	Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale	Dusseault	Duvall
Gould	Graham	Eglinski	Falk
Grewal	Hajdu	Fast	Finley
Hardie	Harvey	Fortin	Gallant
Hehr	Holland	Garrison	Généreux
Housefather	Hussen	Genius	Gill
Hutchings	Iacono	Gladu	Godin
Joly	Jordan	Gourde	Hardcastle
Jowhari	Kang	Harder	Hoback
Khalid	Khera	Hughes	Jeneroux
Lametti	Lamoureux	Johns	Julian
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Kelly	Kent
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Kitchen	Kmiec
Lefebvre	Lemieux	Kwan	Lake
Leslie	Levitt	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Lighthound	Lockhart	Lebel	Liepert
Long	Longfield	Lukiwski	MacGregor
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacKenzie	Maguire
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Malcolmson	Marcil
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)		Mathysen	May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
May (Cambridge)		McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
McCrimmon	McDonald	Motz	Mulcair
McGuinty	McKenna	Nantel	Nater
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Nicholson	Paul-Hus
Mendès	Medicino	Pauzé	Plamondon
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)	Poilievre	Ramsey
Soeurs)		Rankin	Reid
Monsef	Morneau	Rempel	Richards
Morrissey	Murray	Ritz	Saganash
Nassif	Nault	Sansoucy	Saroya
O'Connell	Oliphant	Schmale	Shields
Oliver	O'Regan	Shiple	Sopuck
Ouellette	Paradis	Sorenson	Stanton
Peschisolido	Peterson	Ste-Marie	Stetski
Petipas Taylor	Philpott	Stewart	Strahl
Picard	Poissant	Stubbs	Sweet
Qualtrough	Ratansi	Thériault	Tilson
Rioux	Robillard	Trost	Trudel
Rodriguez	Romanado	Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Rota	Rudd	Vecchio	Viersen
Ruimy	Rusnak	Warawa	Warkentin
Sahota	Saini	Watts	Waugh
Sajjan	Samson	Webber	Weir
Sangha	Sarai	Wong	Yurdiga
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke	Zimmer — 131	
Schulte	Serré		
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)		
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand		
Simms	Sohi		
Sorbara	Spengemann		
Tabbara	Tan		
Tassi	Tootoo		
Trudeau	Vandal		
Vandenbeld	Vaughan		
Virani	Whalen		
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould		
Wrzesnewskyj	Young		
Zahid — 171			

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Arnold	Ashton

PAIRED

Members

Foote

Moore — 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.*[Translation]***Hon. Scott Brison** moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.**The Speaker:** The hon. Chief Government Whip.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I believe you would find unanimous consent to apply the previous vote to the current vote.

The Speaker: Does the chief whip have unanimous consent of the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 228)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brisson	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland
Fry	Fuhr
Garneau	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mencicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)
Monsef	Morneau
Morrissey	Murray
Nassif	Nault
O’Connell	Olipphant
Oliver	O’Regan
Ouellette	Paradis
Peschisolido	Peterson
Petitpas Taylor	Philpott

Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Trudeau
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid — 171

Business of Supply

Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schiefke
Serré
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

NAYS

Members

Aboutaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Arnold	Ashton
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Block
Boucher	Boudrias
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brousseau
Brown	Calkins
Cannings	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Cullen	Davies
Deltell	Diotte
Donnelly	Dreeschen
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseauil	Duvall
Eglinski	Falk
Fast	Finley
Fortin	Gallant
Garrison	Généreux
Genuis	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Gourde	Hardcastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmieć
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Lebel	Liepert
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Marcil
Mathysen	May (Saanchi—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz	Mulcair
Nantel	Nater
Nicholson	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Plamondon
Poilievre	Ramsey
Rankin	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Ritz	Saganash
Sansoucy	Saroya
Schmale	Shields
Shipley	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Ste-Marie	Stetski
Stewart	Strahl

Business of Supply

Stubbs
Thériault
Trost
Van Kesteren
Vecchio
Warawa
Watts
Webber
Wong
Zimmer— 131

Sweet
Tilson
Trudel
Van Loan
Viersen
Warkentin
Waugh
Weir
Yurdiga

PAIRED

Members

Foote

Moore— 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.) moved:

That a sum not exceeding \$30,140,965,114.44 being composed of:

(1) three twelfths (\$17,753,541,673.25) of the total of the amounts of the items set forth in the Proposed Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018, except for those items below:

(2) eleven twelfths of the total of the amount of Treasury Board Secretariat Votes 5 and 30 (Schedule 1.1), of the said Estimates, \$1,237,500,000.00;

(3) seven twelfths of the total of the amount of Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Vote 1, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission Vote 1, Department of Health Vote 10 and Public Health Agency of Canada Vote 10 (Schedule 1.2), of the said Estimates, \$1,376,303,147.92;

(4) six twelfths of the total of the amount of Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada Vote 1, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Vote 1, Department of Employment and Social Development Vote 5, Department of Justice Vote 1, Office of Infrastructure of Canada Vote 5, Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee Vote 1 and Statistics Canada Vote 1 (Schedule 1.3), of the said Estimates, \$1,547,065,649.50;

(5) five twelfths of the total of the amount of Canada Council for the Arts Vote 1, Canadian Food Inspection Agency Vote 5, Canadian Space Agency Vote 5, Department of Industry Vote 5, Library of Parliament Vote 1, Marine Atlantic Inc. Vote 1, Public Health Agency of Canada Vote 1, Treasury Board Secretariat Vote 1, and VIA Rail Canada Inc. Vote 1 (Schedule 1.4), of the said Estimates, \$552,235,743.76;

(6) four twelfths of the total of the amount of Canadian Air Transport Security Authority Vote 1, Canadian Food Inspection Agency Vote 1, Canadian High Arctic Research Station Vote 1, Canadian Space Agency Vote 10, Department of Canadian Heritage Vote 5, Department of Citizenship and Immigration Vote 10, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Votes 1, 5 and 10, Department of Industry Votes 1 and 10, Department of Public Works and Government Services Vote 1, Department of the Environment Vote 1, House of Commons Vote 1, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Vote 5, Privy Council Office Vote 1, Public Service Commission Vote 1, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Vote 1, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Vote 5 (Schedule 1.5), of the said Estimates, \$7,674,318,900.01;

be granted to Her Majesty on account of the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018.

• (1825)

[English]

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

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

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

• (1830)

[Translation]

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

(Division No. 229)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhalwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland
Fry	Fuhr
Gameau	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinty	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
Mendès	Mendicino
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Sœurs)
Monsef	
Morrissey	Momeau
Nassif	Murray
O'Connell	Nault
Oliver	Oliphant
	O'Regan

Ouellette
 Peschisolido
 Petitpas Taylor
 Picard
 Qualtrough
 Rioux
 Rodriguez
 Rota
 Ruimy
 Sahota
 Sajjan
 Sangha
 Scarpaleggia
 Schulte
 Sheehan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Simms
 Sorbara
 Tabbara
 Tassi
 Trudeau
 Vandenbeld
 Virani
 Wilkinson
 Wrzesnewskyj
 Zahid — 171

Paradis
 Peterson
 Philpott
 Poissant
 Ratansi
 Robillard
 Romanado
 Rudd
 Rusnak
 Saini
 Samson
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Serré
 Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
 Sijkand
 Sohi
 Spengemann
 Tan
 Tootoo
 Vandal
 Vaughan
 Whalen
 Wilson-Raybould
 Young

NAYS

Members

Aboulttaif
 Albrecht
 Ambrose
 Arnold
 Barlow
 Beaulieu
 Bergen
 Bezan
 Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
 Boucher
 Boulerice
 Brassard
 Brown
 Cannings
 Chong
 Christopherson
 Clement
 Cullen
 Deltell
 Donnelly
 Dubé
 Dusseault
 Eglinski
 Fast
 Fortin
 Garrison
 Genus
 Gladu
 Gourde
 Harder
 Hughes
 Johns
 Kelly
 Kitchen
 Kwan
 Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
 Lebel
 Lukiwski
 MacKenzie
 Malcolmson
 Mathysen
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 Motz
 Nantel
 Nicholson
 Paupé
 Poilievre
 Ramsey
 Reid
 Richards
 Saganash
 Saroya
 Shields

Albas
 Allison
 Anderson
 Ashton
 Barsalou-Duval
 Benson
 Berthold
 Blaikie
 Block
 Boudrias
 Boutin-Sweet
 Brosseau
 Calkins
 Carrie
 Choquette
 Clarke
 Cooper
 Davies
 Diotte
 Dreeshen
 Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
 Duvall
 Falk
 Finley
 Gallant
 Gagnéreux
 Gill
 Godin
 Hardcastle
 Hoback
 Jeneroux
 Julian
 Kent
 Kmiec
 Lake
 Laverdière
 Liepert
 MacGregor
 Maguire
 Marcil
 May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
 McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
 Mulcair
 Nater
 Paul-Hus
 Plamondon
 Quach
 Rankin
 Rempel
 Ritz
 Sansoucy
 Schmale
 Shipley

Business of Supply

Sopuck
 Stanton
 Stetski
 Strahl
 Sweet
 Tilson
 Trudel
 Van Loan
 Viersen
 Warkentin
 Waugh
 Weir
 Yurdiga
 Sorenson
 Ste-Marie
 Stewart
 Stubbs
 Thériault
 Trost
 Van Kesteren
 Vecchio
 Warawa
 Watts
 Webber
 Wong
 Zimmer — 132

PAIRED

Members

Foote

Moore — 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison moved that Bill C-41, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2018, be read the first time.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Scott Brison moved that the bill be read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole.

