



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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# House of Commons Debates

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Thursday, December 12, 2019

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, December 12, 2019

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*Translation*]

### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the treaty entitled “Protocol of Amendment to the Agreement Between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States”.

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### INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to lay upon the table the Information Commissioner of Canada's 2018-2019 annual reports on the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act.

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(h), these reports are deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics.

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• (1005)

### AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to lay upon the table a report of the interim Auditor General of Canada to the House of Commons entitled “Cost of Crown Corporation Audits”.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

I have the honour to lay upon the table the report of the interim Auditor General of Canada on the implementation of Export Development Canada's environmental and social review directive.

[*English*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

I have the honour to lay upon the table a report of the interim auditor general of Canada to the House of Commons entitled “Commentary on the 2018-19 Financial Audits”.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(g), this document is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

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### TREASURY BOARD SECRETARIAT

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see you again this morning because I have very good news for you. Pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the “Annual Report to Parliament for the 2018 to 2019 Fiscal Year: Federal Regulatory Management Initiatives”.

This report highlights the net benefit of important regulations made by the Governor in Council in 2017-18 and serves as a public report for the one-for-one rule, as required under the Red Tape Reduction Act. The report also includes the administrative burden baseline for 2017, listing the administrative requirements in federal regulations.

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### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS OF CANADA

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with Christmas coming, I have a bigger gift for you. I have the honour of tabling today, in both official languages, the 2019 Public Accounts of Canada. The Auditor General of Canada has provided an unqualified audit opinion on the Canadian government's financial statements. The Government of Canada is committed to sound financial management and to monitoring the use of public funds to enhance accountability and transparency.

S. O. 52

[English]

### INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1) I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canada-China Legislative Association respecting its participation at the 23rd bilateral meeting held in Shanghai, Nanjing, Hong Kong and Macao, China, from May 18 to 26, 2019.

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### PETITIONS

#### HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to present two petitions.

The first is with respect to the issue of organ harvesting and trafficking. In the last Parliament, attempts were made to get Bills S-240 and C-350 through the House. Unfortunately, they failed to make it. The petitioners are calling on Parliament to take action on this issue, and hope that the 43rd Parliament will be the one to finally get it done.

#### AFGHAN MINORITY COMMUNITIES

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am tabling highlights the challenges and persecution faced by the Sikh and Hindu minority communities in Afghanistan. It calls on the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to use the powers granted to him to create a special program to help persecuted minorities in Afghanistan come to Canada. There has been much discussion on this issue, but that special program has not been created.

Further, it asks the Minister of Foreign Affairs to highlight this persecution with his Afghan counterparts.

#### ANIMAL WELFARE

**Mr. Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is the first time I have been able to get on my feet in this Parliament. I would like to thank the good people of Charlottetown for having sent me back here for the third time to represent them. It is truly an honour. I am grateful and humbled to be here.

Today, I rise to table a petition signed by no fewer than 1,500 residents of Prince Edward Island. To have a petition that large come from a place as small as P.E.I. is quite something.

The petitioners are quite concerned about the use of animals in cosmetic testing and the fact that Canada lags behind other countries that have already banned this practice. They call on Parliament to support Bill S-214, which unfortunately died on the Order Paper in the last Parliament. However, it is possible that it will be brought back. Therefore, it is urged that the House support that bill and ban the sale and/or manufacture of animal-tested cosmetics and their ingredients in Canada moving forward.

• (1010)

#### HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

**Ms. Nelly Shin (Port Moody—Coquitlam, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise to table a petition that supports Bill C-350 and Bill S-240 from the 42nd Parliament. The petitioners want the 43rd Parliament to be the one that finally takes action on forced organ harvesting and passes these bills.

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, forced organ harvesting and trafficking is a growing global problem that requires urgent action. I am pleased to table a petition from Canadians who are looking for this Parliament to finally take action on forced organ harvesting by making it a criminal offence to go abroad to receive an organ taken without consent.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from many of my constituents and other Canadians calling on the government to act to end forced organ harvesting.

**Mr. Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition in support of Bill C-350 and Bill S-240 from the previous Parliament. These bills received unanimous consent in both Houses but did not pass in identical form, thus the law was not changed.

The petitioners hope to see this Parliament be the one that finally takes action on forced organ harvesting.

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to table a petition that seeks to combat global organ trafficking. The petitioners want the government to act to make it a criminal offence to receive an organ obtained without the donor's consent.

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### QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

#### ALUMINUM INDUSTRY

**The Speaker:** The Chair has notice of a request for an emergency debate from the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government is going to have to answer to Quebec's 10,000 aluminum industry workers with regard to the new NAFTA.

This new agreement, which was negotiated in secret, cannot be described as a win. Once again, the Prime Minister was unable to protect the workers of one of Quebec's iconic industries. Our nine aluminum smelters produce nearly three tonnes of primary aluminum, or 60% of the total North American production. Our expertise is recognized around the world.

Our industry, which produces the cleanest aluminum in the world, was sacrificed in favour of steel. The government is bragging about the fact that 70% of the materials used in auto manufacturing will now come from North America, when that percentage was already at 62.5%. However, although the agreement clearly indicates that all steel manufacturing processes must take place in one of the three countries for the steel to be considered North American, Ottawa, unlike the U.S. President, failed to obtain the same assurances for our aluminum. As a result, Mexico, which does not produce any aluminum and must therefore import 100% of its aluminum, will be able to continue buying cheaper aluminum from China and processing it before exporting it to the United States labelled as North American aluminum.

Over the course of summer 2019, we saw that the importation of aluminum wheels from China dropped in the United States but rose dramatically in Mexico. During that time, Mexico's exports of processed aluminum wheels to the United States more than doubled.

We have nothing to gain from this agreement, which may even result in the outsourcing of our industry. That is why we are requesting an emergency debate on this issue.

• (1015)

SPEAKER'S RULING

**The Speaker:** Given that we are discussing the Speech from the Throne, which is a topic that essentially covers everything happening in Canada, I must deny the request for an emergency debate on this subject this evening.

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## SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

[English]

### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from December 11 consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the residents of Surrey Centre for once again putting their trust in me. It is truly an honour to be their voice in Ottawa. This moment was possible due to the hard work of my volunteers, who knocked on doors rain or shine, made countless phone calls, put up signs and spread the message of positive politics, all to ensure that I would continue to represent them in this chamber.

I would also not be standing here today if it were not for the unwavering support of my family.

I will always be accessible to the residents of Surrey Centre, and I look forward to working with each one of them for our community. I am certain that by working together we can ensure that Surrey Centre will continue to move forward.

This past election proved that Canadians from coast to coast want their representatives to work harder to tackle the issues that matter most. For Surrey Centre, I will continue to advocate for the middle class and those working hard to join it. I will continue to ensure that appropriate resources are available to those who keep

### The Address

our community safe and will support our climate target to continue leading this country in the right direction.

Gun and gang violence, though on the decline, has been prevalent in Surrey for far too long. In January 2019 Surrey was given \$7.5 million for the Surrey anti-gang family empowerment project, SAFE, the single largest investment in any city in Canada. SAFE was developed from the findings of the mayor's task force on gang violence, which I had the opportunity to sit on as a member. Over 4,500 at-risk youth will benefit from the project, which will work to help prevent youth from joining gangs and participating in other harmful activities by providing them with alternatives.

An amazing initiative that came out of this program was the family and youth resource support team, FYRST. This early intervention and prevention initiative has resulted in 260 outreach visits and 58 client referrals in its first three months.

We have seen results and that is why we will continue to invest in cities to fight gang-related violence.

However, this throne speech tackles harder policies. The government will crack down on gun crime, banning military-style assault rifles and taking steps to introduce a buy-back program. These are guns designed for only one task: to kill the most people in the least amount of time. They are not for hunting and are not for sport shooting.

I would support and encourage the City of Surrey if it chose to proceed with banning handguns or at least creating a bylaw to have handguns stored at gun ranges only. It is time that we prioritize the safety of our youth and make sure our citizens feel safe.

Canadians are counting on us to be bold and ambitious, and to put the needs of the country before our own. With a willingness to collaborate we can do just that. We can deliver results and continue making life better for the people we serve.

In 2015 we promised Canadians real change, and the throne speech will continue to build on the real progress we have made. We created one million new jobs, lifted 900,000 people out of poverty, including 300,000 children, reducing poverty by almost 20%. This is one of Canada's biggest social income changes in a four-year period ever.

It is a privilege to be a part of the democratic process and I take my responsibility with great importance. Representing British Columbia may differ from representing other parts of Canada, but our priorities are the same: to move the country forward together.

*The Address*

The throne speech outlined a number of themes our government will focus on. We all want equal opportunities and have common goals, whether on keeping our communities safe, on affordability or on climate change. My responsibility to my constituents in Surrey Centre is to deliver real impactful results.

The throne speech has put emphasis on keeping Canadians safe, which is a high priority for the residents of Surrey Centre.

I have some of the most hard-working residents in the country. When I knocked on doors, I kept hearing concerns about affordability, whether on housing, schooling or being able to afford day-to-day activities. It was time a government put hard-working Canadians at its forefront.

In 2015, as soon as we were elected, we raised taxes on the wealthy and lowered taxes for the middle class. We created a tax-free Canada child benefit to help families with the cost of raising their children.

• (1020)

In Surrey Centre, the Canada child benefit has helped over 28,000 families since 2016, with the amount of payments to our riding totalling over \$208 million. Since the introduction of this historic benefit, nine out of 10 families have been receiving more money every month for groceries, school supplies, sports and other extracurricular activities.

The Canada child benefit was then increased for a second time to keep up with the cost of living. Canada's poverty rate is at its lowest level in Canadian history, and thanks to the CCB, nearly 300,000 children have been lifted out of poverty. We know when Canadians have more money in their pockets, we build stronger communities, create more jobs and continue to grow a stronger economy.

I am glad that Canadians re-elected a government that would put their needs first. That is why we are repeating this in 2019.

Our government has taken steps to once again amend the Income Tax Act to lower taxes for the middle class and people working to join it. This could save a single person almost \$300 a year and provide a couple or a family close to \$600 a year in savings. Nearly 1.1 million more Canadians would no longer pay federal income tax at all. This would help nearly 20 million Canadians save hundreds of dollars a year in taxes once it is fully rolled out in 2023.

We are moving forward with more help for the middle class and people working hard to join it, because that is exactly what Canadians elected us to do. In the past four years, over one million new jobs were created and unemployment dropped to its lowest rate since records have been kept.

We know how important it is to ensure that we create a better nation for our youth, and that is why we are prioritizing climate change. The fight against climate change and further environmental protection starts now. The government will preserve Canada's natural legacy, protecting 25% of our land and 25% of our oceans by 2025. We are helping to make energy-efficient homes more affordable and are introducing measures to build clean, efficient and affordable communities. We want to make it easier for people to choose zero-emission vehicles, work to make clean and affordable

power available in every Canadian community, work with businesses to make Canada the best place to start and grow a clean-technology company and provide help for people displaced by climate-related disasters. Simple tasks such as reducing plastic pollution and using nature-based solutions, including planting two billion trees, can help clean the air and make our communities greener.

We know that the environment and the economy can go hand in hand. While the government creates strong action to fight climate change, it will prioritize Canadian resources to new markets and offer unwavering support to the hard-working women and men in Canada's natural resource sector.

The throne speech touched on very important, time-sensitive issues: keeping our streets safe, making life more affordable for Canadians and preserving the future of our planet for the next generation. I am truly honoured to be standing here today with a progressive government that prioritizes these issues and many more that help Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, one thing that really concerned me about the throne speech is there was really no clear picture about what we will do in terms of ocean resources. A lot of people are employed in the ocean sector. They are fisher people and others who are not getting the same opportunities. There is no comprehensive plan to address the challenges that wild salmon and other sea life are experiencing in our riding.

The people in my riding want to know what the plan is. They want to know the comprehensive plan. It was missing from this throne speech. Could the member speak to this issue and what his government will be doing differently in the future?

• (1025)

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Madam Speaker, our environment and oceans are a vital source of food, productivity and work for thousands of Canadians, especially on the coast of British Columbia. The government's first responsibility is to protect the oceans so we can have an abundant fish stock that reproduces itself and comes back year after year. If we do not protect the oceans, salmon and sockeye stocks will not return again.

That is why we are protecting 25% of our coast and making sure there is an abundant food supply, particularly from the oceans, for years and generations to come. I can assure members that when the budget comes out in the spring, they will see initiatives to help protect the fishermen and women on the coast.

*The Address*

**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the member just mentioned that he is looking forward to what will come out in the budget later this spring. However, when will we see a long-term outlook on when the budget will be balanced?

In past years, we have seen the government quietly slip the long-term fiscal projections into a press release the day before Christmas Eve when people will not notice, where it reveals that the budget will not be balanced for decades. Perhaps the member could address this issue. When will the government present the House with a plan to finally return our budget to balance?

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Madam Speaker, the debt-to-GDP ratio has been dropping year after year in the last four years. Compared with our European colleagues, on average our debt-to-GDP ratio is one-third of that of any European nation in the OECD, and compared with the Americans, our ratio, as a percentage, is way less than half of theirs.

If we look at the outlook, it is on a constant decline, so we are on the right trajectory, where our GDP is growing and the deficit and debt are decreasing year by year. We are on the right track, and that is why Canadians chose this progressive government once again.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, as we know, we are faced with a climate emergency. Young people from coast to coast to coast have taken to the streets with a climate strike, yet in the throne speech, while the government talked about climate action, it is silent with respect to real action. There is no mention of implementing an environmental bill of rights, a climate change accountability act or anything that would ensure real action will be taken to protect mother earth.

Could the member comment on that and whether the government will be tabling legislation to protect the environment?

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Madam Speaker, we have taken the most comprehensive action. We are protecting our coasts and land masses, we have put a moratorium on tanker traffic along the coast and we have taken the most stringent environmental measures in the resource sector, with Bill C-69 and Bill C-48. We have committed to net zero by 2050, we have committed to the Paris targets and have implemented a price on pollution, which has been scientifically and economically proven to be the best and most effective way to bring our carbon footprint down.

We are on the right track. Canadians accepted that and it is what Canadians are looking for in their government.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to start by mentioning that I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Salaberry—Suroît.

As Bloc Québécois critic for agriculture, agri-food and supply management, I will be talking about agriculture today.

We were pleased to see that the compensation that had been promised to dairy farmers before the election campaign was included in the Speech from the Throne. The government can be assured of our full co-operation for the follow-up.

However, I want to point out to the government that much of the compensation promised when the trade deals were signed has failed

to materialize. Chicken, turkey, hatching egg and table egg farming are not covered, and no agreement has been reached yet between those farmers and the government.

We therefore call on the government to act diligently and as swiftly as possible to resolve this matter. It must make good on all of its commitments and promises of compensation. The financial health of our farming businesses depends on it.

There was also no agreement for the dairy processing sector. Not only has no compensation been determined for that sector, but also all the contingency plans, such as import permits, have yet to be definitively established. We have one concern about that particular issue. Regarding the agreement with Europe, we were told that a permanent determination of import licences would be announced in January. We have no other information at the moment.

Quotas were provisionally set at 55% for retailers and 45% for processors. However, it seems that this ratio is harmful to Quebec's industry. Retailers are taking advantage of the situation to import substantial amounts of cheese, even though the same cheeses are produced here at good prices. Those products are replacing local products on store shelves and causing Quebec producers to lose out.

Accordingly, for the optimal benefit of our local production, that ratio must be amended immediately, with the processors' share increased significantly. When processors are licence holders, they import products that complement the local production, which makes sense. This means less competition for our local producers. This distribution is also better for consumers, who will have access to a broader range of products. It is a win-win.

Therefore, today I am asking about the government's intentions in this regard. Producers, processors, consumers and we, the members, need a clear answer.

That is what I wanted to say about compensation. Although the compensation is necessary and our agricultural producers now want it, it is not their preferred option. Quebec farmers are proud people. They do not want government handouts. What they want is to work. What they need to do that, now more than ever, is for the government to take action and to put in place permanent and unequivocal protections for the supply management system.

*The Address*

We will not be satisfied this time with a commitment or a simple motion. What we want is legislation that protects our supply management system so that it will never again be amputated. This system is unparalleled in the world. It results in a quality product, a stable price and a decent standard of living for our producers. This system should not be cut up into pieces. Instead, we should maintain it and promote it abroad. This system works well. Furthermore, it requires no government subsidies. It is surreal to see this innovative system be gradually replaced by a system of compensation, in essence by subsidies.

The Bloc Québécois wants a firm commitment from this government. Is the government prepared to step up and protect the way we manage our agricultural sector?

NDP members have said that they will support our efforts. Conservative members have been talking a lot about agriculture since we returned, and the opposition leader has spoken in favour of our supply management system in the past. I would imagine, or at least I would hope, that his party will also support our request.

How about the government?

I listened carefully to the statement the minister made on December 3 at the Union des producteurs agricoles congress in Quebec City. The minister was trying to reassure farmers under supply management and guarantee that his government would protect the system and not give away any new market shares. I can only assume that the government will agree to enact legislation that will truly protect our supply management system.

• (1030)

If that is indeed the case, we will have a very strong consensus in the House and our supply management system will forever be off the table in future international negotiations. This is of vital importance. Mercosur negotiations and the likelihood of Brexit are forcing us to move faster. I am urging all MPs to act swiftly.

I would also like to talk about the recent propane crisis, which had a very negative impact on the agricultural sector. After a year of terrible weather, a late, rainy spring and early snows and winter, the sector was hit by the CN strike. The 2019 season was bad enough for grain producers, and all those factors made it even worse.

The propane supply was interrupted from day one. The company gave no notice. Producers were left with silos full of wet grain they could not dry and snowy fields they could not harvest. They had no choice but to watch the grain rot in the fields because they did not have fuel to dry it.

This situation is unacceptable. The Bloc Québécois called for action from the start. We wanted CN to make shipping propane a priority so farmers would get the supply they need. The service interruption doomed many crops.

According to Mr. Overbeek, the president of Producteurs de grain du Québec, many businesses will not make it through 2019. On top of that, when rail service resumed, farmers were subject to an unconscionable increase in the cost of propane. It is disgusting to see one industry profit while another suffers. On Saturday, farmers in Saint-Barthélemy, in Berthier—Maskinongé, told me about

all of the problems they have faced this year and struggled to control their emotions. Some are still trying to salvage some of the grain by harvesting it at night, because the conditions are better. A number of them have given up. Our grain farmers need a sign. They need real action to know that their elected officials support them.

The federal government has little control over the price of propane. However, we must take action when possible. In the short term, we are talking about compensation. Will the federal government commit to follow the Government of Quebec's lead and show our farmers some extraordinary support, in light of the exceptional crisis they have just experienced?

Long-term action is needed as well. Is the government prepared to reflect on how it can guarantee farmers a basic energy supply? We in the Bloc Québécois believe that what our farmers went through was unacceptable and must never happen again. We need to take steps.

The subject of our relations with China has come up in this debate. In that case too, farmers are getting shafted. Pork exports have recovered, but our farmers suffered major losses they will have to be compensated for. We also believe that an emergency fund should be established to support any farm sector that is affected by future diplomatic crises. Our canola farmers have also been hit hard. We need to help them.

We must bear in mind that other countries do not hesitate to support their farmers. That gives foreign farmers an unfair advantage over ours. We should also ask ourselves what kind of support we can offer to our cattle farmers. With regard to the transportation standards that are set to take effect in February, the minister has announced a two-year delay before penalties are enforced.

We should use that time to think about how we can help our farmers and establish reasonable standards that do not jeopardize our agriculture industry.

There were a few other topics I wanted to address, but I will wind up my remarks now and come back to them in my answers. The agriculture industry has been under a lot of strain over the past few years. Rural folks need help and recognition. They need us. We must never forget that agriculture not only provides our food supply and our food sovereignty, in other words, our security, but also ensures the full, dynamic use of our land.

• (1035)

[*English*]

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I welcome the hon. member across the way to the House. It is great to have another person in the House talking about agriculture. My riding is Guelph. Agriculture is very important to my constituents and really it is important to all the country.

I sat in the previous Parliament on the agriculture committee and I hope he is considering that committee. We focus on agriculture and helping our farmers and our food producers, instead of fighting each other through politics.

Could the member expand on what the main challenge is in Berthierville, in his area? He mentioned supply management, but are there other things around developing food security for the people in his riding or other research that he might want to bring forward?

• (1040)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question. Of course I would be pleased to work with him on the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

We face many local challenges. Berthier—Maskinongé is an enormous agricultural riding that is home to various types of products, some of which are supply managed. In the current context, grain farmers are struggling with psychological distress.