[*English*]

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I believe that if you seek it, you will find agreement to apply the result from the previous vote to this vote.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(*Division No. 230*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
 Amos
 Arya
 Bagnell
 Baylis
 Bennett
 Bittle
 Boissonnault
 Bratina
 Brisson
 Carr
 Casey (Charlottetown)
 Champagne
 Chen
 Cuzner
 Damoff
 Dhaliwal
 Di Iorio
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Dzerowicz
 El-Khoury
 Erskine-Smith
 Eyolfson
 Fillmore
 Fisher
 Alleslev
 Arseneault
 Ayoub
 Bains
 Beech
 Bibeau
 Blair
 Bossio
 Breton
 Caesar-Chavannes
 Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
 Chagger
 Chan
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 DeCoursey
 Dhillon
 Drouin
 Duclos
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Ehsassi
 Ellis
 Eyking
 Fergus
 Finnigan
 Fonseca

Business of Supply

Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)	Cullen	Davies
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland	Deltell	Diotte
Fry	Fuhr	Donnelly	Dreeshen
Garneau	Gerretsen	Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale	Dusseault	Duvall
Gould	Graham	Eglinski	Falk
Grewal	Hajdu	Fast	Finley
Hardie	Harvey	Fortin	Gallant
Hehr	Holland	Garrison	Généreux
Housefather	Hussen	Genius	Gill
Hutchings	Iacono	Gladu	Godin
Joly	Jordan	Gourde	Hardcastle
Jowhari	Kang	Harder	Hoback
Khalid	Khera	Hughes	Jeneroux
Lametti	Lamoureux	Johns	Julian
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)	Kelly	Kent
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Kitchen	Kmiec
Lefebvre	Lemieux	Kwan	Lake
Leslie	Levitt	Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Lightbound	Lockhart	Lebel	Liepert
Long	Longfield	Lukiwski	MacGregor
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacKenzie	Maguire
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney	Malcolmson	Marcil
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)		Mathysen	May (Saanic—Gulf Islands)
May (Cambridge)		McCauley (Edmonton West)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
McCrimmon	McDonald	Motz	Mulcair
McGuinty	McKenna	Nantel	Nater
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)	Nicholson	Paul-Hus
Mendès	Mendicino	Paupé	Plamondon
Mihychuk	Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)	Poilievre	Quach
Monsef	Morneau	Ramsey	Rankin
Morrissey	Murray	Reid	Rempel
Nassif	Nault	Richards	Ritz
O'Connell	Oliphant	Saganash	Sansoucy
Oliver	O'Regan	Saroya	Schmale
Ouellette	Paradis	Shields	Shipley
Peschisolido	Peterson	Sopuck	Sorenson
Petipas Taylor	Philpott	Stanton	Ste-Marie
Picard	Poissant	Stetski	Stewart
Qualtrough	Ratansi	Strahl	Stubbs
Rioux	Robillard	Sweet	Thériault
Rodriguez	Romanado	Tilson	Trost
Rota	Rudd	Trudel	Van Kesteren
Ruimy	Rusnak	Van Loan	Vecchio
Sahota	Saini	Viersen	Warawa
Sajjan	Samson	Warkentin	Watts
Sangha	Sarai	Waugh	Webber
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke	Weir	Wong
Schulte	Serré	Yurdiga	Zimmer— 132
Sheehan	Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)		
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand		
Simms	Sohi		
Sorbara	Spengemann		
Tabbara	Tan		
Tassi	Tootoo		
Trudeau	Vandal		
Vandenbeld	Vaughan		
Virani	Whalen		
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould		
Wrzesnewskyj	Young		
Zahid— 171			

PAIRED

Members

Moore— 2

Foote

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Mr. Bruce Stanton in the chair)

(On clause 2)

Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC): Mr. Chair, I ask if the President of the Treasury Board can assure the House that the bill is in its normal form.

● (1835)

Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I can assure the hon. member that the form of this bill is the same as that passed in the previous supply period.

Again, I want to commend the hon. member on his ongoing interest in this important file, and thank him for his interest and his hard work. I hope this time, maybe, we can count on his support.

[Translation]

The Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?**Some hon. members:** Agreed.**NAYS**

Members

Aboultatif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Arnold	Ashton
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Block
Boucher	Boudrias
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brousseau
Brown	Calkins
Cannings	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper

Business of Supply

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 6 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1.1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1.2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1.3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1.4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 1.5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1.5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 1, the short title, carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Preamble agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Title agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Bill agreed to)

The Chair: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.
(Bill reported)

[*English*]

Hon. Scott Brison moved that the bill be concurred in.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you would find agreement to apply the results of the vote on the motion for second reading to this motion.

The Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(*Division No. 231*)

YEAS

Members

Aldag
Amos
Arya
Bagnell
Baylis
Bennett
Bittle

Alleslev
Arseneault
Ayoub
Bains
Beech
Bibeau
Blair

Business of Supply

Boissonnault
 Bratina
 Brison
 Carr
 Casey (Charlottetown)
 Champagne
 Chen
 Cuzner
 Damoff
 Dhaliwal
 Di Iorio
 Dubourg
 Duguid
 Dzerowicz
 El-Khoury
 Erskine-Smith
 Eyolfson
 Fillmore
 Fisher
 Fragiskatos
 Fraser (Central Nova)
 Fry
 Garneau
 Goldsmith-Jones
 Gould
 Grewal
 Hardie
 Hehr
 Housefather
 Hutchings
 Joly
 Jowhari
 Khalid
 Lametti
 Lapointe
 LeBlanc
 Lefebvre
 Leslie
 Lighthouse
 Long
 Ludwig
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)
 May (Cambridge)
 McCrimmon
 McGuinty
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 Mendès
 Mihychuk
 Soeurs)
 Monsef
 Morrissey
 Nassif
 O'Connell
 Oliver
 Ouellette
 Peschisolido
 Petitpas Taylor
 Picard
 Qualtrough
 Rioux
 Rodriguez
 Rota
 Ruimy
 Sahota
 Sajjan
 Sangha
 Scarpaleggia
 Schulte
 Sheehan
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Simms
 Sorbara
 Tabbara
 Tassi
 Trudeau
 Vandenberg
 Virani
 Wilkinson
 Wrzesnewskyj
 Zahid — 171

Bossio
 Breton
 Caesar-Chavannes
 Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
 Chagger
 Chan
 Cormier
 Dabrusin
 DeCoursey
 Dhillon
 Drouin
 Duclos
 Duncan (Etobicoke North)
 Ehsassi
 Ellis
 Eyking
 Fergus
 Finnigan
 Fonseca
 Fraser (West Nova)
 Freeland
 Fuhr
 Gerretsen
 Goodale
 Graham
 Hajdu
 Harvey
 Holland
 Hussien
 Iacono
 Jordan
 Kang
 Khera
 Lamoureux
 Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
 LeBouthillier
 Lemieux
 Levitt
 Lockhart
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 Maloney

McDonald
 McKenna
 McLeod (Northwest Territories)
 Mendicino
 Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-
 Morneau
 Murray
 Nault
 Oliphant
 O'Regan
 Paradis
 Peterson
 Philpott
 Poissant
 Ratansi
 Robillard
 Romanado
 Rudd
 Rusnak
 Saini
 Samson
 Sarai
 Schiefke
 Serré
 Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
 Sikand
 Sohi
 Spengemann
 Tan
 Tootoo
 Vandal
 Vaughan
 Whalen
 Wilson-Raybould
 Young

NAYS

Members

Aboultaif
 Albrecht
 Ambrose
 Arnold
 Barlow
 Beaulieu
 Bergen
 Bezan
 Blaney (North Island—Powell River)
 Boucher
 Boulerice
 Brassard
 Brown
 Cannings
 Chong
 Christopherson
 Clement
 Cullen
 Deltell
 Donnelly
 Dubé
 Dusseault
 Eglinski
 Fast
 Fortin
 Garrison
 Genuis
 Gladu
 Gourde
 Harder
 Hughes
 Johns
 Kelly
 Kitchen
 Kwan
 Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary)
 Lebel
 Lukiwski
 MacKenzie
 Malcolmson
 Mathysen
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 Motz
 Nantel
 Nicholson
 Pautzé
 Poilievre
 Ramsey
 Reid
 Richards
 Saganash
 Saroya
 Shields
 Sopuck
 Stanton
 Stetski
 Strahl
 Sweet
 Tilson
 Trudel
 Van Loan
 Viersen
 Warkentin
 Waugh
 Weir
 Yurdiga

Albas
 Allison
 Anderson
 Ashton
 Barsalou-Duval
 Benson
 Berthold
 Blaikie
 Block
 Boudrias
 Boutin-Sweet
 Brosseau
 Calkins
 Carrie
 Choquette
 Clarke
 Cooper
 Davies
 Diotte
 Dreeschen
 Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
 Duvall
 Falk
 Finley
 Gallant
 Généreux
 Gill
 Godin
 Hardcastle
 Hoback
 Jeneroux
 Julian
 Kent
 Kmiec
 Lake
 Laverdière
 Liepert
 MacGregor
 Maguire
 Marcil
 May (Saaneich—Gulf Islands)
 McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
 Mulcair
 Nater
 Paul-Hus
 Plamondon
 Quach
 Rankin
 Rempel
 Ritz
 Sansoucy
 Schmale
 Shipley
 Sorenson
 Ste-Marie
 Stewart
 Stubbs
 Thériault
 Trost
 Van Kesteren
 Vecchio
 Warawa
 Watts
 Webber
 Wong
 Zimmer — 132

PAIRED

Members

Foote

Moore — 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

When shall the bill be read a third time? By leave, now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Translation]

Hon. Scott Brison moved that Bill C-41, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2018, be now read the third time and passed.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you would find agreement to apply the results of the previous vote to the current vote.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 232)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Alleslev
Amos	Arseneault
Arya	Ayoub
Bagnell	Bains
Baylis	Beech
Bennett	Bibeau
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bossio
Bratina	Breton
Brison	Caesar-Chavannes
Carr	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Cormier
Cuzner	Dabrusin
Damoff	DeCoursey
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Di Iorio	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Eyking
Eyolfson	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Freeland
Fry	Fuhr
Garneau	Gerretsen
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Graham
Grewal	Hajdu
Hardie	Harvey
Hehr	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Hutchings	Iacono
Joly	Jordan
Jowhari	Kang
Khalid	Khera
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lefebvre	Lemieux
Leslie	Levitt
Lightbound	Lockhart
Long	Longfield
Ludwig	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)	
May (Cambridge)	
McCrimmon	McDonald
McGuinity	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)

Mendès
Mihychuk
Soeurs)
Monsef
Morrissey
Nassif
O'Connell
Oliver
Ouellette
Peschisolido
Petitpas Taylor
Picard
Qualtrough
Rioux
Rodriguez
Rota
Ruimy
Sahota
Sajjan
Sangha
Scarpaleggia
Schulte
Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simms
Sorbara
Tabbara
Tassi
Trudeau
Vandenbeld
Virani
Wilkinson
Wrzesnewskyj
Zahid— 171

Business of Supply

Mendicino
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-
Morneau
Murray
Nault
Oliphant
O'Regan
Paradis
Peterson
Philpott
Poissant
Ratansi
Robillard
Romanado
Rudd
Rusnak
Saini
Samson
Sarai
Schieffe
Serré
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)
Sikand
Sohi
Spengemann
Tan
Tootoo
Vandal
Vaughan
Whalen
Wilson-Raybould
Young

NAYS

Members

Abouttaif	Albas
Albrecht	Allison
Ambrose	Anderson
Arnold	Ashton
Barlow	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benson
Bergen	Berthold
Bezan	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Block
Boucher	Boudrias
Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Brousseau
Brown	Calkins
Cannings	Carrie
Chong	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Cullen	Davies
Deltell	Diotte
Donnelly	Dreessen
Dubé	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseau	Duvall
Eglinski	Falk
Fast	Finley
Fortin	Gallant
Garrison	Généreux
Genius	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Gourde	Hardeastle
Harder	Hoback
Hughes	Jeneroux
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kwan	Lake
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Laverdière
Lebel	Liepert
Lukiwski	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Malcolmson	Marcil
Mathysen	May (Saanchich—Gulf Islands)
McCaughey (Edmonton West)	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Motz	Mulcair
Nantel	Nater
Nicholson	Paul-Hus

Private Members' Business

Pauzé	Plamondon
Poilievre	Quach
Ramsey	Rankin
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Ritz
Saganash	Sansoucy
Saroya	Schmale
Shields	Shipley
Sopuck	Sorenson
Stanton	Ste-Marie
Stetski	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Thériault
Tilson	Trost
Trudel	Van Kesteren
Van Loan	Vecchio
Viersen	Warawa
Warkentin	Watts
Waugh	Webber
Weir	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer — 132

PAIRED

Members

Foote

Moore — 2

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

• (1840)

[English]

The Speaker: It being 6:40 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[Translation]

SYSTEMIC RACISM AND RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

The House resumed from February 15, 2017, consideration of the motion.

Mr. Frank Baylis (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is particularly fitting that we are debating Motion No. 103 today, on International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Motion No. 103 seeks to eliminate racism and religious discrimination, including Islamophobia.

When we speak about the tragedy that occurred in Quebec City, an unthinkable act of terrorism, we could blame a young man with mental health problems, the media, some of our own fellow citizens who spread intolerance, or a global narrative that accuses a single group of causing all our problems, but we would be wrong.

Each one of us must bear a small part of that blame, because we have all been caught in the trap of describing a human being as the other, distinct from ourselves. We have all heard intolerant speech without saying a word. We have all stood silent when a fellow citizen's identity—gay, Black, Jewish or Muslim—was used as a weapon against them.

By staying silent, we contributed to a climate that made this hate crime that occurred here possible. We cannot remain silent in the face of discrimination.

[English]

Motion 103 asks the government to undertake a study to combat systemic racism and religious discrimination including Islamophobia.

According to Statistics Canada, Jews are the people most targeted for their religion when it comes to hate crimes. Sadly, I have seen this first-hand in my own riding of Pierrefonds—Dollard. A local synagogue, the Gutnick Mazal Jewish Centre, was defaced with hateful graffiti last summer. When that happened, I reached out to Rabbi Yarmush to let him know that our government and the whole of our community stood with him in condemning this cowardly act.

The year before, during my election campaign, as I was driving home at the end of a night I passed one of my posters that was defaced with a swastika. I did not have any clippers with me to take that poster down, so I called my campaign manager and asked him to take it down first thing the next morning. However, when he got there, the poster was already removed. That is when I first learned about this incredible young man, Corey Fleischer. Corey has made it part of his life's work to take down hateful graffiti in any form, whenever and wherever it shows up, in Montreal. Whether it is a synagogue, a mosque, or a church, people know they can call Corey Fleischer and he will show up and deal with it. My heart is warmed to know that this young man is out there.

However, there is much more work to be done.

When it comes to hate crimes, the rate of crimes against Muslims has more than doubled over the last three years. As we saw with the tragic events that took place in Quebec City, Islamophobia can have horrific consequences.

However, growing Islamophobia did not rise up in a bubble. There are extremists who commit hateful crimes, terrorist crimes in the name of Islam and their actions always make the news. This in turn is seized on by certain individuals who demonize an entire people, and who sow the seeds of fear all in an effort to gain political power.

After the massacre in Quebec City, I attended a number of vigils that were held in solidarity with the victims, the families, and the Muslim community at large. At one of those vigils, I met the widow of one of the murdered men. That lady was completely deflated, crushed, and could not look me in the face. She has a baby and a toddler, two young boys who will never know their father. She was surrounded but she was alone, because she will carry the full weight of that hateful crime for the rest of her life.

• (1845)

There were no words I could say that would make a difference. However, words do make a difference. Words of hate have an impact. Hateful words were said over and over again until they incarnated themselves in the weak mind of a young man with hate in his heart, and that young man went to a mosque and murdered six men who were guilty simply of praying.

Private Members' Business

There are those who will not support the motion because it contains a word they do not like, Islamophobia. There are those who will not support the motion because it does not contain a word they want, or a phrase, or a comma or a sentence. There are those who say the motion will introduce sharia law or will curtail free speech. This is completely untrue.

We can argue about a word or a comma. We can give ourselves any number of reasons for not speaking out, for not taking action, or for voting against this motion. If we do nothing, we do not have to worry because we will not feel the burden of this crime. That young widowed lady will carry all that weight for the rest of her life, and that of her children's. She carries the load of that hateful crime.

Therefore, I ask all members in the House to stand together as leaders of our nation and support this important motion. More important, I ask all Canadians to stand shoulder to shoulder with each other. I ask that we do not allow ourselves to be divided along racial or religious lines. I ask that we all stand together as one nation.

Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the citizens of Flamborough—Glanbrook, and every member of a faith community in Canada, needs to know that their right to religious freedom is at the forefront of our concerns here in the House. Canadians of all faiths should know this: every member of the official opposition is dedicated to protecting their right to worship who and how they choose without fear of persecution.

The motion we are debating this evening, Motion No. 103, touches on this sacred right and has generated significant public discussion and concern, and rightly so. I have heard arguments in favour of and against the motion from within the Muslim community and from the broader public.

In my comments I will try to cut through the political spin of the Prime Minister's Office and the amped-up rhetoric on all sides of this debate.

For context, the motion asks members of the House to agree to three main points: first, to recognize the need to quell the increasing public climate of hate and fear; second, to condemn Islamophobia; and third, to commission a parliamentary study that would recommend ways to reduce systemic racism and religious discrimination, with particular attention paid to Islamophobia. I wholeheartedly agree with the first point but have serious concerns about the second and third points.

In light of the recent attack on the Quebec City mosque, this debate is timely and of the utmost importance. It is imperative that we get it right. For this reason, I would like to draw the attention of my colleagues to the words the Prime Minister spoke in the House not more than two weeks ago to the Daughters of the Vote delegates. He passionately said:

Do we have a problem with Islamophobia in this country? Yes we do. Do we have a problem with anti-Semitism in this country? Yes we do. Do we have a problem in this country with discrimination and hatred? Yes we do and we need to talk about this and we need to challenge each other to be better on this.

I fully agree with these words, and, this will be a rare occasion, I promise I am going to follow the Prime Minister's advice. I challenge him and his Liberal team across the aisle to, as he said, be better on this.

Motion No. 103 could have been better in the following ways. It could have been amended to be inclusive of all faith communities rather than singling out one group over the others. Additionally, the motion could have clarified the definition of Islamophobia so it could not be used to shut down legitimate debate. Finally, Motion No. 103 could have affirmed the right to freedom of speech so Canadians can respectfully criticize any religious practice they believe to be wrong, including the one I adhere to and cherish myself.

Instead of pursuing these changes in an effort to have a meaningful, inclusive, and non-partisan study on the matters of racism and religious discrimination, a debate that should unify us, the Liberals have decided that there are more political points to win by ramming this motion through, regardless of the legitimate concerns I have articulated.

When it became clear that the PMO would not permit these reasonable amendments, the Conservative opposition used one of its valuable opposition days to bring forward its own motion to formally offer the government an opportunity to climb down from its political position.

During the full day of debate, the government dug in its heels and doubled down on its position, once again choosing politics over good policy. As they defeated the sensible Conservative motion, several Liberal members argued that we were trying to water down the language in Motion No. 103 by replacing the word "Islamophobia". This argument is nothing more than shameful political spin and outright balderdash.

Not one member on the Liberal bench argued that Motion No. 103 is watered down because it does not include anti-Semitism. Do the Liberals really expect anyone to believe that a study would have been watered down because the study would have included anti-Semitism? Would it be watered down because the study included Christophobia?

Is the infringement of the rights of one faith group greater in some way than another's? Are not the rights of Muslims, Jews, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Hindus equally important? Why do the Liberals view the inclusion of all religious groups in the parliamentary study as diluting the discussion on religious freedom?

Up until this debate, the Prime Minister had been talking a good game on Canada's diversity. Countless times he has stood in his place proclaiming that our nation "is strong not in spite of our differences, but because of them". That is why Canadians should rightly be outraged by his decision to pit neighbour against neighbour in this debate, choosing division over bringing people together.

● (1850)

Mere platitudes are not enough on the important issues facing our country, especially, when it comes to religious freedom and racial discrimination.

My concerns with the motion are not limited to the disgraceful actions of the Prime Minister's Office, but also with the use of the word "Islamophobia", and I am not alone. Many within the Muslim community have expressed their concerns as well.

Private Members' Business

Raheel Raza, a Canadian Muslim journalist, explained her opposition to the term in an op ed. She said:

The term Islamophobia was created in the 1990s, when groups affiliated to the U.S. Muslim Brotherhood decided to play victim for the purpose of beating down critics. It is also in sync with a constant push by the OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) to turn any criticism of Islam or Muslims into blasphemy.

Further to the questionable origins of the term, Raheel Raza also articulated how the term was counterproductive for those who would like to offer criticism of the religion as part of public discourse. She said:

I believe that...M-103 will only increase the frustration of ordinary Canadian who... (have the right) to ask uncomfortable but necessary questions. Being concerned about creeping sharia is not phobic; questioning honour-based violence and FGM in Muslim-majority societies is not phobic.

Another writer, Farzana Hassan, in her article entitled "I am a liberal Muslim and I reject M-103", reiterated this point when she wrote:

[The] Prime Minister...has talked about finding the right balance between protecting a religious minority and also protecting our Charter rights. The answer to his dilemma is simple: Do not put the slightest dent in our right to free speech.

Consider that the Canadian Muslim community is debating the use, definition, and application of this term and consider further that it has been used in various forums to quell legitimate and respectful criticism of Islam, it is therefore incumbent upon us as members of Parliament to say what we mean with respect to Islamophobia, rather than leave this motion open to interpretation.

For generations, members of Parliament have stood in the House to put Canadian sentiments, priorities, aspirations, and concerns into words for the purpose of meaningful debate. This is a responsibility and a tradition we ought to be careful to uphold.

To that end, I personally met with the sponsor of the motion to replace the divisive language and offered to champion the motion within the Conservative caucus if she would agree. I suggested that we could have replaced the word "Islamophobia" with the phrase "hatred toward Muslims". Alternatively, we could have worked together to draft an amendment that would have included all-faith communities.

Instead, the long arm of the Prime Minister's Office inappropriately reached into private members' business to politicize the debate and denied my request.

In a debate that features questions surrounding free speech, religious freedom, and racial discrimination, it is unacceptable that the government would not work with us to find common ground. Canada has long been a nation where a member of one faith can live peacefully beside members of other faiths. That is the way it should stay. That is the way it shall remain.

Unless the government engages in an inclusive, comprehensive, and unifying discussion on religious freedom, racial discrimination, and free speech, I am compelled to vote against this divisive motion.

• (1855)

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to speak in support of Motion No. 103.

To start my debate, I want to be clear about what the motion says.