A few weeks ago I attended a fundraising dinner marking the 90th anniversary of the UPA in the Lanaudière area. The purpose of the event was to raise money to create a farm outreach program. To have reached the point where we need someone to meet with people on their turf, on their farms, to listen to their concerns is a sign that farmers are extremely distressed. This is also a very important aspect that must receive our support.

[*English*]

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and seatmate for his speech on the Speech from the Throne.

Like the member for Guelph, I am glad to hear this discussion of agriculture. My riding has a lot of agriculture. I live in a very dry, hot part of the country, at least in summer, and we are very concerned about climate change. When I look at the Speech from the Throne in terms of climate action, there are some nice words but there is no mention of real accountability.

For years, we have been hearing promises from various governments and no accountability. I am wondering if the member could comment on that and why we need a separate accountability office to keep the government honest when it comes to climate action.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very relevant question.

We quite agree with the idea that we need to take swift and meaningful action to fight climate change. Climate change is having an impact on our farmers year after year, and things are only

### *The Address*

getting worse. Think of the flooding in 2017 and 2019. The media talked a lot about residents living along the river who had to abandon or renovate their homes, but we also need to consider the farmland that was flooded, making it impossible for farmers to plant crops there. When nothing is planted, nothing can be harvested. That is simple logic. We therefore need to take swift and meaningful action.

The Bloc Québécois thinks that, at minimum, the greenhouse gas reduction targets should be set based on the Paris agreement targets. We also think that those targets should be made legally enforceable so that the government is required to meet them.

In the past, we have seen governments make commitments, announce good news and give nice speeches on television. However, after a few months, they all announced that the targets would not be met. We have even seen some governments withdraw from a signed agreement. We think that embarrasses Canada on the world stage and should not be happening. It is high time we took action.

I am very pleased to hear that my NDP colleagues agree with us that we need to take swift action on climate change.

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ):** Madam Speaker, congratulations to you. It is always a pleasure to see a female parliamentarian occupy the Speaker's chair, and it is my sincere wish to one day see you fully serve as Speaker.

As this is the first time I rise, I want to thank the people of Salaberry—Suroît for putting their faith in me on October 21. It truly warmed my heart. I am returning to the House after an eight-year absence. I am pleased and honoured to have the confidence of the people of my riding.

Obviously, an election campaign like the one we just went through requires a lot of energy, but most of all it requires being surrounded by good people. I was surrounded by very passionate supporters and volunteers. I would like to name one who has been by my side since the beginning, in 2006. Louise Laitre was my campaign manager and deserves to be applauded for her passionate commitment to Quebec and the riding of Salaberry—Suroît.

I also want to thank my three daughters, Aurée, Jade and Florence. Florence, my third daughter, is 23 and ran all my communications during the election campaign. She does exceptional work and I am very proud of her. Today, she has an interview, and I hope that the employer will hire her because she is the best.

*The Address*

I would also like to thank my spouse, who already knows what it is like to be the spouse of an MP. He agreed once more to be my partner and accomplice and to support my dream to be an MP again. He knows the sacrifices that have to be made in our personal and family lives and our relationship. After 35 years, he again committed to working with me and he placed his full trust in me. I want to publicly thank him for being at my side and for supporting my passion, because he deserves it.

Today, I want to talk about what I really care about, seniors and health. I am a social worker by training and I have also worked in the Quebec public health network. In recent years, I was a manager at a CLSC and I coordinated housing for seniors. These seniors are less fortunate, poorer and weaker than most or are in precarious health. Today, in my speech in reply to the throne speech, I will focus on seniors and health.

Front-line workers in a community can quickly and clearly see what the people need. I work as part of a team, in collaboration with community workers. The community needs to act in response to a given social or health problem. All of the stakeholders need to examine the problem and think about a solution, which will be the best possible solution since it is chosen by the people involved. The evidence shows that when solutions are found at the grassroots level, they are better able to address a community's needs.

Imagine my surprise when I read in the throne speech that the government wants to give money to the provinces, provided that they hire family doctors and offer mental health services.

I have to wonder what the Government of Canada, here in Ottawa, knows about the needs of Quebecers in my community. What does it truly know about our needs? Why will it not go along with what Quebec and the provinces are calling for and increase transfers by 5.2%? This would allow the provinces and Quebec to tailor their services to the specific needs of their communities.

These needs are not all the same; some are greater than others. There are community groups in my region that look after all mental health problems. I would like to single out one in particular, Le Pont du Suroît.

• (1045)

The director, Marc André Bédard, is a fantastic guy, a nurse who has dedicated his career to the public realm and saw the little cracks in the system. He therefore decided to spend most of his career working for a community group that supports the loved ones of people with mental health problems. His work is so highly regarded that he gives talks throughout Quebec and indeed around the world. He created an innovative approach, and the Quebec minister of health thought it was so good that he decided to fund the group.

However, just because this group works well in Quebec and in my community does not mean it will work elsewhere. The one who is best suited to determine what a community needs is Quebec's health minister, who can consult local stakeholders, create programs and pay for them. The needs are increasing at this time, but the money is in Ottawa and is not being transferred to the provinces. I see it as a matter of respecting areas of Quebec and provincial jurisdiction. What is being asked is that Ottawa transfer the money to the Government of Quebec, which is the authority

that really knows where investments are needed to adequately meet the needs of its communities.

I do not know what to make of this desire to centralize provincial jurisdictional powers in Ottawa. I am talking about the government, but the NDP also keeps proposing all kinds of national strategies that blatantly infringe on provincial jurisdictions. I see this as a lack of trust. The government is essentially saying that the provinces are not inventive or smart enough to create programs that address the real needs in their communities.

The government would rather tell the provinces what to do with their money. The government thinks it knows what works and that it is in the best position to determine that. This makes me even more passionate and reinforces my vision of Quebec as its own country. If Quebec were to be in control of its own destiny and hold on to the money it sends to Ottawa, it would invest that money into good programs, since Quebec knows what is good for its communities. Although Quebec knows what is needed right now, it lacks the means to take action. I urge my colleagues opposite to respect the provincial premiers' demands for increased health transfers.

Seniors in our communities are really suffering. They need home support and higher incomes to cover the rising cost of prescription drugs and housing. Right now, old age security is not enough. Anyone who gets sick and has to rely on the guaranteed income supplement and old age security will have a hard time paying for housing and any services they might need. Seniors who worked their whole lives in the expectation of a dignified retirement should not have to worry about being able to pay for those services.

One way to solve the problem is to enhance the guaranteed income supplement and old age security. The Bloc Québécois wants the government to increase old age security for people 65 and over and allow people who lose a loved one to collect the guaranteed income supplement for three months following their loved one's death. The death of a loved one is traumatic enough as it is. If those left behind are afraid they will not be able to pay their rent, that is even worse. We are asking the government to show some compassion and increase the guaranteed income supplement and old age security for seniors 65 and over.

In closing, I call on the government to respect areas that fall under the jurisdiction of Quebec and the provinces and increase provincial health transfers by 5.2%. The government needs to let the provinces do what they do best: manage their own issues and find their own solutions.

• (1050)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments of my colleague across the way, but I do not necessarily agree with them.

*The Address*

The constituents I represent believe that the federal government does have a role to play in health care services. Whether in Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Halifax or any rural community, I believe there is a high sense of expectation that the federal government will work with other jurisdictions to ensure there is a national health care system. Therefore, if one goes from one province to another, one can at least anticipate what to expect.

Provinces will change, which is why we have the Canada Health Act. Many of my constituents are very upset with the direction in which health care is going. I try to influence where I can.

Would the member opposite agree with the view of constituents, whom she represents as well, that the national government has a role to play in health care other than just providing money? As representatives, we have a sense of what our constituents want. I believe that even some of the member's constituents would want Ottawa to have a presence in health care.

• (1055)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Madam Speaker, I certainly do not agree with my colleague, because I believe the government's role is to redistribute wealth.

I believe that the provinces and Quebec are in the best position to meet needs. No Quebec health minister, whether affiliated with the Liberals, sovereignists, CAQ or Québec Solidaire, would let anyone tell them how to manage health care. Moreover, the Constitution clearly states that health is a provincial responsibility.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I really appreciate my colleague's message. She talked about her interest in social issues and the consequences of insufficient government support.

People back home who are grappling with mental health or financial problems cannot access the government programs and support they need.

The NDP often talks about the disastrous impact of growing inequality in our society and the problems that have gotten worse, such as mental health and poverty.

I would like to know what she thinks about that, and about the need to put resources in place to help people escape from poverty and access the services they need.

**Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille:** Madam Speaker, I agree that needs in the areas of mental health and poverty must be addressed. However, it is up to the provinces and Quebec to administer their own programs.

The best way to improve services is to give the provinces the 5.2% federal health transfer. Naturally, all the provincial premiers are asking for this.

If I understand correctly, my NDP colleague does not agree with the fact that the premier of the province she represents is seeking a 5.2% transfer from Ottawa to the provinces. We see it as the best way to improve the quality and level of service in our communities.

**Ms. Emmanuela Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise in the House today to

speak to the Speech from the Throne. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

[*English*]

I will be splitting my time with the member for Scarborough Centre.

[*Translation*]

I spent the past five months in the beautiful riding of Saint-Laurent, the riding I have the honour of representing in the House of Commons and that I have considered home since the day I was born.

Over these five months, I had the opportunity to talk to my constituents about the federal issues that concern them the most.

[*English*]

Overwhelmingly, the message that my constituents wanted to relay to me about what they most wanted was for us to do more for our planet. It was that we need to act fast to counter the devastating effects of climate change. This is one of the main messages that I heard at the doors at least a few times every single day during the electoral period. That is why I was thrilled that the Speech from the Throne emphasized and prioritized fighting climate change.

The previous Liberal government, which I was proud to be a part of, did more than any prior government for the environment. The current government has committed to making the fight against climate change a priority. We have set the target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, which may seem like an ambitious goal, but it is one that is absolutely necessary.

[*Translation*]

We absolutely must try to achieve the net zero emission target by 2050 to protect the environment in order to give our children and grandchildren the chance to grow up in a world where there is still fresh air and clean drinking water.

It is time to listen to scientists who are telling us that we cannot exceed the 1.5°C temperature increase and Canada must contribute to that effort. That is why our government will continue to put a price on pollution across the country and work with its provincial partners on further reducing emissions.

We know that our target is ambitious. We have to make the transition to renewable energy sources not only because we currently do not have the capacity to rely on renewable energy sources alone, but also because we have to provide support to the people who work in Canada's natural resources sector.

*The Address*

• (1100)

[English]

As is highlighted in the Speech from the Throne, our government is committing to protecting 25% of Canada's lands and 25% of Canada's oceans by 2025. To go further, one of the commitments that we made public during our election is the plan to plant two billion trees over the next 10 years to purify our air and water, as we know this is the best way to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions.

Those who know me well, know why I entered politics. They know I have always felt a deep passion to make the world a fairer place for everyone, that the inequalities that exist in this world make my blood boil. They know how I feel about the unfairness that exists based on socio-economic and racial or ethnic background. Back home in my constituency, one of my main priorities is to do my best to help those in need by helping organizations that help those who need it most, or by giving a voice to those who are marginalized and providing space for them to come and communicate and express themselves to make life a bit fairer for them.

[Translation]

In Saint-Laurent, community organizations such as the Bon Courage centre, COCLA, l'Unité, the Centre ABC, CARI, the Maison des familles de Saint-Laurent, and the Au cœur de l'enfance pediatric services centre, as well as many others, are indispensable and make all the difference for families in the region.

[English]

Another reason I support the Speech from the Throne is for its focus on strengthening the middle class. Our government has a goal of making life more affordable for Canadians. The personal income tax exemption is being raised to \$15,000 so that Canadians can do more with their money, whether that is putting more money into their savings accounts or being able to afford better-quality food on their table for their families.

When I was growing up, my parents did not have a lot of money. My father was my family's only breadwinner, and sometimes it was tough, but he and my mom made up for it by giving us an amazing family experience and ensuring that we took part in extracurricular activities. They wanted to give us a good life and tried hard to do so. However, I began working at the age of 15 in order to pay for my personal expenses, because I did not want to be a burden on my parents. They made sure that there was a roof over my head and healthy food on the table every single day, but I felt that if I wanted more, it was up to me to earn some money. My mom told me to save half of every paycheque so that I could pay for my university tuition one day. If I wanted a cellphone, I had to pay my own bill.

Let me say that kids who know that their parents are going through financial struggles feel it. It is a heavy weight to carry. I know this because I taught in public schools on the Island of Montreal, and kids whose families did not have an easy time knew not to ask their parents for things that they could not afford.

[Translation]

Our government is going to make a real difference in situations such as these by cutting cellphone and wireless bills by 25%, which will help middle-class families in particular.

We also plan to help students so that they all have the opportunity to have a quality post-secondary education, no matter their family's socio-economic status. Students will not have to pay back their student loan until they find full-time employment.

The government will also implement measures to reduce the number of homeless people by investing in affordable housing. During our last term, we reduced poverty by improving the situation of 900,000 Canadians through the Canada child benefit. We will continue to make these crucial investments for the people that need them most.

Last week, we commemorated the 14 lives that were taken at École Polytechnique in Montreal 30 years ago just because they were women. I want to point out that, as a feminist, I am proud of the fact that our government took seriously the challenges faced by women in our last term of office. I am also proud that the throne speech referred to the gender-based violence strategy. We will do more to fight violence against women and the LGBTQ2 community.

• (1105)

[English]

Speaking of the École Polytechnique shooting, gun violence has been on the rise in Canada, and our government has a plan to tackle this issue. We will ban military-style assault rifles like the one used at École Polytechnique, and we will introduce a buyback program. While we know that this is only the beginning and a lot more needs to be done in order to completely eliminate gun violence, this is an important step in the right direction.

At a time when certain powers around the world are turning their focus inward, taking steps back on the international stage and taking less of a leadership role to help countries around the world, Canada will continue its efforts to make this world a fairer, safer and more sustainable place.

We will continue to support international development and we will invest to make education more accessible in third world countries. We will continue to work hard to make the world a more equal place so as to empower women who do not have the same liberties and freedoms as we do here in Canada.

My thanks once again for giving me the chance to express my thoughts in support of the Speech from the Throne.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, in my riding of North Island—Powell River, we have a huge and growing population of people who are really challenged to find housing. During the campaign, I had multiple people come to my office and talk to me about their realities. Some of them were living in tents, some in summer trailers, and the winter was fast approaching.

What I heard again and again is that there is just not enough housing. Several people made significant wages and had enough to pay rent, but there was simply nothing there, and then the range went all the way to desperately homeless, low-income people.

When I look at the housing crisis that is happening not only in my riding but across Canada, I wonder if the member could tell the House what strategy is actually going to happen. How long are Canadians going to have to continue to wait for resources in their communities to actually make the difference?

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Madam Speaker, we have already committed to investing \$40 billion for the national housing strategy. That money will begin to be available as of January 2020. We are extremely excited that money will finally be going into this program in order to start building affordable housing.

In the last mandate, we came out with the first-time home buyer incentive for young families that wish to start a family and start living in their first home, giving a tax break for people who are buying their first home. If it is a new home that is being built, it is an even bigger incentive.

Therefore, we do have some incentives in place and we do hope to reduce the homeless population by at least 50% with the Canada housing strategy.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the throne speech specifically mentions help to address the opioid crisis. It was just announced today that 14,000 Canadians have lost their lives to opioid use and 17,000 have been sent to the hospital just in the last four years. That is in the throne speech, which is fine.

However, just this week on Monday, when the government introduced its supplementary estimates (A), which provide the funding, the cash programs, there was not a single penny put in from the government coffers to address the opioid crisis. At the same time, though, the government put in vote 5, which is considered to be for urgent needs, \$265 million to subsidize wealthy people to buy Teslas.

Why is the government more focused on helping wealthy people buy Teslas than on addressing the opioid crisis?

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Madam Speaker, yes, we know that a lot more needs to be done in order to tackle the opioid crisis and that not enough has been done up until now, but we have invested millions of dollars to help with this crisis. We made help available in some of the big city centres, and with pharmacare, which will eventually be brought forward, we will be able to help people overcome the struggles they have because of overdoses and different health issues.

• (1110)

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, speaking of overdoses, there is a major crisis in the Downtown Eastside community. We have been calling on the government to declare a national health emergency, yet it refuses to do so.

As we just heard, the number of overdose deaths has increased, so it is not just in the Downtown Eastside community, but across the country.

### *The Address*

Would the Liberals be prepared to at least pilot a safe supply program so that we can begin to save lives and demonstrate to communities across the country that we can save lives and that the world will not end if we ensure there is a safe supply program for people who need help?

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos:** Madam Speaker, I am willing to work alongside the member for Vancouver East in order to look for strategies to help improve these issues in society. I will also be speaking to the ministers who are responsible for these files in order to try to push this along and help.

**Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, congratulations on your appointment.

It is a pleasure to rise for the first time in this 43rd Parliament. Before I turn to the Speech from the Throne, I would like to take a moment to thank the people of Scarborough Centre for returning me to this place. They have put their trust in me to continue to be their strong voice in Ottawa. I am so grateful for their confidence and support. None of us would be here without our dedicated supporters and volunteers. I have an amazing team and I would like to thank team Salma for its countless hours of hard work over these past months and years. I also want to thank my family, my husband Salman, and my boys Umaid and Usman, for their love and support.

I am proud to have received a strong mandate from the people of Scarborough Centre to fight for their values, hopes and dreams in this place. They have shared with me their struggles, their hopes for the future and the challenges their families are facing. It is their priorities I bring to this Parliament.

I also recognize that in a minority parliament it is ever more important that we all work together. No one has a monopoly on good ideas. I am ready to work with those who share the values, hopes and dreams of the people of Scarborough Centre. We are a riding of Canadians by birth and Canadians by choice. Many of us come from somewhere else and have chosen to make Scarborough our home. We are a community of senior citizens and young families. We are a community of Canadians working hard to join the middle class. They are concerned about being able to stretch each paycheque to the end of the month. They worry about the ever-rising cost of housing. They lay awake worrying if they can provide a better future for their children. They work hard and are looking for a little help to get ahead.

*The Address*

That is what I was looking for as I listened to the Speech from the Throne. I was pleased to hear some of the priorities of my constituents addressed in the speech. That a tax cut that will deliver a real benefit to those families working hard to join the middle class will be the first order of business for this government was welcome news for the families of Scarborough Centre. Rather than handouts to millionaires, we know that putting more money into the pockets of families working hard to join the middle class is money that will be invested back into the economy. It means new clothes for going back to school. It means healthier groceries going into kids' lunch bags. It is an investment that will support not only families but also local jobs and economies.

The throne speech mentioned the historic reductions in poverty achieved by the government in its last mandate. Nearly 900,000 Canadians were lifted out of poverty, many of them children, thanks to programs like the Canada child benefit. That is a program we are committed to strengthening even more.

One of the many families in Scarborough benefiting from the Canada child benefit is the Tareen family. Thanks to the CCB, Lenna and Najib are able to provide healthy food for their children, Abdullah, Ahmed Yasin and Habibullah. They can take them on educational outings and allow them to participate in more activities in school. We are proud of that record, but I know this government will be the first to admit there is still more work to be done.

Probably the biggest expense that families in Scarborough face is housing. There is a serious lack of supply. What housing is available is often old, overpriced and inadequate to meet the needs of the average Scarborough family. Therefore, I am pleased to hear that the government reaffirmed its commitment to the national housing strategy and to making continued investments in affordable housing.

Programs like the first-time home buyer incentive are already making a difference. The money already being invested in Toronto community housing is funding long-overdue renovations in community housing facilities in Scarborough and across Toronto. Moving forward with the Canada housing benefit in the coming year will help many families who are struggling with the rising rents they have to pay.

• (1115)

In this Parliament, I will be a voice for continued investment in affordable housing. As well, we must ramp up our investment as fast as our provincial and municipal partners can build the capacity to make new projects shovel-ready.

Another key priority for my constituents is community safety. Too often the sound of gunshots echo through our neighbourhoods. Too many of my constituents have lost loved ones or know a family who has lost loved ones to senseless violence.

I recently attended a community safety meeting in an apartment complex where a family had lost a son in a shooting. Nothing can compare to the grief of a mother who has lost her child. The community came together to grieve and to discuss meaningful action to end these acts of violence. In Scarborough, in Canada, no one should feel unsafe walking the streets of their community. The time

has come for serious action to combat gun violence and the gang activity that fuels it.

While I supported the common sense gun crime legislation passed in the last Parliament, it is long past time to go further. This is why I fully support the commitment in this throne speech to ban military-style assault rifles and introduce a buyback program. Too many of these weapons have been involved in mass shootings in Canada and around the world. Outside the military, they serve no legitimate purpose. These weapons are not designed to hunt deer. They are designed to kill people, as many people as possible, as quickly as possible.