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should: (a) recognize the need to quell the increasing public climate of hate and fear; (b) condemn Islamophobia and all forms of systemic racism and religious discrimination and take note of House of Commons' petition e-411 and the issues raised by it; and (c) request that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage undertake a study on how the government could (i) develop a whole-of-government approach to reducing or eliminating systemic racism and religious discrimination including Islamophobia, in Canada, while ensuring a community-centered focus with a holistic response through evidence-based policy-making, (ii) collect data to contextualize hate crime reports and to conduct needs assessments for impacted communities, and that the Committee should present its findings and recommendations to the House no later than 240 calendar days from the adoption of this motion, provided that in its report, the Committee should make recommendations that the government may use to better reflect the enshrined rights and freedoms in the Constitution Acts, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Since the introduction of the motion in the House, it is most unfortunate that Motion No. 103 has become controversial due to some intentionally misleading online campaigns. However, instead of our doing what is needed, I was left even more disappointed and dismayed that the division and hate that fuels these misleading campaigns was brought right into this chamber with the politicking that took place between the Liberals and the Conservatives.

I was even approached by a minister who suggested that Motion No. 103 would be nullified, because the Conservatives had decided to put up a similar opposition day motion, when in fact, the information provided to the NDP by the clerk's office indicated otherwise. Frankly, that kind of fearmongering and political gamesmanship served only to feed into the increasingly polarized climate surrounding this conversation instead of setting the example that is so desperately needed. To some, it may feel as though they scored a cheap political point. However, let us be clear. In the long run, it is all of us who want to stamp out discrimination driven by fear and division who will lose.

It is my hope that we can turn the page today and call on both the Liberal and Conservative members to set aside their partisan politics and unite with one voice on this motion. To begin, we have a duty and responsibility as members of Parliament to stand up and challenge the misinformation being spread around Motion No. 103 and to correct the record.

Unlike what is claimed in the misinformation campaigns, Motion No. 103 would in no way suppress any rights of Canadians. The motion would in no way favour one group over another or provide some additional benefit to one while taking away from another. It states quite clearly in the motion that the government should "condemn Islamophobia and all forms of systemic racism and religious discrimination". The suggestion that the motion would somehow exclude other forms of discrimination is simply false.

Private Members' Business

As well, the fear that the motion would somehow restrict people's freedom of speech is also unfounded. Nowhere does it state in the motion that people could not inquire or have opinions about the Islamic faith. In fact, on the contrary, it has been my experience that those who practise the Islamic faith are very open and welcoming to those who do not practise, know, or understand their faith. I, for one, know very little about the Islamic faith. In my capacity as the NDP critic for immigration, refugees, and citizenship, I have had the privilege of being invited by many people who practise the Islamic faith to attend events at mosques as a means to learn and understand their religious teachings and culture. They are open, and they welcome questions. They even welcome criticism. They patiently answered all my inquiries. They were more than welcoming.

It is my strongest belief that through such interactions, we, as members of our community, are building bridges between communities. We are actively practising the promotion of cross-cultural understanding. We are fully embracing and respecting our differences, and in that process, we are breaking down walls of fear and walls of division.

● (1900)

I have no doubt that I am not the only one who has experienced this. I know that many of my colleagues have had similar exchanges. It is my hope that we let such an example be the guiding force, our compass, as we build to strengthen our bond between communities. If we witness the opposite, such as the horrific mosque attack that occurred in Quebec City, then we as parliamentarians from all sides of the House must unite to condemn such despicable actions. I am proud that we did exactly that. There is no question that we have a duty as members of Parliament to set an example and speak out against all forms of discrimination and hate wherever we see it.

If we are to hold true to those principles, then we must be consistent with our efforts. That is to say, we need to call out discrimination wherever we see it, at home and abroad.

Just today, it was reported in the news that a pan-American commission will hold an emergency hearing in Washington to investigate the impact of Trump's executive orders on human rights in the country. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights was requested by advocacy groups in both Canada and the U.S. to review "ongoing and deteriorating" conditions faced by asylum seekers and other migrants under the Trump administration. They are asking the commission to make findings that Trump's travel ban against six Muslim majority countries and his expansion of detention and deportation against migrants violates U.S. human rights obligations.

To quote Efrat Arbel, a UBC law professor who co-authored, with the Harvard immigration and refugee clinical program, a report on Trump's executive orders, "The expedited removals and expansion of detention under the orders are going to have profound implications on the U.S. asylum system."

As we witness President Trump, our neighbour, our closest ally, fan fear and hate against members of the Muslim community with his executive orders and immigration policies, how is it somehow acceptable that our Prime Minister and Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship have chosen to be willfully blind to this blatant act of discrimination and do nothing about it? This is so

distressing to me. In fact, not only is the Canadian government silent about Trump's discriminatory policies, but the minister of immigration would go as far as to say that nothing has changed. This of course is blatantly false, and everyone knows it. I dare say, perhaps even the minister knows it. The question is this. Will he summon enough courage to speak up and speak out against Trump's racist policies? So far he has not.

Perhaps the minister could meet some of the young people whom I recently encountered at a rally at the Peace Arch crossing. It was a rally against Trump's racist executive orders. In the crowd, a young person held a sign that said "If you build a wall, my generation will knock it down." Another sign said "Make racism wrong again." I was so encouraged to see the young people's activism. Their strong and direct message is what gives me hope that our collective future is possible.

Bringing their voices and concerns to the House of Commons is a true privilege, one that I take very seriously. New Democrats will stand proudly with these young people to combat the politics of hate and division. The NDP is in favour of any motion that aims to address and combat discrimination, and we will not wallow in political games on these critical issues, especially in the face of rising hate crimes against the Muslim community.

It is the opinion of the NDP and me that this motion and the work to be undertaken by a committee is entirely appropriate and should be welcomed by all parliamentarians. Therefore, the NDP has no hesitation in supporting the motion. As elected officials and representatives of our communities in the House of Commons, I firmly believe that we have a duty to stand up together against Islamophobia, racism, and discrimination in all forms. Let us get together and do this right. On this very day, where we honour an international day against racism, let us all support the motion.

● (1905)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Youth), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I am going to talk about Motion No. 103 on systemic racism and religious discrimination.

I am expressing my thoughts and beliefs in support of this motion as the member for Vaudreuil—Soulanges, as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister for Youth, and, above all, as the father of two young children who will have to live with the decisions we make here in the House.

There was a lot of emotion around February's debate on Motion No. 103 both here in Ottawa and elsewhere in Canada, and Canadians expressed both their strong support and their concerns. Some of the discussions were informed by the personal experiences of new immigrants fleeing religious persecution and of people who have encountered racism here in Canada. Racism, sadly, is fuelled by misinformation. Because of racism, some Canadians, Muslim Canadians in particular, have been subjected to verbal, emotional, and physical attacks.

Today I hope to enrich the discussion and the work undertaken by my esteemed colleague from Mississauga—Erin Mills. I would also like to clarify what this motion would do and what it would not do.

Private Members' Business

[English]

Mr. Speaker, let us begin with what Motion No. 103 is and what it is not. First and foremost, unequivocally and without hesitation, I can state that this motion is not an attempt to control or limit free speech, one of the most fundamental pillars of our freedom, as many critics, many of whom sit across the aisle, have unfortunately come to suggest. Some have argued that this motion allows this government to prevent Canadians from expressing their opinions. I reject that claim.

Motion No. 103 is a motion, not a proposed law. The difference between the two is important to note, as one would have the full force of the federal government and its resources if passed, and one is, among other aspects, a strong symbolic gesture of solidarity and a means by which we as a government can bring about awareness and a discussion on an injustice plaguing millions of Canadians.

The reality is that Motion No. 103 seeks to strengthen the rights and freedoms guaranteed to Canadians by the charter, emphasizing that we must do more to defend Muslim Canadians and others facing discrimination, whose privileges to life, liberty, and security of person are threatened by religious discrimination.

I foresee no Canadian, from any corner of this great country, who wishes to see the rights of any infringed because of the hateful speech of others. Motion No. 103 does not limit rights; it is a motion that seeks to promote and protect the rights of all of us. Some have asked if there is even a need for this motion, as some critics say that Muslim communities in Canada are simply not discriminated against. I think it's time to set the record straight.

In April 2016, Statistics Canada released a report demonstrating that from 2012 to 2014, hate crimes against Muslims have more than doubled. The results say that Muslims in Canada, the United States, and across the globe have seen increased attacks on their mosques, their homes, and their persons. These are not abstract statistics, these are the lives of Canadian women, children, and men. They are our constituents, our neighbours, our families, our friends, and our fellow citizens. This cannot stand.

In my own community of Vaudreuil—Soulanges, two faith leaders, of the Muslim faith and the Jewish faith respectively, whom I respect dearly, have shared with me their concerns about keeping their followers and institutions safe after receiving threats. In some cases, I am sad to report that these led to actual instances of vandalism. Nobody should feel threatened, insecure, or worried because of who they are, not today, not tomorrow, not ever.

In 1971, prime minister Pierre Trudeau said that the freedom to be ourselves “must be fostered and pursued actively. If freedom of choice is in danger for some...it is in danger for all.” I wish only to humbly add that, if the will to defend and protect those who are most vulnerable and who are so often victims of discrimination is in danger, then we must do all we can to remind one another that Canada is a community of nations. That is a fixed fact. Therefore, to defend one community is a duty to defend them all. That idea is not new to either this chamber or this country.

In the past, I proudly rose and voted for similar motions condemning discrimination against the Jewish and Yazidi peoples. In February of last year, this House stood for a motion condemning

anti-Semitism in Canada, as Jewish communities did face and continue to face ugly and un-Canadian hatred. A similar condemnation was passed by the House in 2011 on the attacks on Coptic Christian communities.

● (1910)

This government and the House did their parts then. It is time to rise once again and stand in solidarity with our fellow Canadians as we did in 2011, twice more in 2016, and so many times in our storied history.

[Translation]

We have a duty at this time to support those in need, and this duty also extends to the next generation, that is, young Canadians. We must pass on a legacy that future generations will be proud of. This legacy begins with motions like this one, since the House is united in what is fair and what is needed.

If the House does not adopt this motion, it will be sending a clear message that Islamophobia and other forms of religious discrimination are not a real problem in Canada, and this lie will affect millions of Canadians.

As Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister for Youth, I work with young people because I am convinced that they can make Canada a better place to live for everyone. They are watching us right now. Young people want us to do what is needed and what is fair.

As a father, I want to leave a legacy that my children will be proud of, knowing that their Muslim friends and their families will have the support of the House, as was the case for Jews, Yazidis, and Coptic Christians last year.

● (1915)

[English]

When Shrosh Hassana recently took her seat as part of the daughters of the vote initiative on International Women's Day, she spoke out as a woman, as a Muslim, and as a young Canadian. She spoke passionately and without hesitation on the importance of condemning language that sought to divide us. “Islamophobia”, she said, “is a heavy word, but it is heaviest for those who are on the receiving end of it.”

Her words in the House resonated and reinforced that we were a proud nation, one that was strong because of our differences, not in spite of them.

[Translation]

Motion No. 103 is a step in the right direction, and I hope to help make Canada a safer place for potential victims of racism and religious discrimination. I want to give the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage a chance to study how we can face the challenges that lie ahead for at-risk communities.

Private Members' Business

[English]

This motion is both symbolic and powerful. It is symbolic because it is this chamber's way of standing side by side with our fellow Canadians facing the challenges of discrimination. Furthermore, Motion No. 103 will be effective because it asks the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to work on using the elements of our laws and the information it will be tasked with collecting to better protect both Muslims and others who might face racism and religious discrimination.

In conclusion, we have a duty to our constituents to protect them, but also to stand with them. For all those who face racism and religious discrimination, I am proud to support this motion and to let them know they are not alone.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is something quite perverse about the discussion of Motion No. 103. Effectively, Canadians have been divided on a motion when there seems to me to be very little substantive disagreement on the underlying topic.

Canadians and all parliamentarians agree that discrimination against anyone is unacceptable. We agree, in particular, that there is a problem of discrimination against the Muslim community in certain quarters. This is not to deny, of course, the existence of other kinds of discrimination and that it can range in type and form. For myself at least, I would quite happily vote in favour of a motion condemning discrimination against Muslims, even if Muslims were the only faith community mentioned.

Why, then, are we divided? It is because the word "Islamophobia" can be used to mean both discrimination against Muslims and criticism of Islamic doctrine or practice. It is important that we not conflate the two. Religious people deserve legal protection, but religions do not. People should not discriminate against individuals, but should feel quite free to criticize the doctrine, history, or practice of any religion. This distinction between discrimination against religious people and criticism of religion is not at all a trivial point. It is the point that separates societies like Canada, which seek to protect people from bigotry, from other societies that impose violent sentences on people who blaspheme or apostatize in the name of protecting religion itself.

The Liberals and some in the media want us to simply shrug off this point and vote in favour of this motion because it is just symbolic anyway, but even a symbolic motion should have clear definitions and say what it means. As members of Parliament, our principal tool is the words we use. The suggestion that we should shrug about the meanings of words, about the definitions of things we are being asked to condemn, is clearly wrong. We are in the words business here. We should not, therefore, shrug about the meanings of words. This is my sole basis for objecting to the text of the current motion. This is a problem that should have been easy to solve.

I have spoken to many people about Motion No. 103, both supporters and opponents. Those who support this motion, though, almost uniformly agree with me that the government should entertain amendments that strengthen the motion by providing definition and clarity. Why not simply define Islamophobia? Members have provided definitions of Islamophobia verbally in their speeches.

Why not take the verbal clarifications and add them to the text of the motion itself?

I asked the mover of the motion this direct question during debate on February 16. I said the following:

I have a very specific question that would be worth the member answering. Why does she insist on characterizing the ask for clarity as a watering down? It is not a watering down to amend a motion to provide a definition. It is not a watering down for Canadians with legitimate concerns about knowing what we mean when we use this word to ask the member to provide a clear definition, not just verbally but in the context of the motion.

The member responded:

Mr. Speaker, this has been a great debate on issues that the Muslim community really tackles on a daily basis, and has tackled for a number of years. However, it is not just about the Muslim community; it is about all Canadians.

In October of last year, I was happy to see the House unanimously condemn Islamophobia. Since then, nothing has shifted to what "Islamophobia" means. I find it very interesting that the members across the way are now using the definition of Islamophobia as the reason why they cannot stand up for the Muslim community, recognize the issue as it is today, and do the right thing.

However true or false any of that may be, it is quite obviously not an answer to the question posed. Why are Liberals so allergic to a clear definition? Why will they not answer that question?

What is perplexing about all this is that, if the government or the member were serious about their stated objectives, then they would have every reason to work with us on amendments. The rules of the House do not even allow me to move an amendment without the member's permission, but an amendment that provides a definition would cut off all this unnecessary disagreement and would strengthen the motion.

Liberals might claim that Conservatives are failing to stand up for the Muslim community when we oppose this motion, but the fact is that they failed to stand up for the Muslim community a month ago when we presented a motion that explicitly condemned discrimination against Muslims and that they voted against. When they voted against our motion, they put politics ahead of the fight against bigotry. When they refuse amendments today, they are again putting politics ahead of the fight against bigotry. I sincerely hope that this will be the last time they do that.

● (1920)

Following these points about the motion in front of us, I would like to take a step back and talk about the global climate in which we find ourselves and how we as legislators ought to respond to it. Specifically, I believe we can understand the western political environment in which we find ourselves as being characterized by different kinds of anxieties, anxieties that are real and legitimate and need to be responded to as opposed to dismissed. We see the emergence of economic anxieties, security anxieties, and political anxieties.

Private Members' Business

On the economic front, many middle and low-income workers, especially in certain sectors, feel they have been left behind and are being ignored by economic and policy change. In Canada, this anxiety is being driven by dramatic tax increases across the board and by the disdain with which ordinary workers are being treated, particularly in the natural resources sector. It is all well and good to talk about the jobs of the future, but nobody today is putting food on the table with jobs of the future. The erosion of present natural resource and manufacturing sectors with policies that are supposed to lead to jobs of the future is a recipe for present discord and discontent, and we have seen the effects of that elsewhere. Policies of higher taxes and increased regulation and other changes are contributing to broader economic anxiety.

An increase in terrorist attacks in the western world as well as the increasing accessibility of information and images about terrible violence in other parts of the world are contributing to anxiety about our security situation. Anxiety is increased by fears of uncontrolled migration. Western societies have been built and strengthened by the entry of legal immigrants who come to contribute to our countries, but fears about uncontrolled, unregulated migration are legitimate and sensible. Societies with successful immigration systems do not have open borders. Societies with open borders invariably invoke a backlash. They cannot even sustain the policies they intend to have in place.

Finally, political anxieties emerge when the public feels that politicians are focused on symbolic issues as opposed to on their substantive and legitimate concerns. When people with real economic and security concerns are called deplorables, sewer rats, racist, and whatever it is, they are unlikely to respond well to political elites, and they should not.

Anxieties about the economy, about security, and about disconnected political elitism are all legitimate, but these anxieties can also lead to dark, dangerous, and even violent responses. Recognizing these anxieties and their potential sequelae, we need to do two things. We certainly need to call out and condemn bigotry and violence in clear terms. However, we cannot treat all of those people with legitimate anxieties like they are violent bigots. Instead, we need to recognize and respond to the legitimate anxieties of the wider public.

What is the relationship between this and Motion No. 103? Motion No. 103 would not in any way advance toward its supposed objectives. What genuine bigot was ever dissuaded in his or her bigotry by a motion of the House of Commons? Does the government really think that there is even one person who will repent of his or her bigotry as a result of the outcome of this vote?

The failure of the government to work collaboratively on this has clearly had the effect of accentuating public anxiety among those who fear that the government or people who support it have some dark and hidden agenda, which is their reason for not seeking an amendment. I do not think this motion is the result of any kind of secret conspiracy. It is really just cynical politics. However, surely the experience of this motion should by now have taught them the lesson about the need to have a clearer and more serious response to bigotry that actually deals with the underlying anxieties that give rise to it.

To conclude, I would like to share with the House some words written by Shimon Fogel, CEO of CIJA. He has some good advice for all of us as we go forward. He recently wrote:

I was pleased to engage with the sponsor of M-103...in advance of her motion being debated on the floor of the House of Commons. We had an open and frank conversation at her invitation, which included discussion of the need to define Islamophobia.

We support the motion's intended objective of combating anti-Muslim hate in Canada, which should be unanimously endorsed. However, we are concerned with the potential validation of any restriction placed on criticizing those manifestations of Islam that drive hatred and violence against Jews, Muslims and other Canadians...

Following the anticipated adoption of the motion, critics and proponents alike must set their disagreement aside and ensure that any parliamentary initiative that follows is unifying.

It is not too late for the mover of the motion to do the right thing and amend it so we can have unanimous support. However, regardless of the outcome of the vote, I hope that going forward, the government will be willing to work with us in good faith on these issues. They are simply too important to do otherwise.

● (1925)

Mr. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate having this opportunity to speak to Motion No. 103, a motion I am really pleased to support.

Let us back up and go to first principles and understand what the motion is about. The motion calls for Parliament to express itself on three issues. Let me remind the House what these issues are.

The first one is to recognize the need to quell the increasing public climate of hate and fear. Second, the motion requests that the heritage committee study how the government can develop a government-wide approach to reducing or eliminating systemic racism and religious discrimination, including Islamophobia. Third, the motion calls for us to collect data and contextualize hate crime reports, to conduct needs assessments for impacted communities, and to present these findings within 240 calendar days. It is very simple and easy to understand, and probably very easy to support.

I would like to talk about the first issue the motion asks us to do, and that is to recognize the need to quell the increasing public climate of hate and fear. I have been involved in politics since the age of 14, coming up on 44 years. I have been actively involved in federal politics since I came to Ottawa in 1988, and there is something that has developed over the last almost 30 years that has really concerned me. It is something that became so clear to me when we had those terrible, awful, tragic shootings in Quebec City at the beginning of the year. It is the way we speak to each other. It is the way we engage in conversation. It is the way we refer to each other and how we disagree sometimes.

Private Members' Business

I am not saying that we all have to hold hands and sing together and get along all the time. I am talking about the way we disagree. I have seen a real deterioration in the way we engage in conversation and the way we tend to disagree. I see this in coffee shops. I see this in conversations. I see that when people disagree about a small item, they tend to demonize the other. That would be fine if that just happened in personal conversations, but that has extended into the public realm of debate, even sometimes in our Parliament. We have certainly seen this in newspapers or heard it on radio or TV. The current route of demonizing, for the last 15 years or so, certainly the Muslim community, I find very distasteful, and I will tell members why.

It is clear that I am a member of a visible minority. When I grew up in Montreal, I was one of two black families in our neighbourhood. It was a predominantly Jewish neighbourhood in Montreal. It was an anglophone Jewish neighbourhood, and we were one of two black families. I felt that I grew up in a minority within a minority within a minority within the larger minority of Quebec in North America. That afforded me an interesting perspective. I was able to see what the majority was like and understand the point of view of the majority, yet not be part of it. I was able to step back and have a different perspective and hear a different point of view. To me, that has always been a source of strength.

It is curious to me when I hear people make discriminatory statements against another group I am not a part of, such as anti-Semitic remarks. I have heard a lot of that in my lifetime. I always thought it was funny, because I wondered who people thought they were telling this to. All they would have to do is remove the word "Jew" and replace it with "black" and I would feel terrible.