I understand the need for a rifle on a farm for protection, and I respect the hunting culture practised in many communities, but military-style assault rifles do not belong in our communities. The safety of our children must come first. It is time to get these guns off the streets.

I also welcome the commitment to work with municipalities and communities that want to ban handguns. This is something that I have heard loud and clear from my constituents, and something that the mayor of Toronto and Toronto council have asked for. While these measures alone will not eliminate gun crime, the evidence from jurisdictions around the world shows that it will make a big difference. We owe it to our children to do everything we can.

We must also continue to invest in measures to stop the flow of illegal guns at our borders. As important as getting guns off the streets is, the most important thing we can do to ensure safer communities is to show our youth that better is possible for them. We need to show them that they have opportunities to grow and prosper and succeed.

During its last mandate, our government made significant investments in programs to tackle youth gang violence. I hear from my constituents, especially the mothers, how important this is. As the mother of two sons myself, in this Parliament I will be a voice for further investments in our next generations.

Those are some of the highlights for my constituents, but other priorities of Scarborough Centre are also reflected in this Speech from the Throne. My constituents know that climate change is a real and serious threat, and they want us to do more to achieve our emissions reduction targets, ban plastics and get to net-zero emissions by 2050.

My constituents know we have a moral obligation to Canada's indigenous people to walk the road of reconciliation together. That means eliminating all remaining boil water advisories, enshrining the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in legislation and so much more. They believe that every Canadian should be able to get a family doctor much more easily, and that universal pharmacare is the next natural evolution of the public health care system of which all Canadians are justifiably proud. As well, they want Canada to continue to be a voice for human rights and the freedom of all people, both at home and around the world.

Historically, minority parliaments have been some of the most productive in Canadian history, but that is only possible if we park our egos at the door and work to find common ground. I look forward—

• (1120)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I am sorry, but the time is up. I am sure that the hon. member will be able to finish her thoughts during questions and comments.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my colleague across the aisle mentioned the national housing strategy. We heard a lot about that in the last Parliament and now we are hearing it again. Unfortunately, in the last Parliament the government spent less money on housing than the previous Harper Conservative government spent. We are getting concerned about these fine words and promises.

During the election campaign I attended the opening of three new important housing centres in my riding. One is a centre in Penitton to house the homeless. Another one is for low-cost housing. Another one in Okanagan Falls is for seniors housing. Not one penny involved in those housing projects came from the federal government, not even indirectly.

Could the member comment on that? Can we really rely on the government to do the right thing on housing?

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Madam Speaker, we are committed to a 10-year, \$40-billion national housing strategy. In our last mandate we introduced the first-time home buyer incentive and we are committed to expanding it for cities like Toronto and Vancouver. We have already invested in more affordable housing units. Construction has started at many sites. We have committed money toward renovating the existing units.

We also committed in our last mandate \$1.3 billion for renovations of Toronto community housing units. The repairs have started in many units, including those in my riding of Scarborough Centre.

We will continue working together so that we can make sure that housing remains one of the top priorities in this mandate.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we have heard a lot today from Liberal members around the concern over violence in communities across the country.

I want to bring attention to a concern in my riding in the north and a concern that we are seeing across the country when it comes to first nations specifically with the suicide crisis that is taking place. Young people are taking their own lives. As a result, commu-

### *Royal Assent*

nities are taking unprecedented steps to issue emergency calls for help. It is taking too long for the federal government to even recognize these calls for help. It is taking too long for it to step in and even begin to hear from the leadership and the young people who are most impacted.

While I appreciate the concern around people taking the lives of others, where is the government's priority when it comes to first nations and recognizing the immediate crisis that is taking place on too many first nations and the need to take direct action to prevent these suicides from taking place?

• (1125)

**Mrs. Salma Zahid:** Madam Speaker, we have to make sure that our communities are safe. My own community has grieved a number of times at the loss of a loved one. It is really sad to see a mother grieving the loss of her child.

Our government invested a lot of money in our last mandate to make sure that we could provide alternatives to our youth. We invested money in the city of Toronto for youth activities so we could put an end to gang violence. We have invested in education for all indigenous people. We made significant progress in our last mandate on reconciliation, but more work still has to be done.

I look forward to working with all members of the House to make sure we continue working for our youth.

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## ROYAL ASSENT

[English]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. I have the honour to inform the House that a communication has been received as follows:

Government House

Ottawa

December 12, 2019

Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to inform you that the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada, will proceed to the Senate Chamber today, the 12th day of December, 2019, at 3:30 p.m., for the purpose of giving royal assent to a certain bill of law.

Yours sincerely,

Assunta Di Lorenzo

Secretary to the Governor General and Herald Chancellor

*The Address***SPEECH FROM THE THRONE***[English]***RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

**Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Cariboo—Prince George.

As I rise in the House of Commons for the first time, it is my honour, on behalf of the residents of Essex, to represent each corner of my riding, from Lakeshore to Amherstburg, from Essex to Kingsville, from LaSalle and everywhere in between. I am humbled to represent my great riding. I thank each and every person for putting their trust in me. I have been working and will continue to work hard for them in Essex, as well as in Ottawa.

First and foremost, I must give thanks to my Lord and saviour, Jesus Christ, for the opportunity to stand here as the member of Parliament for Essex.

On the eve of the writ being dropped, I had an unfortunate accident that was scary, to say the least, but many stitches later and amazing health care from the doctors and front-line nursing staff at the Erie Shores HealthCare hospital, along with prayers from many and a long phone call from Conservative leader Andrew Scheer while I was in the hospital that evening, I was discharged. It is not often that a candidate gets a call from his party leader on the eve of an election. This speaks directly to Mr. Scheer's caring character and concern for others.

Members of my Conservative family came out in full force and offered to help my campaign in whatever way they could. As I knew, my Conservative family is a caring, thoughtful and deep-rooted family, ready for the call to action when someone is in need. For this, I need to thank all of my colleagues for their support during this difficult time.

There are so many people I need to thank. I thank my wife Allison, the love of my life, my best friend and supporter, for her sacrifice, her smile, her dedication and trust. I love her dearly. My children Jagger, Cody and Faith should remember that they are only handcuffed by the boundaries that they place upon themselves. Each and every one of them is unique and I am proud to be their father and excited for their future. I thank my amazing parents, Kim and Helen Lewis, and my brothers, Jeff and Kim, for being positive influences in my life and helping me to be the person I am today.

I thank my most amazing volunteer election team, my campaign manager and those who helped spread the positive Conservative message at 43,000 doors across Essex, those who worked tirelessly and always with a positive attitude and great big smiles. From the bottom of my heart, I thank them. I also thank my staff members, the people who truly get things done.

I am honoured to have served alongside my brothers and sisters of the Kingsville Fire Department for seven and a half years. Serving my community is the very reason that I stand here today. To each and every one of them who had my back and looked over my shoulder in the face of danger, I thank them. To my dear friend,

Captain Mark Rankin, I respect him enormously and thank him dearly for his friendship.

I would be remiss not to thank a few other folks, too many to name, but vital to recognize. To my hockey coaches, my baseball coaches, my teachers, my mentors and my friends, as well as those who have influenced my life and given me opportunities along the way, I thank them. Mrs. Robinet, my grade school teacher, and Mr. Robert Peterson, who took me under his wing during my term as Kingsville councillor, have both touched me deeply and I am better because of it.

I stand here today to represent the great folks of Essex. It is with them in mind that I must focus for a moment on the cultural, geographical and economic riches of my riding of Essex. Essex is famous for its farming and agricultural communities. The greenhouse industry is also a big part of its economy, growing a variety of produce and now expanding into the cannabis industry as well. There are wineries and microbreweries. I was proud to see our local wine being served here in Ottawa just last week. There is cutting-edge technology for development, as well as incredible training at St. Clair College, training our future generation of skilled trades workers. There are salt mines and dairy farms, commercial fishing and the most talented auto workers and steelworkers in the country. Geographically, Essex is among the warmest ridings in the country, attracting tourists from around the world to enjoy its climate, waterways and the many festivals the region has to offer.

• (1130)

I stand with confidence when I say that Essex is truly a microcosm of Canada. I would like to include in my speech two issues that are close to my heart and to the hearts of the good folks of Essex.

First, our nation and my riding are built upon the hard-working people and entrepreneurs of our small businesses. These are the people with great hopes and dreams. They are often willing to mortgage everything, short of their children, to ensure that they are serving their local communities, creating jobs and opportunities, feeding the mouths of families and donating to the many charities that, especially at this time of year, come knocking on their door for donations.

These individuals are freedom fighters. They take all the risk, invest the capital, are directly responsible for their success versus their failure and do not receive benefits like many of us do. They often have to borrow money from family members to get their businesses started, as banks are reluctant to lend money to set up a business. They spend long hours creating jobs for Canadian families. These businesses are the economic engines of Canada and when they fail, people lose the ability to feed their families. They pour their blood, sweat and tears into their companies as they are proud of what they do.

*The Address*

What is more, they drown in government regulation and tax. I spoke recently to a gentleman in my riding who was working on his day off. It happened to be a Sunday and he was working very long hours to fill out the tax forms as he could not afford to pay an accountant to do it for him.

Being a small business owner myself, I understand the struggles that these people face each day. I see nothing in the Speech from the Throne to address these issues or to support our small businesses. Conservatives understand what the issues are and we thank our small businesses for what they bring to Canada. We will certainly continue to stand up for them.

Second, I stand in the House as a proud hunter, angler and legal firearm owner. In fact, as an outfitter, firearms are one of the tools of my job. Like many Canadians, I enjoy sport shooting and target shooting. I am not a criminal nor have I ever had a criminal record. Like many Canadians, I have had many background checks and spent a lot of money to enjoy my right as a legal firearm owner. Now the government is looking to penalize and persecute me for a crime I did not commit. I am both a legal handgun owner and a member of the House of Commons and I find it appalling that we are going down the same path that has cost taxpayers billions of dollars in the past with zero results. Criminals and gang members are not going to give up their guns. Mayors across Canada have said that this is simply not the answer.

The answer is giving our border guards and law enforcement officers the tools and funding they need to combat illegal smuggling, gang violence and criminals. Getting serious on crime and giving longer prison sentences is the answer. A buyback program and banning handguns will have absolutely no positive effect to reduce violent crime. When will the government stop penalizing the law-abiding gun owners? The nonsense needs to stop.

I was elected to represent the great people of Essex, to defend their rights as Canadians and help create an environment for families and businesses to flourish. Members of Parliament have been given a sacred trust to do all we can to serve the people who sent us to Ottawa to represent their hopes, dreams and aspirations for themselves, their loved ones and their communities. We have a great challenge and great opportunities ahead.

I look forward to the work I can do to make changes for Canada and my riding of Essex. It is my deepest desire to do all I can to leave this world a better place than I found it.

• (1135)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Before I go to questions and comments, I want to remind the member that he is not to use the names of individuals, whether his leader or any other member, in the House of Commons. I know that he mentioned it a couple of times a while ago and I did not want to interrupt him.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague across the way on his first speech in the House and welcome him here.

He spent a bit of time toward the end of his speech talking about the legislation the government is discussing with respect to guns. I think it is important to point out that we have made it very clear that this is not about hunters. It is not about people who are shooting for sport. What this is really about is getting rid of weapons that are out there that are designed to inflict the maximum amount of human damage as quickly as possible. As a hunter, and I have many hunters in my family as well, I know that the member most likely does not utilize any of those types of weapons.

Can share his insight and comments into whether he believes that weapons that are designed for combat use are weapons that should be left in society?

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh!

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I do want to remind the member for Red Deer—Lacombe that if he has any comments or questions he should wait until it is time to do that, as opposed to interrupting someone in the House.

Again, I would like to remind the member of this, whether it is me speaking or whether it is somebody else.

The hon. member for Essex.

**Mr. Chris Lewis:** Madam Speaker, a Mini-14, which is the gun that was used at École Polytechnique, is a .223 calibre. The gun itself is not going to do any more harm than a typical Winchester or a Browning .223 calibre. It is about the actual number of shots that are in this gun. With a Mini-14, one can hunt predators, coyotes as an example, with a clip of five. People do it all day long. We could have the same case against all of our firearms, including shotguns, but, no, the Liberals want to talk about it being okay for hunters to have these guns, they just want to get rid of the most wicked ones.

The truth of the matter is that this could happen with any type of firearm. Banning handguns is absolutely not the answer, because the criminals will never give them back.

• (1140)

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I get the impression that the Liberal focus, when it comes to firearms, is on scary-looking weapons, weapons that look from the outside to have the same aesthetic presentation as an assault weapon. As a practical matter, it is also my understanding that the military, in particular the U.S. military, uses shotguns for close-range combat because they are just as effective, unfortunately, against humans as they are against animals. This suggests that if we are trying to deal responsibly with weapons that have the potential to harm humans, we have to look beyond aesthetic considerations and talk in terms of practicalities, as opposed to focusing on the fears of those who do not fully understand the issue.

I wonder if we could hear some comments on that.

**Mr. Chris Lewis:** Madam Speaker, you alluded to something in terms of the U.S. military. The truth of the matter is our—

*The Address*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I just want to remind the member he is to address the question to the Chair and not to the individual members.

**Mr. Chris Lewis:** Madam Chair, the member alluded to the fact that our U.S. neighbours carry shotguns. As a matter of fact, our police officers carry shotguns, many of them right there in their vehicles. Why would they do that? Why would we take a shotgun to a riot as opposed to a Mini-14? It is because a lot more damage can be done at very close range, and one does not have to aim, just point.

If we are going to start creating lists of any gun that might look tactical, we are going to have a really long list and, quite frankly, it is going to do absolutely nothing to stop the gang violence and the criminals. The only way to stop this is to throw them in jail and throw away the key.

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague from Essex for splitting his time with me.

If members will indulge me, as this is my first time rising in the House, I want to thank my team, which spanned thousands of kilometres, with hundreds of volunteers, and spent thousands of hours to get me re-elected. I want to give a heartfelt thanks to all of them back home in Cariboo—Prince George.

I also want to take a moment to thank my family, my wife Kelly, my daughters Kassi, Kaitlyn and Jordan, and my son Joshua. Without family, we could not do what we do here. All of us should be mindful of that. If I have one piece of advice for my new colleagues here, it is that while the work we do here is important, if they do not take care of themselves and do not work just as hard on their relationships with their family and friends, then what we do really has no meaning. It is so important.

Last but not least, and why I am here today, I want to talk about my riding of Cariboo—Prince George and its residents. I want to thank all of them for putting their heartfelt trust in me once again to be their member of Parliament. This responsibility is not lost on me. I will work tirelessly to represent them, to bring their voices to Ottawa and ensure they are represented in our nation's capital.

However, this election was probably one of the most divisive times I have faced in recent years. It was probably the ugliest six weeks in my four years of being elected. My family was personally attacked, which speaks to the divisiveness within our country. We did not talk about SNC. We did not talk about blackface. We did not talk about the ethics and the scandals that took place over the last four years. Why? Because that is not important. What is important are the residents who are losing their jobs, whether in forestry or agriculture. It now seems that even our LNG opportunities are in jeopardy.

B.C. is the largest producer of softwood lumber in our country. Over 140 communities are forestry-dependent. Over 140,000 jobs within our province of British Columbia are tied to forestry. One in four manufacturing jobs are tied to forestry. One in 16 jobs in British Columbia are forestry-dependent.

The Prime Minister has said time and again that it is his job to stand up for Canadian jobs. However, what we have seen time and

time again is that he will stand up for his own job, he will stand up for those on the other side, or he will stand up for his corporate friends or Liberal friends. When it comes to western jobs, he is absent.

I looked for some words, some promises in the Speech from the Throne for our agri-food sector. I looked to see what the government would do for our forestry sector. There was nothing there. All we got were platitudes. Empty words is really what they were.

We got a mixed message about a space-time continuum. Wikipedia's definition for space-time continuum is that different people can experience things differently depending on where they are and who they are. Does that sound familiar? I found that odd. I thought maybe the Governor General was taking a quick shot at the Prime Minister or maybe she was on the same space-time continuum as him.

● (1145)

Just two weeks ago, in one 24-hour period, Mosaic Forest Management shut its doors. That was a loss 2,000 jobs. That is 2,000 forestry workers out of work just weeks before Christmas. The very next day, Canfor Forest Products, our largest forest products company in Canada, announced curtailment at all its mills throughout British Columbia. Over the course of 2019, there were 130 curtailments across Canada. Tens of thousands of jobs have been lost, yet it does not even warrant one mention by the Prime Minister in the Speech from the Throne.

It was mentioned today by our colleague from Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies that our province's industry is on fire. We are burning up because our industry is flat.

Over 50% of Canadians report that they are \$200 away from insolvency at the end of every month. In my riding, our constituency office sees constituents every day. They talk about being close to losing their homes, or their cars or their businesses. They want to know what their government will do for them. I do not know if the Prime Minister has that same experience. I can guarantee he does not.

Just last month alone, 18,000 jobs were lost in British Columbia and 71,000 across the country. Eighteen thousand jobs were lost in the province of Alberta last month, yet all we get from the Prime Minister and his merry band of bandits are talking points. They must be double-jointed, because they are so good at patting themselves on the back. It is shocking when we stand in the House and offer this information and they just keep patting themselves on the back.

I have had constituents here. An RCMP officer, who serves our country every day, sat in the House and listened to question period. He was shocked at the non-answers by the Prime Minister. He asked if it was always that way and told him pretty much, when the Prime Minister showed up. He was disappointed and shocked. Canadians are seeing the same thing.

The Prime Minister said right after the election that he heard Canadians, that he needed to be better, that we needed to work across the lines and that he needed to take a bit collaborative and collegial approach. However, in Speech from the Throne, in subsequent meetings and in his talking points, it is more of the same as what we saw over the last four years. He had such a huge majority that he figured he could bank on another four years.

The Prime Minister says “better is always possible”. I do not think that better is always possible with the current Prime Minister and government.

I will probably get some boos from my side of the House when I say this, but there are good people on that side of the House. Sadly, however, they are not on the front bench. The Speech from the Throne was nothing more than a disappointment. However, much more than that, it was more of the same thing we saw over the last four years: nothing for western Canada, nothing for my province and nothing for Cariboo—Prince George, and that is shameful.

• (1150)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member talked about individuals patting themselves on the back. I would encourage members opposite to read some of those members' statements. When I was in opposition, they were one of two things. It was either character assassination of the leader of the third party, now Prime Minister, and nothing has changed as they have continued with that, or it was solid praise and worship of Stephen Harper and how wonderful that government was. The Conservatives need to reflect on that.

Things have changed a lot. We finally have a government that is more focused on Canada's middle class, working day in and day out, than on self-reflection in the Harper bubble of the 10 years of his administration.

Will the member opposite not recognize that one of the biggest changes, among others, is the advertising? Do the Conservatives remember the hundreds of millions of public tax dollars they spent on their propaganda? We can contrast that to a much smaller budget, maybe tens of millions of dollars versus hundreds of millions of dollars under the Stephen Harper era.

**Mr. Todd Doherty:** Madam Speaker, what about the \$600 million the Liberals gave the media just before the election, then appointed Jerry Dias as the godfather over those funds, the guy who posed for Maclean's and said that he was the opposition, or whatever it was, in stopping the Conservatives from gaining power.

Our hon. colleague stands time and again. He is the only one who is defending the Speech from the Throne. Of all the Liberal members on the benches, many more could stand and ask questions. However, it is only that member of Parliament. He is such a good soldier that he is still relegated to the third row. He has not

### *The Address*

made his way to the front bench yet, but I wish him better luck the next time.

• (1155)

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Cariboo—Prince George mentioned forestry in his speech. Of course, it is a serious problem in British Columbia. The industry is in dire straits.

Could he comment further on what the federal government could do to help that industry?

**Mr. Todd Doherty:** Madam Speaker, securing a softwood lumber agreement in the last four years would have been a big start, but that will not help us right now.

We need an infusion of funds to help our workers who are close to retirement so they can bridge that retirement gap. We need an infusion of funds to help our communities and contractors diversify themselves economically so they can retool their equipment and maybe take advantage of some of the oil, gas and energy opportunities, if the Liberals have not shuttered that as well.

We need to ensure we do whatever we can. All we need to see from the government is action, but all we have had is inaction and platitudes.

Our hon. colleague is a stalwart and stands up for our forestry workers. We have not yet recovered from the 2017 wildfires in B.C. and now we see this economic downturn in our forestry industry. Communities are declaring an economic state of emergency.

We need action from our federal government. We need to ensure it is pressing our provincial government to act, and we have not seen that for forestry workers and contractors. The industry is failing in our province and it is all because of the policies and the inaction by the Liberal government. That is absolutely terrible.