● (1930)

I know the sting of that, and no one should ever feel that. Over the last 15 years, I have been hearing a lot of hateful words towards the Muslim community, and that hurts me as much as it hurts anybody else. I am a Roman Catholic, but how can people not see that the minority is not us? All of us should feel that. Although women might be demographically a majority in this country, socio-economically it is clear that women are in the minority in terms of the power structures we have.

When we hear these comments and this kind of discrimination, it worries me. I have been hearing more and more of it. It seems that people try to pick on a group that is probably the least powerful group of our times, and they keep on doing that. Over the last 30 years, I have noticed how this has progressed along.

This is one of the reasons why I have no problem supporting the motion or saying that we should take a step back and look at the way we speak to each other. We should ask ourselves if we are engaging in conversation or in actions which speak to a climate of fear and hate towards a particular group.

To me, the most important thing we could do with this motion is to have the study. I know there are people who might disagree in good faith on some aspects of it. Perhaps it is not as well defined as they would like it to be, or perhaps they want to include in the motion a whole bunch of other groups that have been discriminated against. That may be fine. However, we have done this before. As a Parliament, as a body, in the short time that I have been here, we

have spoken out and taken a unanimous stance against Islamophobia. There was no argument at that time for us to change the motion or define it another way. We know what we meant. We understood what it was trying to convey, and that was a motion we could support.

We are doing nothing more than that in Motion No. 103. I have said in this House before that words and symbols matter. We have seen that in a climate of hate, in a climate of anger, of a phobia of the Muslim community that we have heard on trash radio or that we have seen on disreputable news sources. We have seen this language happen.

I hate to say it, and I know a number of people are going to disagree with me on this, but those statements have consequences. It is not that the person hearing them for the first time will go out and commit a heinous crime like what happened in Quebec City two short months ago, but it is the fact that we have legitimized that kind of debate when we brought it into the public realm.

We need to bring it back. We need to study this. We need to find some way to try to combat this, to change the way that we talk to each other. Words and symbols do matter, and we do need to have a new way of speaking.

● (1935)

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we can either let our differences of race, creed, and religion that speak of discrimination or hatred, exclusion, and suspicion divide us as Canadians, or we can work with our differences to make us stronger and help us progress as a multicultural, secular, strong nation. The choice is ours.

I am honoured to rise today to conclude the debate in Parliament on Motion No. 103. The motion has indeed forced us to re-evaluate our social contract with each other as Canadians. We have had passionate and somewhat uncomfortable discussions about what rights our charter grants us. Where does one person's right end and another's begin? This Liberal government is the party of the charter, and I am honoured to stand in this place to defend the rights of all Canadians.

I would like to thank my colleagues in this House, those who seconded the motion and those who stood by me when we faced the very issue that this motion tries to tackle. I would like to thank our Prime Minister, whose leadership is a beacon of hope, and our Minister of Canadian Heritage, who has tirelessly worked to build bridges among Canadians.

I would like to thank the many civil society and grassroots organizations that stepped up to address the issue of racism and discrimination: NCCM, Solel Congregation, The Meadows Church, Erin Mills United Church, Student Christian Movement, Christian Peacemaker Teams, ISNA Canada, Islamic Shia Ithna Asheri Jamaat, Montreal City Mission, Muslim Neighbour Nexus, ICNA Sisters Canada, Mississauga Tamil Association, Centre for Social Innovation, FCM, and so many more.

I would like to thank especially my family and friends for their unwavering support. I will name a few: Ali Qamar, Sam Forrest, Hashim Tanvir, Qasir Dar, Faisal Javaid, Reema Zuberi, Irfan Siddiqui, Linda Casselman, my parents, and my siblings.

Private Members' Business

I would like to thank community activists for their efforts in raising awareness: Asif, Aman, Fasih, Tahir, Justin, Shehzad, Irfan, Jeff, Nadine, Rizwan, Rashdi, Anne, Shafqat, Farina Siddiqui, Cassandra, Hussain Hamdani, Joe, Graham, Owais, Eva, Hifza, Essam, Karen, Muhammad Hussain, Kashif Hassan, Ihsan, Osama Zaid, Waleed, Ameera, Asma, Moe, Ashfaq, Moazzam, Badar, Domenic, Mike, Nauman, Jeewan, Rob, and so many more.

I thank Imran Mian and Omar Raza, whose leadership and effort in the community has been tireless.

I thank the mayor of Mississauga, Bonnie Crombie, and members of council for owning this issue and for their resolution to support Motion No. 103.

Lastly, I thank my staff, Anas, Lana, Sana, and Sukhi, for their hard work and dedication.

It is only fitting to mention that today marks the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Motion No. 103 is simply another tiny step in this major challenge. It is a continuation effort to reiterate that diversity, inclusion, and acceptance are all strengths in our Canada.

In concluding the debate, I find it fitting to address some misconceptions surrounding the motion and to clarify, on the record, what Motion No. 103 is and what it is not.

First, Motion No. 103 does not give one religion or community special privilege over another. In fact, it is an attempt to study all forms of systemic racism and religious discrimination in Canada. Similar motions have been passed in this House highlighting many issues and many communities.

Second, Motion No. 103 will not restrict free speech. This motion is not legally binding. In fact, Motion No. 103 serves as a catalyst for Canadians to speak out against discrimination and be heard where they may not have been heard before.

Some other outrageous claims were made about Motion No. 103, and to them I say, in simple and clear words, that Motion No. 103 is not an attempt to create sharia law. I vow to be the first person to oppose any motion or law that negatively impacts our multicultural secular society. I assure members that Motion No. 103 does not.

• (1940)

I would like to thank everyone, the supporters and the critics, for inspiring me and holding me to account. I am humbled and grateful.

I look forward to the vote, to the study, and to the support of everyone in this chamber of democracy.

[*Translation*]

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): Pursuant to the order made Friday, March 10, the recorded division stands deferred until Thursday, March 23, at the expiry of the time provided for oral questions.

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*Translation*]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today we have an adjournment debate on a question posed about four months ago, on November 21, 2016. The question was the following:

Mr. Speaker, although the Minister of Canadian Heritage is free to make major changes to the rules governing our distinct culture, she has the responsibility to be open and transparent about what she is calling her “public consultations”. In the interest of transparency, when will the minister make public the briefs submitted as part of these consultations? One thing is certain; they contain important information. Can our ecosystem count on the minister to do what everyone thinks is the right thing and ask foreign companies such as Google, Facebook, and Netflix to pay their fair share?

This is the answer I received four months ago:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his important question. I would like to remind him that we are indeed holding an open and transparent consultation process and that we are going to make public the briefs submitted by the various stakeholders.

That was done. Thank you and congratulations.

I thank the member. I know that he specifically asked me to make this information public. Of course, I agree with him. This is a good example of co-operation.

I agree that there was a lot of consultation, but the question was about the consensus emerging from every sector in the minister's portfolio that the playing field is not level. Foreign providers do not collect sales tax. Their revenues may not be taxed either.

Yesterday, four months later, I asked her the following question:

Mr. Speaker, last week, the closure of the HMV stores led to the bankruptcy of the distributor DEP, which has put an abrupt stop to the marketing of Quebec artists. From Vincent Vallières to the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and Florence K, DEP's bankruptcy seems to be the latest sign of the collapse of Quebec's recording industry and a new source of worry about Canadian content. Canada must move swiftly to regulate all the new online providers, whether they are based in Montreal, Los Angeles, or some other tax haven. Can the minister tell us what she has done to ensure that these new players contribute to our ecosystem and to the same tax system as everyone else?

I will read her response:

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his important question and his interest in this file. Of course, we launched public consultations last year to consider all the repercussions that digital services have on the entire Canadian cultural ecosystem. In 2017, I will have the opportunity to introduce some major changes in order to address some of the issues that were raised by my colleague.

Private Members' Business

I have been asking this question for four months. Some might say I sound like a broken record. Well, yes, that is because it is obvious to everyone. Everyone knows full well that we must ensure that our merchants, our retailers, and our service providers have access to a tax system that is consistent and equal, or at least equal to that of foreign providers.

Of course, when we are in this situation we scratch our head and say it cannot be so. This is a serious problem. Retailers think that online competition makes no sense because they can sell the same product tax free, no GST and no HST. They are right. The same is true for all our cultural providers.

The only thing that is tax exempt is culture from abroad. It is rather pathetic. The question is simple:

Has the Minister of Canadian Heritage asked the Minister of Finance to resolve this situation and ensure that transactional taxes are applied to foreign suppliers?

• (1945)

[English]

Mr. Sean Casey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, September 13, 2016, the Minister of Canadian Heritage was very proud to launch a public consultation on how to support Canadian content creation, discovery, and export in the digital world.

[Translation]

As the minister clearly explained at the time and many times since, our cultural and creative industries are important drivers of innovation and a vibrant part of our economy. The intersection of culture and technology holds tremendous potential for our country's growth and prosperity.

As we adjust to the realities of rapid technological advances and changing consumer behaviour, the minister launched consultations to better understand the challenges and opportunities brought on by this transformation. These consultations provided an opportunity to listen to and learn from Canadians and examine the federal government's current cultural policy toolkit.

[English]

We have been very pleased with the response to our consultation, and all Canadians can find material related to that response at our web portal at www.canadiancontentconsultations.ca. Approximately 26,000 individuals and organizations expressed an interest in the consultations by visiting the portal. Over 800 of them contributed directly to the discussions, including more than 300 who attended the in-person discussions. The department received more than 200 submissions from creators, citizens, entrepreneurs, intellectuals, and companies. Finally, approximately 20,000 people mentioned the consultations and shared ideas on the subject in various social media.

We are committed to this being an open and transparent public consultation. That is why all of the submissions we received are posted and publicly available on the consultation web portal.

• (1950)

[Translation]

On February 21, 2017, the independent firm Ipsos released a report entitled "What We Heard Across Canada: Canadian Culture in a Digital World", which summarized the ideas and recommendations heard during those consultations.

We invite Canadians to read that report. Our government will pay close attention to the results of those consultations.

[English]

The consultations will help us develop a cultural tool kit that is better suited for today's digital realities.

Back in November, my friend posed two questions. One was to make the briefs public. That has been done. The second was to ask the government to put a price on Google, Facebook, Netflix, etc., to pay the taxes. The work related to the consultations is not complete. He is asking for us to prejudge the outcome. He is possibly asking for us to prejudge what might be in tomorrow's budget or a future budget. We are not in a position to do that. We were not four months ago. We were not yesterday, and we are not today.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his ad lib and frank answer. He says that we cannot rush them in this situation.

In the past four months, HMV and DEP declared bankruptcy, which affects the arts community. I would like to cite another striking example.

Experts on sales taxes, the people who collect taxes, for example the excise tax, were called to appear before the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. I use the iTunes app and so I asked them why some songs and apps were subject to the GST and QST in the Apple Store, while others were not. There is no tax on the monthly subscription. They told me that the app that was taxed was probably a Canadian app.

Mr. Sean Casey: Mr. Speaker, we are proud of the results of our consultations.

[English]

Tens of thousands of Canadians visited our web portal, or joined in by social media. Hundreds answered questions and made detailed submissions through our web portal. Hundreds more participated in live consultation events, as well as thousands who joined by Facebook Live or social media.

[Translation]

Our government wanted to foster dialogue and we can say "mission accomplished".

Across Canada, our creators, entrepreneurs, cultural industries, and intellectuals all appreciated having the opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

Private Members' Business

[English]

The department is carefully reviewing the report that summarizes what we have heard, and all Canadians are invited to do the same. The consultations will help the Department of Canadian Heritage develop a cultural tool kit that is better suited to today's digital realities.

The Government of Canada thanks all Canadians and stakeholders for their participation and—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to rise to speak on a question I first raised on February 13, which coincidentally was on the very issue on which we just took a recorded division, which was on a motion I presented in the House on March 9 on restoring danger pay and tax benefits for our troops who are in the fight against ISIS. The unfortunate thing is that we had to essentially embarrass the government to support this motion, when we gave the government so many opportunities to correct this wrong.

Whether they are in Iraq or whether they are in Kuwait, as long as they are engaged in battle and are supporting the operations of the Canadian Armed Forces to stop ISIS through Operation Impact, they deserve all the danger pay and all the support of the Government of Canada, because the government called on them to go into this mission.

We also have to realize that this danger pay is in support of not just military personnel, recognizing the dangerous work they are doing, but is also about supporting their families back home. Military families are the enablers of our armed forces, and they are often dealing with all sorts of hardship because of the separation from their loved ones, such as the extra costs of child care and home and yard maintenance and all the other things that pop up from time to time during these extended periods when their loved ones are deployed.

I raised a question in the House today on this very issue. The minister has, on a number of occasions, misled this House. We raised it with the minister and with the chief of the defence staff back in the fall. We were made aware of this in October 2016. I went the proper route, first writing the minister on this issue. I got a very vague response. It took months to get the response. I raised it in committee when we had, first, the chief of the defence staff there and then the minister, in December, and again, there was no response. It essentially took all sorts of media coverage and questions in question period from the opposition for the Liberals to start recognizing that this now needed to be dealt with.

Unfortunately, we never saw this rectified until tonight, when we saw the vote and the unanimous support for my motion to reinstate hardship pay and danger benefits for all troops in Kuwait and to make it retroactive to September 1, 2016.

The minister kept saying in question period today, when I asked the question, that it was our Conservative government that sent our troops into Iraq without danger pay and that he corrected it in

February 2016. I tried to get up on a point of order, and I will make the point now, that we have the question on the Order Paper, No. 600, signed by the minister himself. It clearly says that Operation Impact in Iraq has had all of the danger pay in place since August 22, 2014. Even for the operation in Baghdad, which started on April 17, 2015, they have had all of their danger pay, so he has definitely misinformed the House or has continued to mislead on the situation.

We also know, from section (h) of the question on the Order Paper, that all the armed forces personnel in Kuwait received tax relief from October 5, 2014, until September 1, 2016, so I would like the parliamentary secretary to correct the record and say that—

● (1955)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of National Defence.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Rioux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my honourable colleague for his question.

First, I would like to reiterate that this government has tremendous respect for the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces. They know their duty is to carry out the missions the government asks of them, and they do outstanding work in performing their duties.

The least we can do is ensure that they are appropriately compensated for the excellent work they do on operations, and that is exactly what the minister said to the member opposite during committee in December, and again when we debated his motion earlier this month in the House.

We committed to look after our men and women in uniform, particularly regarding their compensation. This commitment has not changed. The minister himself has been deployed many times, and he knows how important these allowances are not only for our soldiers, but for their families back at home as well.

This is why Canadian Armed Forces members deployed abroad are entitled to allowances that reflect the conditions and risks that they are exposed to. The risk levels assigned to Canadian Armed Forces operations are established by a committee after review by various experts, including medical and intelligence advisers.

This is a rigorous and thorough process that involves multiple departments. The goal of this committee is to assign levels that accurately reflect the actual conditions and risks that personnel are exposed to in a specific geographic location and on a specific operation. Like for all CAF operations abroad, the different levels assigned to Operation Impact are continuously reviewed to ensure our men and women in uniform continue to be appropriately compensated.

As the hon. member pointed out, there have been recent changes in the risk allowance of 15 soldiers deployed to Kuwait as part of Operation Impact. In its new assessment, the committee found that the level of risk was not high enough to meet the requirements for a tax break for those locations.

Private Members' Business

That being said, we are currently looking at how best to appropriately compensate our personnel for the outstanding work they do on operations. This includes reviewing internal procedures on addressing hardship and risk conditions.

As we have said it before, the minister has asked the chief of the defence staff to look into this issue and to make recommendations on what changes need to be made. The minister has also asked the Department of National Defence to work with the other relevant departments and agencies to review this process. Work to do so is currently under way.

During the debate on March 9, our government supported the motion to reinstate tax relief for Canadian Armed Forces personnel deployed in Arifjan, Kuwait. The House adopted the motion unanimously that evening.

Our government stands with our men and women in uniform who are doing an extraordinary job serving their country in dangerous places. We are extremely proud of the work they are accomplishing. Our troops that are deployed in various locations in Iraq as part of Operation Impact have been very successful so far in helping local forces defeat Daesh. Together with our allies, they contribute significantly to the global fight against Daesh.

As members of the House are well aware, they are accomplishing a wide variety of tasks in support of the coalition. Our CAF personnel are contributing a great deal to this success, and we remain committed to ensure they are appropriately compensated for the work they do.

• (2000)

[English]

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, instead of addressing the issue, the Liberals are blaming the bureaucracy again. I know for a fact that when my party was government, Conservative ministers of defence overturned decisions by the panel that made those decisions.

This is about getting it corrected. Now that government supports the motion, I expect it to correct it. The question has really become this. When will it pay back the troops that were shortchanged this money since September 1? When will they get that danger pay back? When will it ensure that, going forward, the 300-plus members of the Canadian Armed Forces deployed in Kuwait will maintain their danger pay benefits and all the tax relief to which they are entitled?

Finally, this is about respecting the brave men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces, and the military families. It is one thing to put out all sorts of flowery language, but honestly, this is about leadership, stepping up, and getting the job done for them.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean Rioux: Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives are very familiar with the current program because they instituted it. They know full well that our government is bringing changes to their system to get rid of its negative impact.

The government is transparent and applying the established rules. No one has lost any income to date. In the meantime, the Conservative Party has posted this matter on its website in an attempt to score political points. Instead of helping us research and

implement sustainable solutions, it would rather play petty politics at the expense of our troops and their families.

The minister has become personally involved in this file. He knows what the families of our troops experience and he knows how tax relief and other allowances can help ease some of the stress caused by these deployments. All members of the House are in agreement on this.

[English]

STATUS OF WOMEN

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I had the great pleasure and honour of representing Canada at the United Nations last week for a full week. The convention carries on this week as well. Women from around the globe are part of the annual convention on the status of women. This is the 61st year of the UN Commission on the Status of Women to end discrimination against women.

I was very glad to be included in the Minister of Status of Women's delegation. We were able to absorb a lot of the teachings from around the world. We heard, more than anything, in every single session, which were all focused on women's economic justice, what we can do as leaders in our countries to remove barriers to women's economic success. Every time the solutions of pay equity and child care kept coming up as ways to alleviate economic and domestic pressures on women and allow them to participate more fully in the economy.

We heard a lot about the disproportionate load of unpaid care that women tend to take on in families, whether it is early on looking after infants, or looking after aging parents near their end of life or helping with palliative care, or the in-between domestic housework, although certainly in Canada men are really stepping up on that front. We heard again and again from other countries that a significant piece of the economic problem for women is having to take part-time work so they can accommodate the in-between work.

We heard about the impact of political gender-based violence against elected women. There were a number of sessions on this. It was raised in question period in 2016, on the occasion when Sandra Jansen, a member of the Alberta legislative assembly stood in that House and in a very powerful way described the misogyny and sexism that she has faced in her job and particularly online.

During the course of the convention last week, the Inter-Parliamentary Union tabled a report, a global look at the kind of sexual violence women parliamentarians around the world face in the course of their public service. It was extremely troubling. Of the women parliamentarians from 39 countries who were surveyed, 41.8% have received extremely humiliating or sexually charged images of themselves through social media. Social media has become the primary place in which psychological violence is perpetrated against women parliamentarians.

Private Members' Business

The IPU also reported that 65% of women parliamentarians said that they had been subjected often to humiliating sexist remarks during their parliamentary term. This is a problem, of course, because we are trying to encourage more women to get into politics and government. Just two weeks ago, all the seats in the House, except for one, were filled by women who took the place of MPs. More women were in the House than had ever been in the entire history of Canada.

I would like to know from the government, following on our conversation from last year, what it is doing to protect women parliamentarians from this kind of political harassment that can affect their ability to serve the public.

• (2005)

Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for all her hard work at the United Nations last week in New York. I was very pleased to join her and the delegation of the Minister of Status of Women.

I also want to take a moment to commend the hon. member and the Standing Committee on the Status of Women for all their hard work, leading to their new report this week entitled, "Taking Action to End Violence Against Young Women and Girls in Canada". I am confident this report will help to engage Canadians in finding solutions, and we must all be part of the solution, men and women.

I want to add my voice to that of the hon. member, the Minister of Status of Women, and all members of this place who share a profound disgust at the misogyny that women in politics must endure. Violent and sexual language are of course forms of gender-based violence that take place in homes, workplaces, communities, and online in the cyberworld that must never be tolerated anywhere.

The federal government fully understands the profound damage gender-based violence has on a woman, her family, and her community. That is why we are taking a multifaceted approach to addressing violence against women and girls in all its forms. It is why we have put in place a number of important measures to address it since taking office.

Last summer, we established a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. It will examine and report on the systemic causes behind the violence that indigenous women and girls experience, and their greater vulnerability to that violence, by looking for patterns and underlying factors that explain why higher levels of violence occur.

To inform the development of a strategy addressing gender-based violence, we have consulted with a great many Canadians, including service providers, researchers, academics and survivors from across our country. This strategy will also build on the important work already under way on this critical issue in the provinces and territories.

Another key action by the federal government involves ensuring that women and their families have a place to turn in their moment of need through access to shelter and housing. The Minister of Status of Women has announced federal support of over \$1 million for a project by the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters & Transition Houses, the largest federal funding this organization has received, to examine the multiple roles played by the shelter sector in supporting women who are victims of violence.

These concrete actions underscore the federal commitment to reducing and preventing all forms of gender-based violence.

• (2010)

Ms. Sheila Malcolmson: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's intervention. However, I did not hear anything about how to make women in this Parliament safe from sexual political harassment that will interfere with their jobs.