We need to see action. I had hoped to see at least some statements to that fact in the Speech from the Throne, but we saw nothing. We just saw more backslapping, platitudes and space-time continuum, which do nothing for our ridings and our province of British Columbia.

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the words put into the Speech from the Throne are very important. They send messages.

The member mentioned that in the Speech from the Throne were the space-time continuum words. He can just imagine that being at the top of the minds of many auto workers in Oshawa who will lose their jobs this week.

There was not even a mention of manufacturing or auto in the Speech from the Throne. I know softwood lumber is a huge issue for him. By having a Speech from the Throne that does not pay any attention to those issues, what message does that send to industries and their workers?

*Privilege*

**Mr. Todd Doherty:** Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the message is still the same as it has been over the four years. If one is not a Liberal donor or Liberal-connected corporation, then one does not count. The Liberals will stand up for the jobs that matter most to them and that is it.

The Liberals had a real opportunity after October 21 to send that message to Canadians, to stop the division and really extend an olive branch to all opposition parties. They failed to do that. All they did was pat themselves on the back.

\* \* \*

**PRIVILEGE**

LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was elected to this House in 2004, at the ripe old age of 25. In many ways, I grew up in this chamber, but some might say I have not yet grown up. I was barely out of university, newly married and with our first child on the way. Since then, I have had five beautiful children. My first-born is now 14. He is all arms and legs. I think he is going to be taller than me very soon.

I have logged many hours flying back and forth from Regina to Ottawa and all across this wonderful country. Alongside my friends in the Conservative caucus, we have accomplished a lot on both the government and opposition sides of the benches. Most importantly, we have kept our party united and strong.

That is why I felt it was appropriate to speak to my friends and colleagues today in the House of Commons about one of the most difficult decisions I have ever made. I have just informed my colleagues in the Conservative caucus that I will be resigning as the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada.

I will be asking the Conservative Party national council to immediately begin the process of organizing a leadership election. As our party embarks on this exciting opportunity of electing a new Conservative leader and Canada's next prime minister, I intend to stay on as leader of the party and the official opposition.

Serving as the leader of the party that I love so much has been the opportunity and challenge of a lifetime. This was not a decision I came to lightly. It was one I came to after many long, hard conversations with friends and family over the past two months since the election campaign.

It has been an incredible challenge for our family to keep up with the pace that is required to lead a caucus and a party into a general election, and my wife Jill has been absolutely heroic. However, in order to chart the course ahead, this party and this movement need someone who can give 100% to the effort. After some conversations with my kids and loved ones, I felt it was time to put my family first.

Our Conservative team is always stronger when we are united. When fiscal conservatives, red Tories, social conservatives, libertarians, Quebec nationalists and Conservatives in rural and urban Canada in the east and west come together, great things happen. We elect strong Conservative governments that deliver lower taxes, smaller governments, more freedom and stronger human rights.

The party we have all built together is far more important than one individual.

Our party is not a cult of personality. It is not shaped by whoever's name is on the masthead, but by the hundreds of thousands of Conservatives who pound in lawn signs, sit on their riding associations and donate a few dollars every month.

As our party begins to embark on this exciting opportunity of electing a new leader, my only ask to my fellow Conservatives is this: Let us stay united. Let us stay focused on our one shared goal and one shared priority, which is to deliver a strong Conservative government that can unite our country and make life better for all Canadians, for the oil worker out of a job, for the senior who is choosing between heating and eating and for Canada's position on the world stage.

● (1200)

I believe in this party, I believe in our movement and I believe that we will be the government after the next election. I became involved as a teen because I love this party. I ran because I love this party, and I ran for leader because I wanted to help this party.

I will continue to serve my Conservative caucus, and I will continue to serve the great people in the fantastic riding of Regina—Qu'Appelle.

I am proud of what we have accomplished during my time as leader. We kept our party united and strong, we knocked the Liberals down to a minority and we increased seats all over this country. Whoever the hundreds of thousands of Conservatives across the country choose to lead our party into the next election will have my 100% support.

My message to the Prime Minister and the Liberals in the House is this: During this leadership election, there will be no free rides in the House of Commons. We have already hit the ground running. We had a 1,000% batting average for a brief period of time on Tuesday evening. We might see if we can increase that batting average.

We are going to continue to be here every single day to represent our constituents, to perform our duties as parliamentarians and to put Canadians and Canada first.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for indulging me in this statement. I want to thank my colleagues in the Conservative Party.

● (1205)

[*Translation*]

Being the Leader of the Conservative Party was the greatest honour of my professional life. I thank all my colleagues for their support and trust over the past three years.

I made this decision because it is the best thing for our party.

[English]

Our party needs someone who can give everything he or she has. I have always been honest with my colleagues. I have always been honest with everybody. I know that the road ahead and the stress it would put on my family would mean I could not give them that 100% assurance.

I know the next person will, and I know I can speak on behalf of all our team that the next leader of this party will have the support required from these benches to make sure we are successful in the next election.

• (1210)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I know there will be many more moments for us to reflect and celebrate the dedication and service that the member opposite has offered and continues to offer to Canadians in his work as an MP for Regina—Qu'Appelle, in his work as the former Speaker of the House and in his work as the leader of the Conservative Party of Canada

I know thoughts, first and foremost, are for family. I want to salute Jill and recognize his kids who, I know better than most, have made significant sacrifices to see their father take on a leadership position like this. We deeply appreciate it.

I know from the many conversations I have had over the years with the hon. leader that he sees his responsibility as a parent very much the way I, and so many others, see our responsibility of being good parents to our kids.

In a similar way, we are politicians. We are in the House not in spite of having kids, but because we have kids and are dedicated to building a better world for them with everything we have. I respect that deeply and thank him for that focus on a better future for his kids.

[Translation]

I would also like to point out that few people know the challenges and possibilities, but also the roadblocks and barriers that exist for the leader of a diverse and national party like the Conservative Party or the Liberal Party.

[English]

We have a collection of MPs who are focused on representing their constituents and on serving their constituents. It is always a challenge and an incredibly rewarding experience to work with them as a leader.

I know that for all the challenges, it is an extraordinary privilege that is enriching and wonderful. I know that the member opposite has shown tremendous strength and compassion, as he has done through tragedies, difficulties, victories and more challenging moments.

I very much wish him all the very best in his next and exciting steps, whatever they be, be they here in the House or beyond. I want to thank him deeply for his service to Canada on behalf of all Canadians and on behalf of all Liberals. I know there are many more conversations to have.

### Privilege

Thank you, Andrew, for the work you are doing.

• (1215)

[Translation]

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are all parliamentarians regardless of ideology or party affiliation. I am sure that everyone who goes into politics does it for the right reasons.

It is not an easy career path. It requires many things, including an unwavering commitment, which everyone here in the House fully understands. It also takes courage.

We can all have different views. The more different they are, the more courage they require to uphold when it would be easier to compromise. The desire to amicably debate differing opinions in our democracy brings about what is best for Canadians and Quebecers. I trust that these different opinions have given people food for thought. I am sure that the member has done excellent work in that regard.

In a spirit of friendship, I recognize that, on the rare occasions that we have met, he has always been unfailingly cordial. I am deeply convinced, despite other opinions, that everything that was done was done in people's best interests. Everything was done with absolute sincerity.

I do not have much experience as a political party leader, but I have just enough to know that there are good moments and bad. I sincerely hope that, the day after this decision, which was most likely a difficult one, and every day that follows, will bring peace and the certainty that it was the right one. In the meantime, I would like to reiterate my friendship.

[English]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I also want to add my voice in acknowledging the cordiality in the chamber today. As well, I want to acknowledge the solidarity in recognizing the difficulty and the challenges that public life presents.

I want to thank the leader of Her Majesty's official opposition for taking up that mantle, for being in public service not only as the Leader of the Opposition but also as Speaker and the representative of Regina—Qu'Appelle. It is a big sacrifice, and the member and his family know that very well.

I want to also acknowledge what the Prime Minister alluded to, that being the idea that we not only represent and work for the benefit of people in our ridings but for the benefit of Canadians around the country.

I really enjoyed the sentiment and the spirit behind the idea that the member is doing this for a better future for his kids. I know that is true for the member and true for the Prime Minister, and hopefully one day it will be true for me too.

I want to take a moment to touch on what the leader of the third party mentioned.

*The Address*

[*Translation*]

Of course we have our differences of opinion, but what unites us is the idea of working for the common good. We may take different approaches, but I think we share the same desire to help ordinary people, change policies and resolve issues to help everyone. I know that is something that unites all of us.

• (1220)

[*English*]

I think that is something that we all share in this chamber.

It is a very difficult decision to take, and I want to acknowledge the hard work that the Leader of the Opposition has put in during all of his roles and the years of service that he has provided. We speak as a united voice in acknowledging that. I thank the member for his service.

I thank all members in the chamber for taking up that mantle. Today is a day to acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition and thank him for his service and his contribution to political life in Canada.

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will not abuse the indulgence that you have given me today, but I do want to sincerely thank the other party leaders.

I want to thank the Prime Minister for his kind words. I believe our children are of the same age. If there is one person who knows the challenges and the difficult decisions that need to be made when balancing public and private life, it would be the Prime Minister. I have always appreciated our opportunities to chat briefly about how our respective families are holding up during the pressure and the grind that this life places on parliamentarians.

[*Translation*]

I also want to thank the Leader of the Bloc Québécois for his comments. We have not worked together for very long, but as he said, all of our conversations have been respectful.

[*English*]

Thanks very much to the leader of the NDP as well. We have crossed paths several times throughout the years at various events together. I have always found when we put partisan differences aside, there is a great deal of mutual respect for people of all different parties because when we come to this place, we might disagree on what it is that we think should be done for Canada, but we all agree on the motivation, and that is to make Canada a better place.

I truly do believe that. Each one of us makes tremendous sacrifices to that.

I hope the Prime Minister will not mind a bit of good-natured ribbing. Obviously debates can be heated and fiery, but we do like to point out successes and we are very proud of what we accomplished in the last election. Although we fell short of our goal, someone pointed out something that I have not fact-checked yet, but I will: I am the first person in Canadian history to get more votes than a Trudeau. I could not resist saying that.

I do intend to serve the constituents of Regina—Qu'Appelle for the near future. When I was 25, the highest goal I set for myself was to be the best member of Parliament that I could be for the con-

stituents of Regina—Qu'Appelle, and I look forward to devoting more time to doing that.

As for future positions in the House, those are discussions for another day. I doubt that I will become the Grover Cleveland of Speakers. That is probably not going to be in the cards.

[*Translation*]

I once again want to thank all my parliamentary colleagues.

[*English*]

Thank you so much for your kind words today. I know they are heartfelt.

We all go back to our homes and our ridings and deal with many of the same struggles, no matter where we are from or what party we represent.

I will see members at 2:15.

\* \* \*

• (1225)

#### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

**Ms. Lenore Zann (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne.

It is a great honour and privilege for me to stand here and acknowledge that we are standing on unceded Algonquin territory.

I would also like to acknowledge the leader of the Progressive Conservatives. I would like to thank him for his service and wish him well in the next chapter of his life.

It is not easy to be a politician in this day and age when there is a hard split of opinions on the left and on the right. It would seem to the public that people here with differing opinions are constantly at each other's throats. However, today we are seeing what we can do when we come together to acknowledge the humanity in each other and see that we are not just spokespersons spouting out political ideology but in fact living, breathing human beings.

It is this spirit of reconciliation that I believe the throne speech embodies, and since the word “reconciliation” is used many times in it, as a new member of Parliament, I have to say that this is the spirit that I embrace and that I intend to continue to put forward in the days, months and hopefully years to come.

*The Address*

I am a proud Nova Scotian. My riding of Cumberland—Colchester is a beautiful region in northern Nova Scotia. It is bound by the sea on both sides, by the Bay of Fundy and the Northumberland Strait. One of the issues we have is climate change, which is very real for us. Many of us are on flood plains, including my home of Truro, Nova Scotia. We have already had one big flood, which occurred 10 or 11 years ago when I had just become a member of the legislative assembly of Nova Scotia. One of the first tests of my leadership was a huge flood. At the time, it showed me what could be to come if we are not careful.

The Chignecto Isthmus is a piece of land at the top of my riding, and it joins Nova Scotia to the mainland of Canada. Right now, the seas have risen so far that the only thing that is keeping the sea from crossing over that isthmus and turning us into an island is a railway. There are 400-year-old Acadian dikes there, an incredible engineering feat that has managed to keep out the seas for this long in Nova Scotia, but the dikes are aging, and we are going to have to raise them. We will also have to take other measures to protect Nova Scotia from the rising seas. This is why I am very pleased to see so many mentions of the environment in the throne speech, as well as the idea that climate change is a crisis and that we need to act now.

Therefore, when I hear opposition members say that climate change is not necessarily a priority, it gives me great concern, because in my riding it is a huge concern. The first nations people, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, have been very active in combatting all kinds of environmental degradation in our province. I am very proud to have stood with them on the front lines, fighting for government recognition and fighting to get these issues noticed, especially when big corporations are polluting the lands right beside the first nations communities.

● (1230)

In fact, one of the bills I introduced in the legislature in Nova Scotia was called “An Act to Address Environmental Racism”. It acknowledged the disproportionate amount of toxic waste sites, landfills, dumps and huge corporate pollution on the lands of first nations and black communities. I would like environmental racism to be talked about more often, especially in the House, as we move forward.

It is with great honour that I was elected to the House. It is my first time in Ottawa. I would like to acknowledge the people back home in Cumberland—Colchester who helped me get here. I will not let them down. I will fight for everything I believe in: human rights and justice for women and girls and dealing with human trafficking and domestic violence.

On domestic violence and gun control, I noted that at least 118 women and girls have been murdered across our country so far this year, according to the annual report from the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability. More often than not, that is a result of domestic violence, and shooting was the most common method of killing. This report comes on the 30th anniversary of the École Polytechnique massacre at the university in Montreal. That shooting, which left 14 innocent young women dead, thrust the term “misogyny” into the public discourse in Canada. It still continues today, and it is a problem. Missing and murdered in-

digenous women are still a huge issue that we need to address on all sides of this House and in all provinces across this nation.

I would like to reiterate, in the spirit of reconciliation, that no matter which province we come from in Canada, we are still all Canadians and we still bleed red blood. We want our children and grandchildren to be looked after, have food on the table, have good education and schools, go to school in peace and not be afraid of violence. We want them to have affordable housing, which is also an issue in my area. We need to deal with poverty, including in the middle class, to help people struggling to become part of the middle class. We need to not forget them. As somebody who cares deeply about social, environmental and economic justice, as well as justice for arts and culture and for realizing how important they are to the fabric of our society, I intend to stand in the House as much as I can to remind us all of the importance of these values and doing everything we can to help every single person in Canada, not just a few.

In Cumberland—Colchester, there are a lot of farms and small businesses, and a lot of women have taken on small businesses. I have to say that it gives me great pride to walk down the streets of Truro, pop into a store and see a female entrepreneur who has been there for 35 years, as in the case of one of my friends. She has a dress store called “Moments”. She dressed me today and other days, and she was very excited about that. There are also many little restaurants.

I am thrilled and excited to help put Cumberland—Colchester on the map and bring more tourists to my beautiful region. There is great wine in Jost, which has many types of incredible wines, including a new red wine called “Great Big Friggin’ Red”. For anybody who likes barbecues, spaghetti or steak, it goes with them.

● (1235)

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank my friend across the way for being alive to the impacts of environmental racism. Having an equity and diversity lens throughout all of our decision-making is very important.

We have heard the government talk repeatedly about guns and gangs. What kind of analysis will the member bring to the root causes of violence in our communities as it relates to indigenous people and persons of colour across the country?

*The Address*

**Ms. Lenore Zann:** Madam Speaker, some people say we need more boots on the streets in order to deal with violence and gang violence, but I believe that the root causes of violence are poverty, desperation, lack of education, lack of a sense of hope, mental illness and addiction.

In my community, many people can get in trouble with the law because they have an affliction like alcoholism or addiction. I am an alcoholic, a proud sober alcoholic who has been sober for 24 years. It is not a disease I would wish on anybody. Because I have lived experience and hit bottom at the age of 36, I know how hard it is to live with, for the families and loved ones as well. They say it is a family disease because it affects everybody.

Therefore, I believe that we need to put more money into addictions research and helping people on the ground. In Nova Scotia, the wait time for people to see an addictions counsellor is atrocious. Sometimes it is 365 days or 125 days.

I was glad to see that our government put money into mental health in Nova Scotia to the tune of about \$138 million each year for the next five years. I am pleased about that because we need as much help as we can get.

Sadly, in Millbrook First Nation there have been a few suicides. One blossoming young man was a mixed martial artist, a firefighter and well loved, but he was suffering from depression and anxiety. He went to the hospital and was given some pills. He went home, took the pills and then hung himself. This is a really sad state of affairs. This did not have to happen.

**Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I was captivated by a lot of things the member said in her speech. I want to make it clear, though, that not all opposition members feel the same way about caring about the environment. New Democrats care desperately about the environment and have a sense of urgency around this issue. I also appreciate that the member brought up environmental racism. This is an issue we all need to address more fully in our country.

If we are going to see action, I believe we need accountability measures. One thing missing from the throne speech was a way to measure success when we address the climate crisis we are in right now. It would have been reassuring to all Canadians.

Could the member share with the House what steps she could take to help the government take that next step?

• (1240)

**Ms. Lenore Zann:** Madam Speaker, I meant the official opposition. I acknowledge that members of the Green Party and the NDP have been very vocal and passionate about the environment as well. I thank them for that.

This government has set milestones. Every five years it has a milestone to get to zero emissions by 2050. That is a clear sign that we have certain limits to reach as we go along.

I also think the price on pollution is important. I have heard people say we need to get rid of the carbon tax. We do not have it yet in Nova Scotia, but when I was with the NDP government in Nova Scotia, we set very strong targets and goals, which we reached. We

were able to do a transaction with the Government of Canada and—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** My apologies, but we have to resume debate.

The hon. member for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the people of the south shore of Montreal are probably watching today and getting a kick out of the fact that my neighbour is sitting in the Speaker's seat. I am so proud to be your neighbour.

First, I would like to thank the people of Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, who on October 21 sent me back here with a larger level of support. I also want to thank my beloved family, who have put up with this crazy job for the last four and a half years. Of course, I would also like to thank my friends in Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine and Brossard—St-Lambert who have stood by me.

Over the last four years, we have heard a lot from folks about doing things differently. Yesterday my friend and colleague from Larnak—Frontenac—Kingston gave a beautiful speech on our friend Deepak, whom we lost this year. He reminded me of something. He reminded me that we are supposed to be here talking from the heart and representing the people who sent us here, so this is the first time in the House that I will be speaking without a speech. I am going to try to emulate my colleague across the way, so please bear with me if I muff this up.

I am happy to speak on the Speech from the Throne. In it, we said we are going to do things differently. Canadians asked us very clearly on October 21 to work together in a collaborative way. I hope that my colleagues across the way will agree with me that this has always been the way I have worked.

A lot has changed for me in the past year. As many members know, my mother passed away right before Christmas last year, unexpectedly. This happened at the same time that our older son was deployed overseas for his first deployment. Since then, I have been taking care of my dad and my family while being a parliamentarian. What I have learned over the past year is we have had a lot of ups and downs. As I said, my mom passed, but we have also had some great news in the family. Our older son came back from his first deployment and got married, and our military family grew. We also went into an election and I am happy to say I am back.

I want to do things differently. I want to continue to work across the aisle with my colleagues. I have had great conversations, especially with the member for Durham, regarding how we can support the brave men and women in uniform and the families who serve them.

*The Address*

I had the pleasure of working with the member for Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, and I am sorry I am pointing him out. We worked on a committee for electoral reform, a special committee that was set up in June 2016. The great thing about that committee was that the Liberals did not have a majority. I had the great pleasure of experiencing what it is like to work in a minority government. I want to thank my colleagues who were on the Special Committee on Electoral Reform with me, because we got to become friends and got to work together. It was a very good example of how we can work together.

In the Speech from the Throne we talk about the importance of affordable housing.

• (1245)

[*Translation*]

In my riding, Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, nearly 3,000 people are on the wait list for affordable housing. I have been working with my provincial and municipal counterparts to address this issue.

[*English*]

My father is on that list, as are many people in my riding.

[*Translation*]

Nearly 4,000 seniors in my riding receive the guaranteed income supplement.

[*English*]

I know that increasing the personal exemption to \$15,000 will help a lot of our seniors as well.

[*Translation*]

Now let us talk about public transit. As people know, Taschereau Boulevard is hell during rush hour. We need a streetcar on Taschereau Boulevard. The mayor of Longueuil has clearly stated that she needs our support. That is why I am very proud to lend my support to that project, and I hope we can all work together to see it come to fruition.

[*English*]

We have talked a lot about the environment, and our government has made incredible strides in the last four years with respect to the environment and climate change. There is still so much to do. Quebec has had the largest pickup in electric vehicles purchases since our incentive came into place on May 1. The provincial incentive and federal incentive combined, there is up to \$13,000 in rebates on the purchase of electric vehicles. I know people in my riding are very excited about that.

With all of the actions we have taken on climate change, there is one thing I have learned from listening to my friends across the way, especially those from Alberta. Over the past week and a half I have listened to the debate on the challenges they are facing and I want them to know that I am listening and that I hear them and want to hear more. I think we can absolutely find a balance between protecting the environment and helping those who work in the resource sector.

Most people in this place know the reason I decided to run in 2015: I have two children serving in the Canadian Armed Forces.

In 2015 I was quite worried, not about their being in the Canadian Armed Forces but what would happen if, God forbid, they became ill or were injured in the line of duty. I was quite concerned about how we treat our veterans. As most people know, parents can either complain about something or do something about it. As a parent I decided to do something about it, and I ran for office and won.

What I have heard over the past four years, in my capacity as a member of Parliament and as parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, are the challenges of transitioning faced by many veterans and their families.

In our Speech from the Throne we also talked about how important it is for every Canadian to have a family doctor.

[*Translation*]

I know that health care delivery is a provincial jurisdiction, and I fully support that. However, there is room for a federal contribution.

[*English*]

Often when members of the Canadian Armed Forces leave, they are left on their own to find a family doctor. If they are ill and injured, the difficulty is that to get the services and care they need, they must have a diagnosis. They therefore need a family doctor.

I am excited to be working with our new health minister because I know she feels as strongly as I do about working in collaboration with our provincial and territorial partners to make sure that veterans and their families have access to a medical doctor.

We also addressed the homelessness of veterans. I had the great pleasure of meeting two phenomenal people from Nova Scotia, Jim and Debbie Lowther, who run VETS Canada. They work tirelessly on the ground to help veterans in need. We need to continue to support organizations like VETS Canada and others to make sure that we end veteran homelessness.

As folks who were with me in the last Parliament can attest, I have said many times in the House that we really need to work together. Our common cause is the people we represent, and I am always willing to work with anyone who wants to sit down and have a constructive conversation about how we can move things forward.

• (1250)

[*Translation*]

I am so pleased to be part of the 43rd Parliament. I think that, together, we can do what Canadians have asked us to do.

*The Address*

[English]

They asked us very clearly on October 21 to work together, and it is with that in mind that I offer my help on any file we can move forward together.

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for her kind comments and congratulate her on her re-election.

This is more of a comment than a question. She pointed, quite rightly, to the fact that a small number of us in the House, most of whom re-offered for re-election or are back, were involved in the electoral reform committee, where we functioned in a situation where the government did not have a majority. That is now how all committees are going to function.

There is another parallel there as well. The government really needed the support of one party, and any of the parties would work, in order to get a functioning majority. That will prevail in every committee in this House.

Therefore, I want to say, not as much for the benefit of the hon. member as for her party's House leader and whip, that it would make sense to draw upon that expertise and spread it around. That might be true for the other House leaders as well. However, that is the way we are going to function.

I have served now in three majority and four minority parliaments, if we include this one. There is a bit of a different dynamic. We would all benefit from reviewing what worked well in the last minority Parliament, before we start getting into cat fights in committee, rather than after. That is just a thought.

I thank the member for what I thought was an excellent and heartfelt speech. I hope there are more heartfelt speeches from this member in the future.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Madam Speaker, it is not really a question, but I want to again thank my colleague across the way for the generous time he has always offered me, with respect to his good guidance and knowledgeable background. I have to say that he is a wealth of knowledge.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, congratulations to you, as well as to the member on her re-election.

I thank the member for her touching speech and especially for highlighting her connectedness through her family to veterans' affairs.

I have a constituent in my community of Vancouver East who has been having difficulty accessing medical marijuana through the Veterans Affairs system. In fact, some veterans are having such grave difficulty that it is causing additional stress and distress in their lives.

I am wondering if this is something the member can work with me to help resolve, not only for my constituents but I suspect for many people across the country as well.

• (1255)

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Vancouver East for the question. We have not had a chance to work together, but I am looking forward to doing so.

When I was the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, we heard a lot about the use of medical marijuana by veterans for their treatment. I would be happy to work with the member for Vancouver East with respect to access to that.

I know the parliamentary secretaries were announced today and there is a new Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs, who I am sure would be happy to also assist in this regard. I have a bit of a background in assisting veterans with access to services, and I would be happy to work with the member opposite.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, earlier today we had the wonderful announcement of the tabling of the Canada-U.S.-Mexico trade agreement. This is good for Canada's middle class and those aspiring to be part of it.

I would ask the member for her overall thoughts and impressions with respect to how critically important this agreement is for our economy and our society.

**Mrs. Sherry Romanado:** Madam Speaker, during the campaign and over the last year and a half, the importance of the agreement with our largest trading partner, the United States, came up on the doorsteps of the folks in my riding.

This morning, the minister tabled that trade agreement, which has brought a lot of pride to Canada with respect to how we handled ourselves and what the return on the trade agreement will bring to our nations.

I know that folks in my riding were concerned about tariffs, culture and the protection of our industry in Quebec. I am happy to say this will be a very good trade agreement for Canada and I am proud to support it.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Hamilton Centre.

I wanted to once again thank the constituents of London—Fanshawe for electing me to the House. I have worked here for more than a decade, actually in a different capacity, as a parliamentary staffer for many amazing NDP members of Parliament: Chris Charlton from Hamilton—Mountain, Wayne Marston from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, Jean Crowder from Nanaimo—Cowichan and most recently, the former MP for Essex, Tracey Ramsey. I was also raised by another incredible and powerful woman, who represented London—Fanshawe for the past 13 years: my mother, Irene Mathyssen.

I come to this House with many mentors and supporters, and I stand here because of them. It is when I consider important votes, like on this throne speech, that I will always think of the people who elected me here.

*The Address*

I hear every day from people in my riding who need help now. If this is all that the Liberals are willing to offer to help Canadians, it is not good enough. I represent a riding where many people are struggling. The average household income in my constituency is well below the national and Ontario averages.

I see it every day. People are working harder than ever to keep a roof over their head and to put food on the table. I also see a community that is consistently coming together to support one another, to answer calls for help and to push for more. They deserve better than this throne speech.

For more than a decade when someone needed help in London—Fanshawe they knew that they could turn to their member of Parliament. Irene's office was a place that would consistently go above and beyond to advocate and push for anyone who walked through the doors. I will proudly continue that tradition.

While my constituency office will work hard to help, I know that more and more people are seeking that help. The policies of past Liberal and Conservative governments are failing them. In the House, in this 43rd Parliament, we have an opportunity to change the direction of the country, one that should put less focus and attention on how well the rich and powerful of this country are doing and more on how everyday Canadians are doing.

One disturbing trend we have seen is that people are continuing to come to the office in search of affordable housing. Housing prices continue to skyrocket in London as many people are being pushed out by other markets around the GTA. What once was a starter home found throughout London—Fanshawe has become out of reach for too many families. Instead of more empty words, the Liberals could have worked with us to invest in affordable housing so that everybody in Canada could have a place to call home.

Canada is in the midst of a national housing crisis impacting every area of the country. Average rents rose in every single province last year, and today 1.7 million Canadian households spend more than 30% of their income on housing. A major part of the long-term solution to the problem is to ensure that more affordable rental units are built across the country.

One in three Canadians is a renter. In many cities, the few affordable apartments available get snapped up quickly, and people end up either living in inadequate housing or forced to spend a huge chunk of their income on rent. If the Liberals are willing to work with us to address the housing crisis in our country, we are ready to deliver for Canadians.

Another trend I have heard too many stories about is how people cannot afford their medications. One gentleman came into my office during the campaign who had suffered from a workplace accident. He told my team and me how he had been injured at work. He was going to physiotherapy and attempting to heal and get better.

Although he is not well enough to return to work, he knows his benefits are running out. He needs his medication. He cannot live without it, but he also knows he cannot afford it on his own. He told us that he is being forced back to work, even though he is not ready, knowing he is putting his own life in danger.

Imagine if we had a system that rather than worrying about how this person is going to survive, to pay for the medicine that he needs to live, he could focus on getting better and returning to work when he is able.

In the days before medicare, New Democrats saw their neighbours suffer because they could not afford the health care they needed. We saw people lose their homes, their farms and their businesses as they struggled to pay their medical bills. We saw illness destroy entire families.

In response to that reality, New Democrats led the fight to establish universal public health care for all Canadians. Medicare changed the lives of millions of people and it is one of our party's proudest achievements.

Millions of families cannot afford to take the medications they need because they have no employer-provided drug coverage. The number of uninsured people forced to skip their medications is growing as more people work on contract, are self-employed or have jobs that just do not come with health benefits. Too many seniors are putting their health at risk because they do not have drug coverage and cannot afford out-of-pocket payments.

The stress and worry that people feel is not an accident. It is the direct result of deliberate choices that have been made by Liberal and Conservative governments. They choose to let drug companies gouge patients and they choose to leave millions of people uninsured or under-insured, paying hundreds or thousands of dollars out of pocket for the medicine that they need.

● (1300)

Today, Canada is the only wealthy country in the world with a universal health care system that lacks universal prescription-insurance coverage. We pay the third-highest prices for prescription drugs in the world and must deal with a patchwork of programs and coverage, if we are lucky enough to have coverage at all.

When I look at this throne speech, I see there is no language about any pharmacare being universal, comprehensive or public. There is no funding amount and no timeline. Since the Liberals have been promising pharmacare since 1997, we can see why New Democrats are a bit skeptical. We need to see a real commitment to deliver universal, public, single-payer pharmacare.

We are ready to work with the Liberals and deliver for Canadians, but it takes concrete measures to help improve lives.

*The Address*

There is a growing urgency to also address the climate crisis. I was proud to join hundreds of people from across London at the climate strike in September. I joined them because we need action now and we need bold targets.

The real plan to address climate change is needed now. That is why this throne speech is so disappointing. There is nothing on stronger emissions targets for 2030 and nothing to confront the urgency of the problem. In the last four years, the Liberals gave billions of dollars in subsidies to fossil-fuel companies instead of investing in renewable energy and job creation. After being lobbied more than 1,500 times by the fossil-fuel industry, the Liberals are putting big oil first.

We also need action to protect our fresh water. With growing algae blooms and invasive species decreasing lake levels, as well as flood damage, we are in need of a national freshwater strategy. A strategy that would set national drinking-water standards would solve the problems presented by piecemeal provincial strategies and years-long boil-water advisories on first nations reserves.

I have been meeting with members from Oneida Nation of the Thames, just outside of London. There, the drinking water has failed to meet provincial standards dating back to 2006. Upstream, London dumps millions of litres of raw sewage into the Thames River that serves as the community's water source. This is unacceptable. Our municipal government recognizes the problem. It wants to help, but there is no action from the government to help address the water situation at Oneida.

After claiming its most important relationship is with indigenous people, the Liberal government continues to break its promise. It refuses to commit to dropping the appeal against fairness for indigenous kids, while also refusing to fix the problem with the child welfare system. It is simply unacceptable.

The throne speech offers nothing for our seniors, either. Everyone deserves to be able to age with dignity as a valued member of the community. The Liberal government refused to protect workers' pensions, while dragging its feet on the creation of a real plan to deal with the health challenges faced by seniors.

As more Canadians enter their senior years, we need to make better choices and we need to be ready to meet their needs to ensure everyone can age with dignity. With the right leadership, we can make sure our institutions and public services are strong and prepared, and that all seniors have access to the health and social supports they need to make life easier.

One group my mother, in her capacity as a member of Parliament, was so proud of and honoured to work with was our veterans. It is time for the government to do right by our veterans. They should not have to wait weeks or even months to receive the services they need.

Unfortunately, for too long veterans have had to fight for the benefits they have earned. Veterans need investments into their services and increased access to caseworkers. There is also much more that we can do to ease the transition from their life in active service to becoming a veteran.

While I have so much more that I could talk about, I want to finish with this. As it stands, there is not enough in the throne speech for Canadians. People need help now. We urge the Liberals to offer more than just pretty words and to put forward concrete solutions that start to deal with the systemic poverty and inequality that too many face.

The Liberals have been putting the demands of the wealthiest and the rich corporations ahead of the needs of Canadians for too long. We are ready to work with them and deliver for Canadians, but it takes courage to make the necessary choices that will truly help improve their lives.

• (1305)

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, congratulations on your affirmation to this position by the House.

I want to congratulate my colleague on her first intervention in the House and her speech on the throne speech.

I know that the member spent a good deal of time talking about pharmacare specifically and the fact that perhaps that was something that was lacking in the throne speech. I would refer her to the throne speech where it specifically says:

Too often, Canadians who fall sick suffer twice: once from becoming ill, and again from financial hardship caused by the cost of their medications.

Given this reality, pharmacare is the key missing piece of universal health care in this country. The Government will take steps to introduce and implement national pharmacare so that Canadians have the drug coverage they need.

I agree with the member that the NDP, under the leadership of Tommy Douglas, played a huge role in seeing medicare come into this country, and the New Democrats have the opportunity to play a huge role to see pharmacare become a reality, particularly in another minority government just like the minority government back then.

Can the member not at least accept the fact that there is a will within the throne speech to specifically tackle the issue of pharmacare?

**Ms. Lindsay Mathysen:** Madam Speaker, I would be very excited if the Liberal government wanted to move forward with a universal single-payer pharmacare program. New Democrats will absolutely want to work with the Liberals to ensure that happens. The problem is that we have been waiting since 1997. Canadians have been waiting on Liberal promises since 1997.

*The Address*

I can assure my hon. colleague that in this minority government, as in many other Liberal-led minority governments, New Democrats will fight tooth and nail to ensure that the people of Canada have those programs that they desperately need.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate my colleague on being elected to the House of Commons. I also thank her predecessor, Irene Mathyssen, for the incredible work she did in her many years here as well.

The member mentioned many things in her speech. As a strong advocate for women's rights, on the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, I would like to see the government take real action, first to commit to implementing all the calls for justice and to ensure there is accountability with action and a timeline and resources allocated to it.

I wonder if the member could comment on that.

• (1310)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen:** Madam Speaker, my mother, Irene, has been an advocate for women over her entire career and not just in this place. It is something that I am fiercely proud of.

Absolutely, the government needs to take action on those calls for justice. I mentioned that I worked with the former member for Nanaimo—Cowichan who served our party as the critic for indigenous affairs. This was something that was continually brought up.

With the suffering these families went through time and again telling those stories, having to relive them, but seeing no action from the government, it is time to put in solid timelines. It is time to put forward all of those calls for justice. We need to act now. There is absolutely no excuse. Again, the government has committed to putting that nation-to-nation relationship first and foremost and we call on the government to do just that.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate you as well.

I thank the hon. member for joining us in this House.

In the throne speech, there is an entire section on strengthening the middle class in which we address poverty and the progress we have made. We are two years ahead of the mandate already in reducing chronic homelessness in Guelph by 23% just last year.

Could the hon. member at least acknowledge that there has been some solid work going on and that, together with the NDP, we will be able to do some solid work in the year ahead?

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen:** Madam Speaker, I look forward to working with the government for some substantial housing initiatives. Unfortunately, we have not really seen that much.

In my own riding, it was actually community groups that led the charge, and they had to do all the work. The federal government came in with a small amount afterwards, when all of that work had already been done by the municipality and some of the provincial government advocates.

I think there is an expanded role. It is a shame that the government cancelled the national housing strategy in 1993. It was something that New Democrats certainly had been fighting to get back. However, if we could get back to a place where the federal govern-

ment is actually building those affordable units, the 500,000 units that New Democrats have called for, I would be happy to work with it.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I rise in humility, humbled by the confidence my constituents and neighbours placed in me to be here today to carry on the working-class values of Hamilton Centre that were brought to this House by my predecessor, the always honourable Mr. David Christopher. He exemplified the nobility of public service, which I hope to emulate and pursue in my work in this House.

I rise in gratitude to the dozens of grassroots volunteers who organized hundreds of door knockings, went door to door, street to street and neighbourhood to neighbourhood talking to my neighbours in Hamilton Centre. Without them I would not have the privilege to serve in this duty, and for that I am forever grateful.

I rise to share the sentiments of the leaders we heard here today talk about the importance of being a parent in this House. I rise to give thanks and gratitude to my incredible spouse, who has been there from day one to support me. I thank all the spouses of members of this House, who sacrifice and bear the brunt at home so we can be here.

I rise for my son, who is three years old and is excited to see daddy's new place of work. The most sacred time in my day starts around seven o'clock when I put my son down to sleep. I read him bedtime stories that try to imbue him with the characteristics for the person I want to see him grow up to be and teach him the values I want to see him grow up with.

My son's name is Langston. In his namesake, I am reminded of the poem *Dream Deferred*. In the words of the throne speech, we have heard the aspirations expressed to the government. We have heard them before, as we did in 2015. The question is whether this is also going to be a dream deferred.

We have heard today many people talk about the divisive nature of our society right now. Some would try to frame it as it being about east versus west. I would agree there is division in this country, but it is not a geographic division. It is between the ultra-wealthy and the working class.

I rise as a former city councillor, a very proud city councillor in Hamilton. I represented Ward 3. I would often say that my ward is to Hamilton what Hamilton is to the rest of the country. When times were good, our steel sector literally built this country. The working-class people had enough to provide for their families. They had benefits and pensions that they could rely on. However, through some of our free trade deals, we saw these jobs shipped overseas to districts that had lax environmental regulations and lower wages.

*The Address*

We have seen a bit of a resurgence in our city. We have also recently seen the erosion of our manufacturing sector with the loss of a company like Hamilton Specialty Bar, which was bankrupted by Bain Capital. Generations of workers are left without the opportunity to provide their families with good benefits and pensions. I stand here for those workers.

I stand here today for the water protectors in our city. They are protecting and holding accountable the degradation of our Hamilton harbour through a recent spill that happened.

I stand here today for the youth, for Fridays for Future and the students who campaign on the urgency of climate change. These youth will not accept words. These youth want action now.

I stand here today for organizations like the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, an organization I am very proud to represent. It stands on the front lines against the rise of growing white supremacy and far-right organizing in our city. I am here for the Disability Justice Network of Ontario, which is fighting for the most vulnerable in this country. I am here for groups like SACHA, the sexual assault centre, which is fighting for women.

● (1315)

I have heard the conciliatory comments across the way about collaboration. I would put it to the Liberals that if we want to close that division, that profound inequality that we see in this country, we only have to look to the wealthiest 87 families who, from 2012 to 2016, amassed \$800 million in wealth. Those families have more wealth than the 12 million lowest-earning Canadians. We have to fight back against the commodification of our housing markets, the commodification and financialization of every aspect of our lives.

It is in the spirit of co-operation and conciliation with my friends across the way that I would like to move a subamendment to the throne speech. I move:

That the amendment be amended by:

(a) replacing the words “tax relief for Canadians with a path to a balanced budget”, with the words “making Canada’s millionaires, billionaires, and biggest corporations pay their fair share, ensuring that we can fund critical services and make needed investments for the long term”;

(b) adding, after the word “potential”, the words “including building half a million affordable homes and expanding healthcare to include a universal public pharmacare program and a national dental care program”;

(c) adding, after the words “climate change”, the words “with a bold plan including stronger targets and eliminating subsidies to big polluters who are already profitable, (v) addressing the rising cost of living by taking on the big telecom companies to bring down the high cost of phone and internet services that families and small businesses need”;

(d) replacing the words “regimes in Moscow and Beijing, and protecting Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic”, with the words “climate crisis and the rise of the far-right extremist leaders”;

(e) replacing the words “with traditional allies such as NATO, Ukraine and Israel”, with the words “for multilateralism, peace and justice”;

(f) replacing the words “strengthening the relationship with our largest trading partners”, with the words “ensuring that any future trade deal is fair for workers, people and our environment”;

(g) deleting all of the words after the words “unity crisis, which requires” and substituting the following: “(i) taking immediate action to ensure Indigenous communities have clean drinking water, and access to healthcare and support; (ii) respecting provincial jurisdiction and supporting a strengthened Quebec within a united Canada; (iii) helping workers, particularly those in Western Canada, struggling to make ends meet within a rapidly changing global econo-

my; (iv) restoring confidence in our national institutions, starting by bringing ethics and accountability to the federal government and making sure that the government listens to people and not just to the wealthy and the well-connected.”

● (1320)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The subamendment is in order.