I also want to say as loudly as I can that although we are ringing the alarm on this kind of harassment, I am concerned that it will have a dampening effect on the enthusiasm of other women to volunteer for this work, to put themselves forward, young women in particular. At the United Nations, and on some of our Canadian panels, we heard ministers from Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Alberta, and Ontario all describe very personal experiences of being harassed in the job because of their gender.

The government voted down my colleague's bill, the member Burnaby South, which would have created incentives to elect more women. It voted down proportional representation, which would elect more women. Therefore, I would like to know the measures—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Terry Duguid: Mr. Speaker, it may surprise some Canadians that misogyny, as well as violent and sexual language, are front and centre in our political conversation today. Unfortunately, these are not abstract topics for women and girls in our society, and that would include parliamentarians.

We must therefore continue speaking out against misogyny and sexism wherever they appear, in our politics, on social media, or in our communities. I encourage all Canadians to join this conversation about changing attitudes. The only way we can build an inclusive, tolerant society for women, girls, and all Canadians is by acting together.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mr. Anthony Rota): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:13 p.m.)

CONTENTS

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Government Response to Petitions

Mr. Lamoureux 9801

Committees of the House

Canadian Heritage

Ms. Fry 9801

Procedure and House Affairs

Mr. Bagnell 9801

Petitions

Animal Welfare

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 9801

Falun Gong

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 9801

Agriculture

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 9801

Palliative Care

Mrs. Hughes 9801

Immigration

Ms. Dzerowicz 9802

Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Lamoureux 9802

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Business of Supply

Opposition Motion—Budget 2017

Ms. Ambrose 9802

Motion 9802

Mr. Gerretsen 9805

Mr. Boulerice 9805

Mr. Sorenson 9806

Ms. Petitpas Taylor 9806

Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo) 9808

Mr. Boulerice 9808

Mr. Gerretsen 9809

Mr. Tilson 9809

Mr. Boulerice 9809

Mr. MacKinnon 9811

Ms. Watts 9811

Ms. Hardcastle 9811

Mr. Eglinski 9813

Mr. MacKinnon 9813

Mr. Deltell 9813

Mr. MacKinnon 9816

Mr. Nantel 9817

Mr. Waugh 9817

Mr. Lamoureux 9818

Mr. Fergus 9818

Mr. Cannings 9819

Mr. Lamoureux 9819

Mr. Sorbara 9820

Ms. Watts 9821

Ms. Ramsey 9821

Mr. Gerretsen 9821

Mrs. Vecchio 9822

Mr. MacKinnon 9823

Mr. Waugh 9824

Ms. Watts 9824

Mr. Lamoureux 9825

Ms. Trudel 9825

Mr. Sorenson 9826

Mr. Grewal 9826

Mr. Jeneroux 9827

Mr. Nantel 9827

Ms. Lapointe 9828

Ms. Sansoucy 9829

Mr. Génereux 9829

Mr. Tilson 9829

Ms. Trudel 9829

Points of Order

Draft Supplementary Supply Bill

Mr. Nater 9830

Mr. Lamoureux 9830

Ms. Mathysen 9830

Business of Supply

Opposition Motion—Budget 2017

Motion 9831

Mr. Albas 9831

Mr. Holland 9832

Ms. Trudel 9832

Ms. Rempel 9833

Mr. Vaughan 9834

Mr. Nantel 9834

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Vic Derman

Ms. May (Saanich—Gulf Islands) 9835

Valcartier Victims

Mr. Ruimy 9835

Plessisville Hunting and Fishing Association

Mr. Berthold 9835

Innovation and Economic Development

Mrs. Lockhart 9836

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Ms. Ramsey 9836

International Day of Forests

Mr. Baylis 9836

World Down Syndrome Day

Mr. Carrie 9836

The Push for Change	
Mr. Tabbara	9836
International Day of Forests	
Mr. Amos	9837
Sylvia Fletcher Thomas	
Mr. Brown	9837
International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	
Mr. Anandasangaree	9837
Post-secondary Policy Forum Challenge	
Ms. Tassi	9837
Sexual Assault	
Mr. Clement	9837
Health	
Mr. Sarai	9838
Acton Vale Region	
Ms. Sansoucy	9838
Taxation	
Mr. Bezan	9838
2017 Global Teacher Prize	
Mr. Fraser (Central Nova)	9838

ORAL QUESTIONS

Government Accountability	
Ms. Ambrose	9839
Mr. Trudeau	9839
Ms. Ambrose	9839
Mr. Trudeau	9839
Ms. Ambrose	9839
Mr. Trudeau	9839
Finance	
Ms. Ambrose	9839
Mr. Trudeau	9839
Taxation	
Ms. Ambrose	9840
Mr. Trudeau	9840
Small Business	
Mr. Mulcair	9840
Mr. Trudeau	9840
Infrastructure	
Mr. Mulcair	9840
Mr. Trudeau	9840
Taxation	
Mr. Mulcair	9840
Mr. Trudeau	9840
Justice	
Mr. Mulcair	9840
Mr. Trudeau	9841
The Budget	
Mr. Lebel	9841
Ms. Petitpas Taylor	9841

Mr. Lebel	9841
Ms. Petitpas Taylor	9841
Mr. Poilievre	9841
Ms. Petitpas Taylor	9841
Taxation	
Mr. Poilievre	9841
Ms. McKenna	9841
The Budget	
Mr. Deltell	9841
Ms. Petitpas Taylor	9842
Mr. Deltell	9842
Ms. Petitpas Taylor	9842
Standing Orders of the House of Commons	
Ms. Boutin-Sweet	9842
Ms. Chagger	9842
Mr. Cullen	9842
Ms. Chagger	9842
Ms. Bergen	9842
Ms. Chagger	9843
Mr. Godin	9843
Ms. Chagger	9843
Mr. Strahl	9843
Ms. Chagger	9843
Mr. Strahl	9843
Ms. Chagger	9843
Indigenous Affairs	
Mr. Saganash	9843
Ms. Bennett	9844
Foreign Affairs	
Ms. Laverdière	9844
Ms. Freeland	9844
Status of Women	
Mr. Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)	9844
Ms. Monsef	9844
Public Safety	
Mr. Clement	9844
Mr. Goodale	9844
Ms. Rempel	9844
Mr. Goodale	9844
National Defence	
Mr. Bezan	9845
Mr. Sajjan	9845
Mr. Paul-Hus	9845
Mr. Sajjan	9845
Taxation	
Mr. Johns	9845
Ms. Chagger	9845
The Environment	
Ms. Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)	9845
Ms. McKenna	9845
Ethics	
Mr. Calkins	9846
Ms. Chagger	9846

Mr. Calkins	9846
Ms. Chagger	9846
Canadian Heritage	
Mr. Gourde	9846
Ms. Joly	9846
Small Business	
Mr. Whalen	9846
Mr. Bains	9846
Indigenous Affairs	
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	9846
Ms. Bennett	9847
Official Languages	
Mr. Choquette	9847
Mr. Garneau	9847
Mining Industry	
Mr. Serré	9847
Mr. Carr	9847
Veterans Affairs	
Mr. Brassard	9847
Mr. Hehr	9847
The Environment	
Ms. Pauzé	9847
Ms. McKenna	9847
Softwood Lumber	
Mrs. Gill	9848
Mr. Carr	9848
Points of Order	
Oral Questions	
Mr. Bezan	9848
Draft Supplementary Supply Bill	
Mr. Lamoureux	9848

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

Business of Supply	
Opposition Motion—Budget 2017	
Motion	9848
Mr. Anderson	9848
Motion negatived	9850
Mr. Lamoureux	9850
Mr. Albrecht	9851
Mr. Johns	9852
Ms. Dzerowicz	9852
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	9854
Mr. Johns	9854
Ms. Harder	9854
Mr. Lamoureux	9856
Mrs. McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)	9856
Mr. Aboultaif	9856
Mr. Vaughan	9858
Ms. Kwan	9858
Mr. Dubé	9858

Points of Order	
Supplementary Supply Bill—Speaker's Ruling	
The Speaker	9861
Business of Supply	
Opposition Motion—Budget 2017	
Motion	9861
Motion negatived	9863
Opposition Motion—Canadian Forces Tax Benefit	
Motion agreed to	9864
Supplementary Estimates (C), 2016-17	
Mr. Brison	9864
Motion for concurrence	9864
Motion agreed to	9865
Bill C-40. First reading	9865
(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)	9865
Second reading	9865
Motion agreed to	9867
(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Mr. Bruce Stanton in the chair)	9867
(On clause 2)	9867
Mr. Kelly	9867
Mr. Brison	9867
(Clause 2 agreed to)	9867
(Clause 3 agreed to)	9867
(Clause 4 agreed to)	9867
(Clause 5 agreed to)	9867
(Clause 6 agreed to)	9867
(Clause 7 agreed to)	9867
(Schedule 1 agreed to)	9867
(Schedule 2 agreed to)	9867
(Clause 1 agreed to)	9867
(Preamble agreed to)	9867
(Title agreed to)	9867
(Bill agreed to)	9867
(Bill reported)	9867
Motion for concurrence	9867
Motion agreed to	9868
Third reading	9868
Motion agreed to	9870
(Bill read the third time and passed)	9870
Interim Supply	
Mr. Brison	9870
Motion for concurrence	9870
(Motion agreed to)	9871
Bill C-41. First reading	9871
(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time) ..	9871
Second reading	9871
Motion agreed to	9872
(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Mr. Bruce Stanton in the chair)	9872
(On clause 2)	9872
Mr. Kelly	9872
Mr. Brison	9872
(Clause 2 agreed to)	9873
(Clause 3 agreed to)	9873

(Clause 4 agreed to).....	9873
(Clause 5 agreed to).....	9873
(Clause 6 agreed to).....	9873
(Schedule 1.1 agreed to).....	9873
(Schedule 1.2 agreed to).....	9873
(Schedule 1.3 agreed to).....	9873
(Schedule 1.4 agreed to).....	9873
(Schedule 1.5 agreed to).....	9873
(Schedule 2 agreed to).....	9873
(Clause 1 agreed to).....	9873
(Preamble agreed to).....	9873
(Title agreed to).....	9873
(Bill agreed to).....	9873
(Bill reported).....	9873
Motion for concurrence.....	9873
Motion agreed to.....	9874
Third reading.....	9875
Motion agreed to.....	9876
(Bill read the third time and passed).....	9876

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Systemic Racism and Religious Discrimination

Motion.....	9876
Mr. Baylis.....	9876
Mr. Sweet.....	9877
Ms. Kwan.....	9878
Mr. Schiefke.....	9879
Mr. Genuis.....	9881
Mr. Fergus.....	9882
Ms. Khalid.....	9883
Division on motion deferred.....	9884

Canadian Heritage

Mr. Nantel.....	9884
Mr. Casey (Charlottetown).....	9885

National Defence

Mr. Bezan.....	9886
Mr. Rioux.....	9886

Status of Women

Ms. Malcolmson.....	9887
Mr. Duguid.....	9888

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