**Mr. Adam Vaughan (Spadina—Fort York, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to welcome the member. It is always good to see former city councillors on the floor of the House speaking to the issues that matter to municipalities. Housing was one of the issues that was referenced in the subamendment that was just tabled.

I have read the paragraph in the NDP platform on housing. As a former councillor, I was curious that it required a one-third, one-third matching funding, and that 500,000 homes were going to be built with no mention of how they would be financed. At an average cost of \$360,000, that is a \$180-billion program. If one-third has to come from municipalities, which is the NDP platform, where are the cities that have that \$60 billion financial capacity and how those cities would come up with \$60 billion? To put it in context, one-third of federal programs come to Ontario, so that means \$60 billion alone for Ontario. For Toronto, that is a \$30-billion program he is proposing. That would require the City of Toronto to come up with \$10 billion, an extra \$1 billion a year on top of the tax base in order to fulfill the NDP’s pledge as mandated by its platform.

Does the member opposite think the City of Toronto has an extra billion dollars lying about? If it does, why is it not building housing now with it?

● (1325)

**Mr. Matthew Green:** Madam Speaker, the former city councillor will know that under this current national housing strategy, the money does not really flow until 2024. Therefore, if Toronto had the capacity to build now, it would be building now.

However, the member is quite right. In our platform, it actually does not specify one-third, one-third, one-third. That is under the national housing strategy right now, which quite frankly is only giving a paltry \$2.5 billion to social housing, because municipalities cannot afford to continue to download onto the tax levy what is a national responsibility. To have the member rise on the national platform that is in fact spending 19% less than the Conservatives at their peak is a very interesting proposition to make.

We are looking to take action now. This can no longer be a dream deferred for the millions of people across the country who are in serious core housing need. In Hamilton, we can have record numbers of building permits and cranes dotting the sky while simultaneously having record numbers of people living in the streets. We have heard the government talk about lifting people out of poverty. My question is, where? Who are those people? They certainly do not live in Hamilton Centre.

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for the subamendment. It is particularly important for the people of Vancouver East on all of the issues he highlighted, whether it be on the climate emergency, housing, universal pharmacare, more affordability for people and so on.

One of the issues the member highlighted in his speech was the climate emergency. The government often says, and we saw it in the throne speech, that it is going to deal with this issue, yet this is the government that bought a pipeline and has not tackled the subsidies for the fossil fuel industry. We know, according to the IMF, that Canada is subsidizing the fossil fuel industry to the tune of \$60 billion a year. We know the government is not tackling the tax loopholes for the wealthiest and the biggest corporations. If it did that, we could save some \$10 billion per year.

Would the member advocate for the government to, once and for all, take the climate emergency seriously and, first and foremost, take action to reduce the subsidies for the fossil fuel industry?

**Mr. Matthew Green:** Madam Speaker, not only will New Democrats advocate for it, but let us look at the amount of money that is put into the subsidies for oil and gas. Let us imagine a compelling alternative for transit to shift to a carbon-free economy. We only have to look to the NDP national transit strategy that would offer predictable and sustainable operational funding to public transit that would be expanded, not just east and west but also north and south.

We have heard quite compelling stories around missing and murdered indigenous women. We know that if we provide north and south connectivity among isolated communities through good, public, reliable and safe public transit, we can reduce those highways of tears. Not only is this a shift from subsidies, but we have the money that we could invest in a very ambitious nationalized transit strategy.

**Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, congratulations on your election to assist the Chair.

I want to start by thanking the constituents of Beaches—East York, everyone who supported me in the campaign and at the outset of my political career when nobody knew who I was. It is a humbling experience, being a candidate in politics, where hundreds of people come together, all acting on behalf of me and my party and helping us, as individuals, come to this place. I sincerely thank the hundreds of people who have contributed not only in this past election, but also over the years. Of course, I also thank my family and especially my wife Amy.

I am not sure whether it is because of the last four years in this place, or in spite of the last four years in this place but I continue to think that this role of being a parliamentarian, being in government,

### *The Address*

being in politics remains a pathway to making one of the most positive differences we can make in the lives of our neighbours and our fellow citizens. It remains, I think, a noble profession, and we have an opportunity to display that to our fellow Canadians over the next two, three or maybe four years as we seize the opportunity of this minority Parliament.

Minority parliaments hold the potential for greatness. Peter Russell is an academic and long-time political scientist who studied minority and majority parliaments around the world, including here at home. He has called minority parliaments here in Canada some of the most dynamic in our history.

Of course, the throne speech makes reference to Pearson. When we look to the Pearson years, we see co-operation that was able to deliver the Canada pension plan, Canada student loans, public health care and the flag. During those five years in Canadian history, Parliament accomplished more than most Parliaments we have seen before, so this minority situation holds potential for greatness. It is up to us, and how we conduct ourselves in this place, whether we seize the opportunity or whether we succumb to partisan politics.

One of the jobs in this place, as we hopefully seize the opportunity, is to work across the aisle. In the last Parliament, I had the good fortune to work across the aisle with Murray Rankin of the NDP on cannabis amnesty and with Fin Donnelly of the NDP on the shark fin trade. I had the opportunity to work across the aisle with current members in this House from the Conservatives and the NDP to tackle election interference, platform governance and privacy protections. I think if people watched our committee in the last Parliament, they would be hard pressed to determine who was the Liberal, who was the member from the NDP and who was the Conservative. That is how this place should operate, particularly at committee.

I hope we see more of those opportunities in this place going forward. I also worked really hard in the last Parliament to carve out some space, which is not always the easiest thing to do in this business, for principled independence. If I heard anything from my constituents in this last election, it is that they want me and the people in this place to work together as much as possible to accomplish big ideas for our country. They also want us to be less partisan and to carve out more of that principled independence and to carry that with us.

I want to echo the throne speech and the message that Canadians sent us here with a clear message, which is to work together, and I hope we all take that very seriously going forward.

*The Address*

Canadians were also clear about the need to tackle climate change in a much more serious way. I had the good fortune in early June to introduce a bill to require the government to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050. I was incredibly happy to see that as a core commitment in our platform, and as a core and early commitment in the throne speech.

Our principal goal in this Parliament is to set Canada on a credible path to net zero while we ensure a just transition for affected workers and affected regions. That is our principal challenge in the coming years. We have come a long way over the last four years. In early 2016, Environment Canada told us that projected 2030 emissions were 815 megatonnes. After four years of policy-making that included methane rules to reduce methane emissions by 40%; phasing out coal-fired electricity; the price on pollution; massive investments in public transit, clean tech and energy efficiency; and the clean fuel standard, which, as an aside, all of us in this place need to keep an eye on because it is in the process of being watered down, that 815 megatonnes is now 592, a 25% reduction.

• (1330)

For the first time in my lifetime, we had a federal government that took climate change seriously and acted. It did not just set targets and blow past them, and that was the fault of the Conservatives and the Liberals I agree, but for the first time set targets and took action to meaningfully reduce emissions. Now our task is to build on that progress.

In our platform, we promised a number of important initiatives such as expanding electric vehicle charging infrastructure and planting two billion trees. We promised to incentivize clean-tech businesses in a serious way. There will be continued investments in public transit and more, so none of those measures add up to where we need to be. Therefore, we will require more serious action to meet our international, our intergenerational and fundamentally our moral obligations in tackling climate change and doing our part. Doing our part: What does that mean?

We have a 2030 target right now that is 512 megatonnes, and that will be a challenge. However, if we take science seriously, the IPCC tells us that the world has to reduce emissions to 45% below 2010 levels by 2030. How many in this place have that number in their head? What does that number mean? It is 380 megatonnes. Our current target is 512 megatonnes. The minimum we ought to be doing our best to reach is 380 megatonnes, 45% below 2010 levels by 2030, and that is not an easy task, but if we are not sufficiently ambitious in our goals, we will not be forceful enough in our actions.

On the matter of co-operation and climate change, I fundamentally believe in the platform we put forward, strong action, but I also saw a promise from the NDP on an independent climate accountability office, and that is really important.

A Conservative creation, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, holds the government to account on our behalf as parliamentarians. It helps us hold the government to account when finance tables a budget. When we turn those long-term goals into a five-year carbon budget to ensure we have short-term practical climate action, so too do we need an independent mechanism to hold the government to account on its carbon budget process. Whether that is housed in a

PBO or housed in the environmental commissioner or whether we adopt a different and independent framework, that promise of independent climate accountability is an important one. There is an opportunity to work across the aisle.

When we look at the promise in our platform on a just transition act, now we can say that the Bloc Québécois came back and that party represents a good portion of Quebec. However, if I am more honest about regional differences, and I see Alberta and Saskatchewan, I know, as a member from Toronto, that the Conservative Party best represents Alberta and Saskatchewan in this place. If I think about co-operation and working across the aisle, as we develop that just transition act, we absolutely must be learning from, listening to and heeding the advice of our Conservative colleagues.

The throne speech also talked about strengthening the middle class. Obviously, those of us in this place and those across the country have heard the Prime Minister and this government mention the middle class once or twice over the years.

Increasing the basic personal amount is an important step. It will affect many Canadians. These are big numbers. Twenty million Canadians will have their taxes reduced. Hundreds of thousands of Canadians will be taken off the tax roll. When we increase the basic personal amount from just over \$12,000 to \$15,000, it will mean that people who really ought not to be paying any taxes at all will not be paying them.

It will cost \$6 billion, and there is a challenge here. It is not paid for. It is deficit finance. It is obviously going to be implemented as it is our platform promise. If I am to be somewhat critical and fair, budgets continue to be sustainable and I will believe that as long as the PBO tells me that, but value for money is a different proposition altogether.

We do need to ensure that there is fairness in spending as between generations. I do worry, from a fiscal sustainability standpoint, about a broad-based tax cut or even the increase to OAS when they are deficit financed. They should be properly paid for.

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There is another area of both optimism, because of the success and progress over the last four years, and also some criticism. With regard to those working hard to join the middle class or low-income Canadians, those struggling with poverty, we have made incredible strides over the last four years with the national housing strategy, and housing benefits come online this year. Hundreds of thousands of people no longer live in poverty, almost 900,000 people, according to Statistics Canada numbers. That is incredible progress.

However, as chair of the anti-poverty caucus in the last Parliament, having taken over from Senator Eggleton, who continues to do incredible advocacy on a basic income, I would be remiss if I did not note not only the incredible progress, but also a lack of similar ambition in this place going forward.

● (1335)

We brought hundreds of thousands of Canadians out of poverty by increasing the Canada child benefit and the GIS. Going forward, I do not see similar promises from any party that will lift that same significant number of Canadians out of poverty.

However, there is good news with respect to another area of potential collaboration. I will provide a bit of history.

When Ralph Goodale was the minister of finance, he introduced a measure of basic income support, like the OAS, the GIS and the Canada child benefit, but for the working poor. It was not implemented. It was a good Liberal idea at the time, but it became a good Conservative idea when finance minister Jim Flaherty introduced it in this place and made it a reality.

In the namesake of his riding, Whitby, it was WITB, the working income tax benefit. In the last Parliament, we increased that significantly, and while I am not sure how many people were paying attention to the member for Timmins—James Bay and the leadership, he was calling for it to be increased, so we had a Liberal finance minister, a Conservative finance minister and an NDP troublemaker all calling for the same measure to be increased.

When we look at the total numbers, we see over \$50 billion a year for seniors in OAS and GIS and over \$20 billion a year for children through the Canada child benefit. However, even after the increases in the last Parliament, we only see \$2 billion a year for basic income support for the working poor, the people who are working multiple jobs, who are struggling to get by and who need it the most. That is where the action should be in this place, on poverty reduction, when it is an idea that we have already agreed on.

The throne speech also talks about keeping Canadians safe. There are so many different ways we can talk about keeping Canadians safe. For those members who were not in this place in the last Parliament, a member of my local chapter of Young Liberals, Reese Fallon, was killed in the Danforth shooting. The hardest speech I have ever had to give was at her funeral. It was a great honour for our community and the family that the Prime Minister was so engaged that he was able to come to the funeral, but we need action, and in his platform, we saw action. The question then becomes this: How do we make that action as effective as possible? As a reminder to all of us in this place, defaults matter, so if we are to give cities the power to set their own rules, there ought to be a baseline

set of rules that cities can opt out of if we truly want that policy to be effective.

With respect to keeping Canadians safe, I am happy to say that working across the aisle in the last Parliament on privacy issues, we saw a great deal of that work and those recommendations from our committee become promises in our platform. We are going to keep Canadians safe online. As my three-year-old grows up, he will live his entire life online, and we need rules to reflect his reality.

Thousands of Canadians continue to die because of a contaminated drug supply and our opioid crisis. To reference Statistics Canada numbers, for the first time in the last 40 years, life expectancy has stalled, attributed to the opioid crisis. Thousands of people have died. If it were not from substance use, I guarantee there would be more committed governmental responses from the provinces. As a federal government, we took significant action over the last four years, but we do not see that collective action across parties and provinces to address this real public health crisis.

The throne speech rightly says that we have done much, but there is more to do. I hope we all agree in this place with this simple premise: that we should treat drug use as a health issue. Yes, we must tackle traffickers and producers, but the very people who need our help, the patients, should be treated as patients and not criminals. If we do that for alcohol and gambling, we ought to do it for all substances. That is how we save lives. If we start with the premise that we treat drug use as a public health issue, and we all agree on that, then let us work together on what that means in legislation.

My constituents have also called for a faster strategy to tackle rare diseases, and they continue to call for a universal and national approach to pharmacare. I know that was referenced in the throne speech and in our platform, and there was a lot of good work done in the last Parliament.

● (1340)

I have a 13-year-old constituent, Helena Kirk, who was diagnosed with cancer at the age of three and went through 841 days of chemotherapy. She met with the Prime Minister, the science minister and the former health minister. In our platform was a \$30-million commitment to pediatric cancer research, largely because of Helena's advocacy. I want to thank Helena for her hard work and let her know that we will do as much as we can to save the lives of her friends.

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It is not only about keeping Canadians safe; it is also about all living beings in Canadian society who think, feel and love. That includes animals in our society, and our pets and more. We made progress in the last Parliament on animal protections and we have to continue to build on that progress.

Importantly, the throne speech talked about moving forward on reconciliation.

I will first talk about the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal case. I have heard the minister that say money is no object. At the end of January, we have to deliver submissions to the tribunal that properly set out a path for just compensation, saying money is no object, what it will cost and that we have a fair path forward. Having already spoken to the minister, I will be looking very closely at our submissions. We need to ensure that those in our society who have suffered discrimination by the government receive due compensation.

We have seen incredible progress on clean water, an issue I hear a lot about from the constituents in my community. Over the last four years, over 60% of long-term boil water advisories on reserve were lifted. We injected \$2 billion into the system. When the PBO said more money was needed, more money was provided. We remain on track to lift all advisories within the five-year commitment.

There is another specific project, in Grassy Narrows, that needs to be made a priority. I was very pleased to hear the minister say that money was no object and that the facility would be built with federal support. Again, I will be looking at that very closely.

Then there is the implementation of UNDRIP. I ran into Romeo Saganash very briefly when he was here the other day. We spoke briefly about our promise in our platform that his bill would be a floor. I hope to see the amendments, which were not adopted in the last Parliament, made to his bill. I hope his bill will be a floor. We have a historic opportunity to implement UNDRIP and provide the rights to indigenous peoples that they fundamentally deserve.

On a final note on reconciliation, on our urban indigenous communities, I did not see enough in our platform or in the throne speech. We need a much stronger commitment to urban indigenous communities. In Ontario alone, some of the estimates I have seen are that over 80% of indigenous people do not live on reserve. We need to ensure that indigenous services understands that and is able to deliver services properly to urban indigenous communities.

● (1345)

On Canada's place in the world, there have been great successes over the last four years. We saw greater fairness in our immigration and refugee system. Just to be clear, we brought in more refugees last year than any other country in the world. We are doing our part, which is the right thing to do. My riding has a very strong Bangladeshi community. Those in that community called on me to be vocal on the Rohingya refugee crisis. I and this government were, on the recommendations of Bob Rae. I am very proud of the government's efforts on that issue in the last Parliament.

We need to continue to take that leadership on the global stage on human rights. We need to continue to defend and support our multilateral institutions. We are best at fundamentally supporting

institutions. Whether it is training judges, election commissioners, parliamentary processes, we need to double down on what we are best at. We are doing it in some countries, but clearly, when we see what is going on around the world, other countries could use some of that stable support and democratic decision-making from the Canadian Parliament and the Canadian people.

On global climate action, we saw great leadership in the last Parliament on phasing out coal, not only domestically but also abroad. We were global leaders in helping the rest of the world chart this path. We need to continue to do that work, but we cannot do that if we do not do the strong work at home to meet our emission reduction targets. We have to help lead our country and the world on this defining issue of our time.

I will close by reiterating that we have in this minority Parliament a real opportunity to work together on these big ideas and issues that can make such a difference in the lives of Canadians and citizens of the world. Let us seize that opportunity and not waste it.

● (1350)

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my friend from Beaches—East York for his thoughtful remarks. I can attest that the three-year-old son he talked about is the apple of his eye and a very, very cute three-year-old. I am saying that on the record, in Hansard.

Some of the points the member raised on the growing need to have some sort of regulation of social media giants is a critical challenge that we will face in this Parliament. I think, in many ways, if we do not do that, we are going to see a continuation of the preference bubble approach to politics, because the secret algorithms and everything else almost encourage people to only listen to voices within their own tribe. The rhetoric that we see that is often influenced by foreign actors as well is limiting discourse.

I really like the fact that in the last Parliament a committee led by a Conservative member, my friend from Prince George, with this member and others, combined with other parliamentarians from other countries started tackling these issues. While there was not much in the throne speech on this, I wonder if the member can speak to that work. Is there an ability for some cross-partisan support to really get a handle on this for our children's future and also for the future of serious political discourse in Canada?

*The Address*

**Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith:** Madam Speaker, I hope to be able to work closely with the member in this Parliament on any number of issues. He mentioned the good work of our colleague from Prince George. I would add the member for Timmins—James Bay and the member for Thornhill and, of course, many members from this side of the House as well.

The three of us, representing three different parties, were able to attend in London. As I mentioned in my remarks, one would be hard pressed to know which party we each represented. We were there on behalf of Canada working with our international partners from different parties as well. Similarly, when looking at the U.K. Parliament, one would be hard pressed to know who the Tory or Labour members were. That fundamentally is the approach that bears results.

Tackling tech and talking about GDPR-like rules became a growing consensus at our committee, cross-partisan. We also looked at algorithmic transparency, the ability to audit algorithms to understand what are the positive and negative impacts of these algorithms that are being employed that are affecting our lives and affecting society.

In fact, in the public sector if a department or agency wants to employ an algorithm that is going to have a potential adverse effect, some 80-odd questions have to be answered. They are in the four risk categories. Depending on the risk category, they take certain remedial efforts. A private sector company that has many more data points and is doing many more things has no obligation whatsoever. That obviously needs to change.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member opened up by talking about the early days. What a lot of people probably do not know is that the member for Beaches—East York and I both ran for city council in 2006, in the city of Kingston. We did not run against each other. We were running in neighbouring districts. If I remember correctly, he was actually a Queen's student at the time. Unfortunately, the people of Kingston did not select him. I do not think they were quite ready for him at the time. However, it is great to be sitting in this House with him now.

The member talked specifically about the strength that we can see and the collaboration that can happen in minority governments. Indeed, he did hit on some of the very important work that has been accomplished by a minority government, such as the creation of the CPP, health care and the creation of the flag. Those are all real things that can happen in a minority Parliament when parties choose to work together.

Would the member comment on what he sees are the main struggles to getting that collaboration to work and how we could possibly overcome that?

**Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for highlighting my previous inadequacies. I joke that in that election I learned everything not to do.

There is a lesson in politics about running as a student in Kingston where I did not have a real community around me. When I was successful was when I ran in Beaches—East York where I grew up, where my parents were teachers, and where I played base-

ball my whole life. That is my community. Fundamentally, one should not get into politics unless one is representing one's community.

One can achieve greatness as a representative, a city councillor in Kingston, or maybe as the mayor of Kingston and one could have been a bouncer before that. We all come from humble backgrounds in our own life.

On the question of co-operation, rules can help change things, but it depends on culture and that culture depends upon the way we conduct ourselves in this place and outside of this place. I think there are great opportunities. The challenge is, of course, that we want to win an election. Everyone wants to win an election. An election is always forever on the horizon in a minority Parliament. That is the fundamental challenge, how to set aside partisanship while knowing that an election is on the horizon. It comes down to us and how we conduct ourselves. We need to take an approach to put co-operation first and let us put Canadians first.

• (1355)

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for acknowledging that Conservatives know best about the issues in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Hopefully we are going to be able to work together on these issues.

He seems to be a financially aware individual, so could the member explain why the Liberals continue to impose a carbon tax when Alberta and Saskatchewan are already utilizing technology and not taxation to lower emissions?

**Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith:** Madam Speaker, I heard the same thing, that provinces could reduce carbon emissions without a price. When I look at the Auditor General's work in Ontario, actually it is not always the case that this happens.

If we truly are serious about taking the most market-based mechanism we can, relying upon the market not picking winners, that means a price on pollution. It allows different technologies to develop, and we make sure the social costs and the negative externalities, if we are talking economics and financial language, are internalized in the cost of the good at the point of purchase. That is what a price on pollution does. It is a conservative idea going back to Ronald Coase, who was not a liberal. That is fundamentally the best way to tackle climate change.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is always good to hear the member's non-partisan views from the other side of the aisle.

*Statements by Members*

He talked about the urgency of the climate crisis. Perhaps he could comment on the fact that we have a Trans Mountain pipeline that was supposed to make the government money, and in some Orwellian fashion it was going to use that money to do good things for the environment, yet we hear now from the Parliamentary Budget Officer that we are not making any profits at all. I am just wondering if he could comment on that and why we have to stand up to the oil and gas companies and stop subsidizing the fossil fuel industry and instead move to a low-carbon future.

**Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith:** Madam Speaker, of course I agree that we ought to subsidize the things that we want, which are cleaner technologies, and not subsidize the things we do not want, which are technologies that hurt the environment. However, I want to be clear that when the oil and gas sector or other industries can move the needle on reducing emissions, there are opportunities potentially to offer incentives for them to reduce emissions if they otherwise would not. Really what we should be looking at is the dollar cost for emissions reductions and where the efficiencies might be.

On the Trans Mountain pipeline specifically, I always understood that the bulk of the profits, to the extent we see them, occurs when the project is completed, because that is when the capacity is able to increase and we will see more revenue generated in our economy and more tax revenue certainly.

Let me just note that the supply-side measures are incredibly hard to accomplish when there are not alternatives in the marketplace. Phasing out coal-fired electricity makes a good deal of sense because there are alternatives and we can see emissions reductions.

However, in taking a supply-side measure on oil and gas today in Canada, what is going to happen is we are going to see the same global demand. Global supply is more than sufficient to meet that global demand, and we will have frittered away industry in Canada and not made a difference at all to tackle the overall picture of global climate change. Therefore, we have to be very careful about supply-side measures and blocking projects in Canada without considering the impacts around the world.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

● (1400)

[English]

### HARBOUR AIR COMPANY

**Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to give my warmest holiday wishes to my constituents in Nanaimo—Ladysmith and to all Canadians.

I also want to congratulate Greg McDougall and the innovative team at Harbour Air. On Tuesday morning, I watched with enormous pride as Harbour Air made history with a test flight of the world's first fully electric commercial aircraft.

Harbour Air is a regional airline that provides an important transportation link between coastal communities in southern B.C. It has been working in partnership with magniX to become the world's first fully electric airline by converting their seaplanes to e-planes.

With the success of Tuesday's test flight, they moved closer to the goal and positioned a Canadian business as a global leader in zero emissions air travel.

This company has seen both the challenge and opportunity posed by climate change, and has stepped up for our children and grandchildren. I cannot wait to take my first trip on an e-plane.

I congratulate Harbour Air.

\* \* \*

### SINGHS DOING THINGS ORGANIZATION

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the residents of Surrey—Newton for once again placing their trust in me. I am truly humbled by their support and will continue to remain highly accessible. More importantly, I will always put their voices ahead of all other considerations.

With that in mind, I would like to acknowledge the youth-led volunteer organization, Singhs Doing Things, on its fourth annual food and toy drive. This past Sunday, over 225 volunteers came together to support the Surrey Food Bank in its single largest collection effort of 2019. Over 60,000 pounds of food was collected through generous donations from the community.

I want to give a special thanks to the donors, organizers and volunteers of Singhs Doing Things for all their hard work in helping the less fortunate.

\* \* \*

### DON PENNY

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to proudly pay tribute to a great Canadian business icon, Mr. Don Penny, upon his recent passing.

Don's legacy is acknowledged across the country as he was a founding partner of the accounting company Meyers Norris Penny, now known as MNP. Becoming CEO in 1977, he was proud that the small accounting firm that started in Brandon, Manitoba, now has offices across Canada and employs more than 4,500 people.

In recognition of his business acumen and philanthropic spirit, he received our nation's highest honour, the Order of Canada. However, Don never forgot his roots. Whether he was in Brandon, Clear Lake or Bay Street, he was always the same kind and generous man helping everyone he knew.

I offer sincere condolences to his wife Sandra, his son Darren, his daughter Leanne, his step-daughters Rhonda and Karla, and his five grandchildren.

Canada, particularly western Manitoba, has lost a great leader, visionary and philanthropist in Mr. Don Penny. May he rest in eternal peace.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### HOLIDAY GREETINGS

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to thank the people of Saint-Laurent from the bottom of my heart for entrusting me with a second mandate.

[English]

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my volunteers who donated their time and money to make it possible for me to return to this place to represent the community and the riding that I love so much once again.

With the holidays quickly approaching, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very healthy and happy holiday season. Whether people are celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanza, I hope this is a time of joy, peace, prosperity and a lot of quality time with family and loved ones.

[Translation]

I wish everyone happy holidays and a happy new year.

\* \* \*

#### MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

**Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I believe we would all prefer to face death serenely, peacefully and without suffering. Gloria Taylor, Kay Carter, Jean Truchon and Nicole Gladu sent a message: our death, like our life, belongs to us.

The autonomy bestowed on a person by law through the principle of self-determination and its corollary rule of free and informed consent is never questioned throughout a person's life, even in emergencies. Why then would things be any different for a person with an incurable or irreversible disease who is suffering intolerably? Why would it be any different for competent individuals who are neither depressed nor suicidal and who have expressed a desire to live fully until they reach the limit of what they can tolerate?

Let us make medical assistance in dying a non-partisan priority for this Parliament. The Bloc will collaborate. We must work together because it is our duty to succeed this time.

\* \* \*

• (1405)

[English]

#### SENIORS

**Ms. Jean Yip (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, from the neighbourhoods of Wishing Well, Bamburgh Circle, L'Amoreaux, Steeles and Glendower, I want to thank the people of Scarborough—Agincourt for the honour of representing them once again.

#### Statements by Members

Shepherd Village is Toronto's largest not-for-profit seniors community and has been in my riding since 1961. It is an active community and just recently had their milestone birthday party celebration, celebrating residents turning 95 and up. One really has to be 95 years old or older to be part of this group.

I congratulate Olive Myhre, who will be celebrating her 108th birthday soon.

Seniors are important. That is why we look forward to providing an increase of 10% to their OAS for those 75 years and up, and a 25% increase to the Canada pension plan survivor benefits for widows and widowers.

\* \* \*

#### TOBIQUE—MACTAQUAC

**Mr. Richard Bragdon (Tobique—Mactaquac, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to thank the good people of Tobique—Mactaquac who elected me to be their voice here in Ottawa. I also want to thank my family, especially my beautiful wife Crystal and our three children, Vada, Walker and Mariah, for being there to support me.

During the campaign, my father's lunch bucket became a very important symbol to me. My father is 68 years old and still works at the pulp mill in Nackawic. It is because of people like my father and mother who work in our factories and wait on our tables, the farmers who grow our food, those who develop our natural resources and those who truck and ship our goods that I am here today. They are the ones who are so often overlooked, ignored and increasingly looked down upon.

On this side of the House, those who have been forgotten and feel disconnected from the decisions being made here will always have a voice. They will be heard. They will have their rights and livelihoods defended until we make it onto that side of the House and bring about the changes they are desperately longing for.

On this side of the House and in this seat, we will remember those who carry the buckets.

\* \* \*

#### GORDON BEAN

**Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of an extraordinary human being, Gordon Bean, a tremendous public servant for 30 years and someone with whom I had the privilege to serve.

Gord left us far too soon, but not before teaching those whose lives he touched what it means to love, serve and be a friend.

Gord lit up every room he entered and was the friend that everyone only dreamed of having. He was the most selfless person I ever met. Even during his last two months, there was never a thought for himself, only worries about those whom he would leave behind. Gord lived his life to make life better for others, and he did.

*Statements by Members*

To Gord's devoted life partner Craig Richardson; Gord's father, siblings and their families; Shelley Dooher and her family, I thank them all for sharing him. Let us all take time to be kind and do something for a friend or a stranger to honour Gordon Bean.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our communities play a key role in protecting the environment and fighting climate change.

[English]

I would like to commend the District of Squamish for taking a leadership role in the climate emergency by supporting the national and constitutional price on carbon that our government has introduced, through its participation as an intervenor in the Supreme Court of Canada.

It is with great pleasure that I was able to participate in the submission of the application to have Howe Sound recognized as a UNESCO biosphere reserve last week. First nations, governments, NGOs and citizens have come together to pursue a common goal of a healthy, thriving Howe Sound. I am grateful for the ongoing leadership of Ruth Simons and Joyce Williams, and I wish to congratulate the hard work of the community to date in restoring this important ecosystem.

[Translation]

I look forward to collaborating on these issues with my colleagues. I feel certain that by working together, we can do great things.

\* \* \*

[English]

**BARRIE—INNISFIL**

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the residents and businesses of Barrie—Innisfil have always come to the aid of families, seniors and the vulnerable in our community at Christmas. This year has been no different.

Once again, the South Simcoe Police Service has had another successful "stuff the command post" toy drive.

With food bank use increasing, Pastor Howard and Beulah Courtney of the Innisfil Food Bank are doing whatever they can to help families have a magical Christmas dinner. Close to 5,000 pounds of food was recently delivered to the Barrie Food Bank by Barrie Ford, Barrie Chrysler and 400 Chrysler.

However, this year has been challenging for a couple of Christmas campaigns. Barrie and District Christmas Cheer, which helps 1,700 families, is a far cry from its \$250,000 target. The annual Salvation Army kettle drive is also struggling to meet its fundraising goal this season. I know the residents of Barrie—Innisfil will come through.

To everyone working to help those less fortunate, thank you for showing us what Christmas is about. My family wishes everyone a

very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous new year.

\* \* \*

● (1410)

**SANTA'S PARADE OF LIGHTS**

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents of Orléans for giving me their trust on October 21.

[Translation]

I am honoured to represent them in the House of Commons.

[English]

On November 30, I had the pleasure of participating in this year's annual Santa's Parade of Lights for the first time as the member of Parliament for Orléans.

[Translation]

Santa's Parade of Lights in Orleans drew nearly 130,000 spectators all along St-Joseph Boulevard, which we are proud to call the heart of Orleans.

[English]

The parade, organized by the members of the Ottawa Professional Fire Fighters Association and led by Bob Rainboth and Ken Walton, raises money and toys for the firefighters' Help Santa toy fund.

I congratulate all participants and volunteers who helped make this year's parade such a huge success.

\* \* \*

**FIRST HARBOUR AIR COMPANY**

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, something historic happened this week in my home province of British Columbia. History was made when Harbour Air founder and CEO Greg McDougall completed the world's first flight of an all-electric commercial plane. In the air for less than 10 minutes, Greg said after the flight that the retrofitted float plane "wanted to fly".

With the potential to fly about 160 kilometres before it needs to be recharged, the retrofitted de Havilland Beaver proves that commercial electric flight is possible, and we can proudly say that we did it first in B.C.

Congratulations to Greg and everyone at Harbour Air, and its partner magniX, for this milestone achievement. Congratulations, Greg.

\* \* \*

**DAUPHIN—SWAN RIVER—NEEPAWA**

**Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous honour to rise in the House for the very first time to thank the very many people who got me here.

First, I thank the constituents of Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa for placing their trust in me. It is a privilege to take this seat to represent them, and I will never forget who I am working for.

I thank my family. I thank my kids, Hannah and Mike, and especially my wife Leigh, for their dedication and support.

As a farmer and an eternal optimist, I hope to achieve real results in this Parliament. I pledge to stand up for our farmers and the communities they support, to constantly advocate for the residents of my riding and to defend the rural way of life. It is what my constituents deserve.

\* \* \*

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is becoming more expensive for average Canadians to pay their bills. Costs are going up across the country, and in Alberta in particular, families are struggling. Car insurance rates have gotten more expensive, electricity bills are higher and just this week parents are learning that they will have to pay out of their own pockets for their kids to ride the school bus.

On top of all this, Canadians are still paying some of the highest fees for cellphones and Internet bills in the world because the government refuses to do what is right and put the needs of people ahead of the demands of the telecom industry.

No matter where people live in Canada, they should be able to stay connected without breaking the bank. Wishing, hoping and claiming that industries regulate themselves just will not work. Canadians need a price cap on their cellphone and Internet bills.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### BERTHIER—MASKINONGÉ

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to two residents of Berthier—Maskinongé who have made outstanding contributions to civil society.

At the last convocation ceremony at Université de Sherbrooke, Amélie Drainville of Île-Dupas received her third Governor General's Academic Medal in recognition of her academic excellence.

It is rare for someone to win this prestigious award three times, and the whole region is proud of you, Ms. Drainville.

In addition, the Commission des services juridiques, Quebec's legal aid society, recently presented the Robert Sauvé Award to Michel Purcell, of Saint-Paulin, who is the coordinator of the community street outreach organization of the RCM of Maskinongé. Mr. Purcell was a trailblazer in rural street outreach and has been working with our most disadvantaged citizens for 25 years. This award recognizes his outstanding contribution to the community.

Well done, Mr. Purcell, and keep up the good work.

### Statements by Members

• (1415)

[English]

### BATTLE OF ORTONA 76TH ANNIVERSARY

**Mr. Phil McColeman (Brantford—Brant, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, December 28 will mark the 76th anniversary of the Battle of Ortona during the World War II Italian campaign. The battle was described by those who were there as having “the quality of a nightmare”.

The Battle of Ortona took place over the course of eight bitter days during Christmas of 1943. Victory would cost 502 Canadian lives. The best estimates put civilian deaths at 1,300. Sadly, the town had not been evacuated before being overrun by retreating Germans. The fighting in Ortona that Christmas was hand to hand.

Ortona is just one example of the extreme sacrifices Canadians made in the hellish conditions of the Italian Campaign. The campaign raged on for one year, 10 months and 22 days. These are sacrifices we must always honour.

Lest we forget.

\* \* \*

### CHRISTMAS

**Mr. Anthony Housefather (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker,

'Twas the last sitting week before Christmas  
And who knew?  
That Cuzner's Christmas poem tradition  
Would be assumed by a Jew.

But whether we light the menorah  
Or a big Christmas tree,  
Parliamentarians are asking for presents  
On that, we agree.

For our Conservative colleagues  
I know today has been a shock.  
In the spirit of the holidays  
I will go straight to the Bloc.

And for the Bloc leader, flush with success  
For Mr. Claus he had but one request.  
When flying over Quebec, please remove that red suit.  
It is a religious symbol and ugly, to boot.

For the NDP, pharmacare was on the list.  
It is supported by the government, but they have requested a twist.  
They asked Santa, who is known for passing out candy,  
To put dental care on the agenda. Would that not be dandy?

And when it comes to our PM  
We know what he wants, all being equal,  
No more hot mikes  
And a new *Star Wars* sequel.

I wish all members some holiday cheer.  
Enjoy your family and friends, and maybe some beer.  
And when we come back in January, let us see the light,  
Let us work together for Canadians and let us get it right.

*Oral Questions***ORAL QUESTIONS***[English]***THE ECONOMY**

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last month 71,000 Canadians lost their jobs. This is shocking when we compare it to the 266,000 jobs created in the same month in the U.S. Broken down by sector, the story gets even worse. Natural resource jobs in Canada decreased by 3% while they grew by 15% in America. Manufacturing-job creation in the U.S. is more than double what it is in Canada.

Will the Prime Minister admit that he is creating the conditions for a made-in-Canada recession?

• (1420)

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me start by recognizing the hon. member's service to the House and to his party. I hope he has many more years doing that.

I know we need to look at the month-by-month numbers, because they tell us about what is going on across our country. They tell us about Canadians who are struggling, people who are facing up to real challenges in their lives.

Our goal is to continue investing. We know that the program we have done over the last four years has created, together with Canadians, over a million new jobs. We are going to continue to invest to make sure we deal with the challenges across our country, improving the situation for—

**The Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

*[Translation]*

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the program is not working.

The Prime Minister drove out 56% of direct foreign investments. Energy projects worth \$100 billion were cancelled. Canadian companies are forced to close their doors and sell their equipment to American companies, which are doing the work.

One might say that the Prime Minister is doing more to create jobs abroad than here. Our economy needs to refocus on jobs and growth.

Will the Liberals present an economic update this week?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very important to have an approach for the economy and to give Canadians information about our economic situation. We will be making an announcement in the coming days.

We will maintain our approach, which seeks to improve the economy and make investments in Canadians as well as in infrastructure. This will lead to significant economic growth and the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

*[English]*

**Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the problem is that their high-tax, high-regulation, big-borrowing approach is not working. It may be creating jobs in other countries. Foreign direct investment into Canada has fallen by 56%

since the government came to power, over \$100 billion of investment in the energy sector has been cancelled and five G8 countries have a significantly lower unemployment rate than does Canada, including Japan, Germany, the U.S., the U.K. and even Russia.

Will the Prime Minister abandon this course of action?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me start by acknowledging that we do need to continue to focus on how we can ensure that the economy does well.

Our approach has been to make investments in our economy, and that approach has clearly been working. We have been able to have a higher level of growth than we would have had otherwise. We are expected, next year, to have among the highest levels of growth among the G7 countries, and of course we are going to continue to invest across the country to make sure we have strong employment all across the country, including in those regions of our country that are experiencing particular challenges.

\* \* \*

*[Translation]***INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the official opposition was briefed on NAFTA after it was signed. We still have more questions than answers. The aluminum, auto and agriculture sectors have a lot of concerns. The Prime Minister cannot expect us to accept this agreement without doing the necessary checks.

When will the Liberals release the impact assessments of the new NAFTA?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear: this agreement puts an end to the existential threat that our country has been facing since Donald Trump threatened to tear up NAFTA. Our economy and our country were in real danger. We avoided this danger. All Canada has to do is ratify this modernized, updated agreement. Jeopardizing the ratification of the new NAFTA essentially amounts to putting partisan politics ahead of the national interest.

*[English]*

**Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we are asking for the economic impact analysis so we can make an informed decision.

While the Prime Minister's undiplomatic behaviour at Buckingham Palace is providing comedians with new skit material, for Canadians this is no laughing matter. The relationship between Canada and the United States is crucial. Canada's foreign policy, domestic defence policy and trade partnerships are all shaped by a historically strong and positive relationship with the United States.

What will the Prime Minister do to regain a sense of trust and partnership with the President of the United States so that Canada's interests are defended—

• (1425)

**The Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Prime Minister.

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will tell the member what our Prime Minister will do and what he is already doing, and that is to get a modernized trade deal with the United States, our neighbour and most important partner, ratified. I must say that we are aware we are in a minority Parliament and that this is a grave historical responsibility of every member of this House.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, steel is protected, but not aluminum. Aluminum is produced in Quebec, steel is produced in Ontario.

Once again, Ottawa has sold out Quebec's interests to the benefit of Canada's best interests. Aluminum workers have been abandoned, as were dairy producers, cheese producers, Rona employees, forestry workers, our creators, the people in our shipyards and others.

Instead of denying what is obvious to everyone, will the government provide real protection for the workers in Quebec's regions?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to defending the aluminum sector and its workers. We fought to have the U.S. tariffs on aluminum fully lifted. Only Canada and Mexico have had these tariffs lifted.

When the new NAFTA is ratified, we will have a guarantee that 70% of the aluminum in cars manufactured in the area covered by NAFTA will be sourced in North America. The current percentage is zero.

We must ratify this agreement.

**Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloil—Chambly, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government seems to be the only one that still believes that tale.

The economic nationalism that serves Quebeckers and Quebec workers so well is being sacrificed by this government in the name of Canada's best interests. The Prime Minister has been repeating ad nauseam that he protected aluminum workers. That is true. He protected the aluminum workers in China, India and Russia, but not those in Quebec.

Does the Prime Minister realize that he is basically inviting aluminum plants to abandon their investments in Quebec, invest in Asia instead, and then come back to flaunt their steel in the faces of

the workers from Côte-Nord, Bécancour and Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is very important. This is a historic moment for the entire House. It is important to talk about facts and reality.

The reality is that this modernized agreement will benefit the aluminum industry, Quebec and all Canadians.

This is not the time for partisan politics. It is the time to stand up for our national interest.

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## INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, all parliamentarians agreed that the government needs to accept the tribunal's decision and stop the discrimination against indigenous children. That means that the government must follow the tribunal's orders, stop taking the children to court and ensure that the children and families do not have to testify in court.

My question for the Liberals is this: will the Prime Minister immediately stop taking indigenous children to court?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we need to compensate the first nations children who were harmed by past government policies. We are seeking a comprehensive, fair and equitable solution. That is why I asked the assistant deputy minister to work with those involved in the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, or CHRT, and those involved in the Moushoom class action suit to find the best possible solution for all of the children affected.

Our commitment to implement other CHRT orders and reform child and family services has not changed in any way. That work will continue.

• (1430)

[*English*]

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, that is not good enough. Indigenous kids and their families have sent a clear message: Stop taking us to court and stop discriminating against us. It is pretty simple.

The thing is, the tribunal decision did not just say that the government discriminated against indigenous kids. It said that it was “willful”, it was “reckless”, and the result is that kids are dying.

The question is very simple. The whole House agreed to follow the tribunal's decision. Will the government respect basic human rights and stop taking indigenous kids to court?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today we are in full compliance with all of the CHRT's orders to address the overrepresentation of first nation children in care. We have almost doubled funding to child and family services, with over 483,000 Jordan's principle requests that have been approved.

We agree that the most recent orders for compensation for first nation children harmed by government policies must be respected. What the CHRT has asked parties to do is to sit down and work out what exactly the compensation will look like, and that is exactly what we are doing.

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**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister is very well known for her support for the international rules-based order. In fact, she once told the House that it was absolutely essential for Canada's interests to make sure we stand up for a rules-based order.

Does the Deputy Prime Minister still believe it is essential for Canada to stand up for an international rule-of-law-based order in all of our trade agreements, including NAFTA?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me give members a few of the reasons why the new NAFTA is a much better agreement for supporting the rules-based international order than the agreement it will replace.

One is that in the new NAFTA we have a much stronger state-to-state dispute settlement mechanism, formerly chapter 20, now chapter 31. Second, we have gotten rid of ISDS, which is inappropriate in our trade relationship with the United States. Third, we have maintained chapter 19.

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the international rules-based order is more than just a slogan. This modernization of NAFTA, particularly as it comes to aluminum, should ensure that the three partners in NAFTA adhere to the highest rules, ensure that there is no transshipment allowing foreign aluminum into our country and make sure that the rules of origin for steel can be applied to aluminum to make sure that our world-class sector is successful.

Was the minister successful in all the aluminum rule-of-origin objectives in the negotiation?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, with regard to aluminum, let me tell members what our government has been successful in doing.

First of all, we have been successful in getting the section 232 tariffs on aluminum lifted. This is no small thing. Let us be clear: Canada is today the only major aluminum producer with tariff-free access to the U.S. market.

Second, in the new NAFTA, which will come into force with support from my friends across the aisle very soon I trust, the aluminum sector will benefit from an additional 70% content requirement.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Sylvain Maltais of the United Steelworkers is here today to express workers' concerns about the fact that the North American aluminum market is not getting adequate protection.

The government acted too fast and proved it has no respect for the greenest aluminum on the planet. When the Prime Minister visited our area, I clearly remember him saying that he would fight for our aluminum industry.

How is he going to protect our market and increase exports of aluminum from the Saguenay?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I met with the United Steelworkers today too. The Leader of the Government in the House of Commons was with me.

I visited the plant twice. We discussed Quebec aluminum. It was a constructive conversation, like all my conversations with unions from our excellent aluminum sector. Workers know that our government is committed to fighting for the aluminum sector and its workers.

● (1435)

[*English*]

**Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, there is pain in Canada's auto industry. The loss of 1,500 jobs at Chrysler and 450 jobs at Ford, and the closing of our GM assembly plant in Oshawa are evidence of a crisis ignored by the Prime Minister. Now, at a time when he should be focusing on keeping jobs in Canada, the Prime Minister has agreed to new rules that hurt the Canadian aluminum industry and has spent his time focusing on the best way to draw the ire of the U.S. President.

When will the Prime Minister start focusing on the crisis in Canada's auto sector?

**Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have always supported the auto workers and the auto sector. Investments by this government of \$440 million have leveraged over \$6 billion of investments in the automotive sector since 2015. In the first three years of our mandate, we have seen the creation of 10,000 new jobs in the automotive sector because we turned the corner, as opposed to the Conservative government. In its first three years, it lost 20,000 jobs before the recession even hit.

With respect to the new NAFTA, the rules of origin will provide more opportunities for the Canadian supply chain, because more of those parts will be sourced locally.

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### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, while our neighbours to the south added more than 250,000 jobs last month, here in Canada 71,000 Canadians lost their jobs. That is not even bad compared to what is happening in the natural resources and energy sector. Over the past two years, employment in Canadian mining, oil and gas has shrunk by over 3%, while in the U.S. in those same sectors it has grown by over 15%. This is what happens when the Prime Minister does not support our oil, gas and mining sectors.

When will the Prime Minister finally get to work doing something to get jobs back in these industries?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that the last couple of weeks have been somewhat good for getting our resources to market. I will tell members why.

Not only is construction on TMX under way, but I am also happy to report—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** I am going to have to interrupt the hon. minister for a second. I am having a hard time hearing the answer, which I am sure we are all looking forward to.

I know some of the members are whispering, but some of them have wonderful voices that carry very well. I am sure they do not mean to shout. It is just that they are talking to someone nearby, and I want them to be conscious that there is a question being answered.

The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan:** Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House understand that the sector is going through some trying times, but we know that it is getting better with the construction of the TMX pipeline. We know that it is getting better with Line 3, which is coming into service now on the Canadian side of the border. This not only provides opportunities for the industry per se, but it also provides opportunities for indigenous workers along those pipeline routes.

**Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, “somewhat good” is probably about a D+ where we are from, so that is not good enough. It is clear that this is happening because of government policies. The Prime Minister has really set the stage for a made-in-Canada recession. What is disturbing is that the Liberals do not seem to recognize this, and their “somewhat good” attitude is not good enough.

When will the government recognize that there is a part of this country that is literally in a crisis? Families are being destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of jobs are being lost. “Somewhat good” is not good enough.

### Oral Questions

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge that “somewhat good” is not good enough, but I would ask, if a government was not able to get TMX built, and if a government was not able to get Line 3 completed on the Canadian side of the border, what grade would we give that? I would give it an F.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mrs. Marilène Gill (Manicouagan, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, let me clarify the reality for the Deputy Prime Minister. The reality is that the new NAFTA is a betrayal of Quebec's aluminum workers. We are talking about Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, but also the 900 workers at Alouette in Sept-Îles. We are also talking about the 700 workers at Alcoa in Baie-Comeau, as well as families in Bécancour and Deschambault.

All those people are just as important as steel workers. All those people and their jobs deserve to be given their due. Can the government explain why steel workers' jobs are worth more than those of our aluminum workers back home?

● (1440)

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the new NAFTA is excellent for all of Canada's workers, including aluminum workers. Jean Simard, president and CEO of the Aluminium Association of Canada, said that the new NAFTA was the path to take. Aluminum workers themselves are saying that.

To jeopardize ratification of the new NAFTA is to put partisan politics ahead of our national interest. We are not doing that in our government.

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### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government claims to prioritize the interests of Quebec and climate change.

However, when the Bloc Québécois wanted to include compliance with Quebec's environmental laws in the throne speech, which is something the Government of Quebec expressly requested during the election campaign, both the Conservatives and the Liberals voted against it. We absolutely need to enforce the strictest environmental laws to combat climate change.

Why does the government refuse to commit both to Quebec and to the environment?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are working constructively with all Canadian provinces. Transportation issues connected to the environment may have both federal and provincial components. This is the case, for example, with the Lac-Mégantic bypass. BAPE conducted a study and made recommendations, and we respect these recommendations from the province of Quebec.

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**INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the government told us that it has understood the message sent by Quebec in the election. For their part, the Conservatives assure us that they want to defend Quebec's jurisdictions. However, both have voted against adding Quebec's priorities to the throne speech. They voted against respect for Quebec's environmental laws, against protection for supply management and against an increase in health transfers.

How can the government justify voting once more, as did the Conservatives, against Quebec?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are 35 proud Quebecers sitting on this side of the House who work every day with the Government of Quebec and the different municipalities.

Infrastructure projects, environmental issues or very specific files such as the new toll-free Champlain Bridge in Montreal, the Highway 19 extension or all the investments we have made in culture are all projects we have worked on because we have the interests of Quebecers at heart.

\* \* \*

**THE ECONOMY**

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we already know that Canada lost 71,000 jobs in November. As we also know, the rate of insolvency increased by 13%, and half of all Canadians are \$200 away from insolvency. Now we are learning that the default rate for non-mortgage debt over recent months is the highest it has been in the last seven years.

Is the government creating the conditions for a made-in-Canada recession?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, four years ago, economic growth was very low and unemployment was too high. We decided to invest in families and in infrastructure, and now we have a growing economy.

We obviously still face some challenges, but we will continue to invest to make life easier for people who are struggling. In doing so, we will have an economy that is good for all Canadians.

[English]

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we already know that we lost 71,000 jobs last month and that there has been a 13% increase to a 10-year high in the number of people who have become insolvent. Now we know as well that the rate of Canadians defaulting on non-mortgage credit reached its highest third-quarter pace in seven years.

Is the government not creating the conditions for a made-in-Canada recession?

• (1445)

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is always important to recognize that there are challenges. Canadians are going through challenges in parts of the country. We need to be focused on how we can deal with those challenges.

At the same time, we need to recognize that investing in our collective future is the way that we can actually experience success. We have seen over a million new jobs created by Canadians over the last four years and more. We are going to continue to invest to deal with these challenges so that people can have confidence in their future, for themselves and their families.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, confidence is not what Equifax is expressing. Its vice-president said that there has been a “significant increase in consumer bankruptcies.” Therefore, now we have a seven-year high in third-quarter defaults on non-mortgage debt. We have a 10-year high in the number of people who have gone insolvent. Seventy-one thousand people are losing their jobs. The minister continues saying, “Don't worry, be happy”, while Canadians are falling behind and losing their jobs. Why are he and his government continuing to create the conditions for a made-in-Canada recession?

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, actually we just came through an election campaign where we said that in fact we need to pay very close attention to the challenges that Canadians are facing. That is the reason that we need to continue to invest. That is the reason that we need to recognize that things like what we put forward this week, a reduction in taxes for 20 million Canadians, are a greater way for them to feel a greater sense of confidence and that they have enough money to spend for themselves and their families. We are going to continue with our approach to invest. It has seen success. Of course, as we face challenges, it is important to stay on that track.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to first nations, the Prime Minister says one thing and does another. He says he believes in reconciliation, but then he takes first nations children to court. Instead of starting the reconciliation process, his government is perpetuating colonialism. Let us be clear. His government's negligence towards these children is costing lives.

Will the government stop taking first nations children to court, yes or no?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today we are in full compliance with all of the tribunal's orders to address the overrepresentation of first nation children in care. We have almost doubled funding to child and family services, and close to 500,000 Jordan's principle requests have been approved.

We agree that the most recent orders for compensation for first nation children harmed by government policies must be respected. What the tribunal has asked parties to do is to sit down and work out what exactly the compensation for victims will look like, and that is what we are doing.

[English]

**Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, since the Prime Minister began his legal vendetta against the Human Rights Tribunal, we have lost over 100 first nations children in Ontario alone, including 16-year-old Devon Freeman, who hung from a tree for seven months outside the group home. It has been over a year since the Prime Minister's lawyers told the Human Rights Tribunal they were not going to negotiate with Cindy Blackstock about compensation. They would rather litigate. They are still in court trying to quash this decision.

Parliament has ordered the Liberal government to stop this vendetta. When are the Liberals going to call off their lawyers?

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we agree that we must compensate first nations children harmed by past government policies. We are seeking a solution that is at the same time comprehensive, fair and equitable. That is why I have instructed my assistant deputy minister to work with those involved with the CHRT and those involved in the Moushoom class action to develop the best possible method that includes all affected children.

Nothing about our commitment to implement other orders from the CHRT, or reforming child and family services for that matter, changes. This work will continue.

**Mr. Jaime Battiste (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this is my first time rising in this House. I want to thank the good people from Sydney—Victoria for electing me as their member of Parliament. I would also like to thank all the volunteers whose hard work resulted in our victory.

[Member spoke in Mi'kmaq and provided the following text:]

Msit Nokomatut, Eymu'tik tan teluwitmek UN year ujit Lnu'sltikw, aq kejitu teplutaqn etek ujit apoqnmmitamukw tan teli Lnu'i'sltikw. Ketu pipanimk mawi espipite'w Kaplnewel maliaptoq lnuekatik, tali kisi apoqnmatisnukw tan teli lnu'sltukiw ujit elmkinew. Mita menuaqlu'kik nutkwotlitewk siawi'lnuisltenew iapjui.

[Member provided the following translation:]

All my relations, we are currently in the United Nations Year of Indigenous Languages. While I understand legislation has been created to ensure protection of languages, my question for the Minister of Indigenous Services is how do we plan on implementing the language act, so that future generations of indigenous peoples are giv-

en the resources to ensure they can continue to speak the language proudly?

[English]

• (1450)

**Hon. Marc Miller (Minister of Indigenous Services, Lib.):**

[Member spoke in Mi'kmaq and provided the following text:]

Wela'lin ta'n telpi panigasin.

[Member provided the following translation:]

Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question.

[English]

We are implementing the indigenous languages act in collaboration with those who know best how to revitalize their languages, indigenous peoples and teachers, and we are doing so by providing \$337 million over the next five years for indigenous languages and \$1,500 per year for each kindergarten to grade 12 first nation student as part of the new co-developed education funding policy.

This government is firm in its resolve to support indigenous languages.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, despite the 35 members elected in Quebec, the Liberals did not address any of Quebec's requests in the throne speech. There was nothing on a single tax return, no commitment for the third link in the Quebec City area and no sign of any willingness to give Quebec more autonomy in immigration.

It is enough to make one wonder what kind of deal the government made with the Bloc for it to rush to support the throne speech.

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there were no backroom discussions leading up to the throne speech. As we know, the throne speech is a document that outlines the broad themes the government plans to address. The details will come, projects will be announced, and the opposition can judge us at that point.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we, the Conservatives, care about the Quebec nation and will work tirelessly to ensure that Quebec remains strong in a united Canada. Despite the Bloc Québécois' rush to support the Liberals on the throne speech, Quebec's three requests were left out of that speech: a single tax return, more autonomy for Quebec on immigration, and a third link between Lévis and Quebec City.

Where are the Liberals and the Bloc Québécois when it comes time to work for Quebec's best interests?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there are 35 of us who are here for Quebec. We will work for Quebec's interests. All I can say is that I hope the opposition will work with us for the interests of Quebec and Canada.

\* \* \*

[English]

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, premiers are united behind promoting our natural resources in a responsible manner. The export of more liquefied natural gas by Canadian producers will lower global emissions and create good, high-paying jobs. With 71,200 jobs lost last month, this could not come at a more important time.

Will the environment minister commit to amending Bill C-69 to allow for the construction of more LNG facilities?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just to remind everyone, LNG Canada represents the single largest private sector investment in Canadian history. It is a \$40-billion investment that is going to create 10,000 jobs at the height of construction and hundreds of millions of dollars in construction contracts for indigenous businesses, all while having the lowest carbon intensity of any large-scale LNG facility in the world and helping to reduce coal plant emissions in Asian markets.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my home province of B.C. can contribute in a very significant way to the fight against global climate change by providing clean LNG to Canada and the rest of the world, yet this industry is suffering under excessive restrictions and investors are losing confidence.

Western Canada needs changes to Bill C-69, the no-more-pipelines bill, so the industry can be fully developed.

When will the government make the necessary amendments to Bill C-69?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is well positioned to become a major player in the global LNG industry. We are taking action to be the world's cleanest producer of LNG.

Projects like LNG Canada are creating jobs for Canadians, opportunities for indigenous businesses—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** We were doing so well. I want to remind members that when someone asks or answers a question, we all want to hear what it is. I will allow the minister to finish his answer.

The hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

● (1455)

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan:** Mr. Speaker, we are at COP in Madrid right now and we are working hard to ensure that we get this right for the environment and for the economy.

[Translation]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Raif Badawi began another hunger strike to draw the world's attention to his wrongful imprisonment in Saudi Arabia. He has begun another hunger strike to draw the attention of Canada, which has left him languishing in prison for seven years. He has begun another hunger strike that will cause even more worry for his wife, Ensaf Haidar, whom I salute, and their children. They miss him.

What will it take for the government to take action and finally get Raif Badawi released?

**Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to freedom of expression, freedom of conscience and freedom of religion or belief, are an integral part of Canadian foreign policy. We remain extremely concerned about Raif Badawi's situation.

[English]

We have raised it at the highest levels. We have repeatedly called for clemency to be granted. We will stand with Mr. Badawi. We will stand with people facing human rights atrocities around the world.

[Translation]

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Montarville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the time for talk is over.

It is scandalous that Raif Badawi is still languishing in prison after seven years without having committed any crime. If the government can sit down and work with Saudi Arabia at the G20, if it can sit down with Saudi Arabia to do business and sell the country weapons, then it can certainly sit down with Saudi Arabia to demand the release of Raif Badawi.

What meaningful action does the government intend to take to finally have Raif Badawi released?

[English]

**Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me assure all members of the House that our hearts go out to Mr. Badawi and his family. The Prime Minister has spoken directly to the Saudi Crown Prince and to the King of Saudi Arabia about this particular case. We have raised the case directly to the Saudi minister of foreign affairs.

Our goal is not to grandstand; it is to work persistently, calmly and patiently to have Mr. Badawi reunited with his family.

## AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as this is my first time asking a question in the House, I would be remiss if I did not first thank the constituents of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound for giving me the pleasure of continuing to serve Canadians and to serve them.

I was very disappointed last week, when listening to the throne speech, to hear very little mention of rural Canada and our critical and diverse agricultural sector.

Ontario farmers are suffering from a lack of processing capacity and their inability to sell fed cattle to the United States. The government missed a critical deadline to apply to the World Organisation for Animal Health for negligible risk status. Why?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we understand that the closure of a meat processing plant in Ontario has significant impacts on our cattle producers, but we cannot compromise on food safety. Our government is working with the industry and with the Province of Ontario to find short-term alternatives and to see how the meat processing capacity can be increased.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Battle River—Crowfoot is proud to produce some of the best beef in the world, yet it is still recovering from the BSE crisis that nearly devastated the industry a decade and a half ago. However, on this road to recovery it was dealt a significant setback when the Liberals missed a simple deadline to apply to the World Organisation for Animal Health for negligible risk status. Alberta ranchers are suffering due to this Liberal mistake.

Could the Minister of Agriculture please explain to the Canadian beef industry simply why this deadline was missed?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government will always stand up for ranchers and farmers. We know how important it is for the beef sector to be granted negligible BSE risk status.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is working with the beef sector to develop a strong submission to the World Organisation for Animal Health for spring 2020.

• (1500)

**Mr. Dave Epp (Chatham-Kent—Leamington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as this is my first opportunity to rise in the House, I would like to thank the residents of Chatham—Kent—Leamington for the opportunity to serve.

The Liberal failure to apply for the negligible risk status with the World Organisation for Animal Health last July was a shocking sign of incompetence. Because of this ridiculous misstep, Canadian-fed cattle cannot be sold into the U.S. market.

Why then did the Prime Minister reappoint the same agricultural minister after she missed an application deadline that is costing our Canadian farmers dearly?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government will always stand with ranchers and farmers. We know how important it is for the beef sector to be granted negligible BSE risk status.

## Oral Questions

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is working with the beef sector to develop a strong submission to the World Organisation for Animal Health for the spring of 2020.

**The Speaker:** I want to remind hon. members, whether they are making a statement or shouting across the hall, that certain words should not be said in Parliament. I am sure hon. members do not want to be pointed out, but I want to remind everyone that certain words are borderline and are somewhat offensive.

The hon. member for Whitby.

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## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time I rise in the House, I want to thank the residents of Whitby for electing me.

This government's Canada child benefit is the most innovative social policy in a generation. It has put more money, tax-free, in the pockets of nine out of 10 families and has helped lift nearly 300,000 children out of poverty.

Could the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development tell the House how this government will build on the success of the CCB and continue to provide assistance to parents and children who need it most?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the hon. member for Whitby on his election to the House.

Our government introduced and increased the Canada child benefit precisely to help families meet the rising costs of raising children. We also recognize there is more work to do on this issue. That is why we will be boosting the Canada child benefit by an additional 15% for kids under the age of one. This will ensure that up to \$1,000 more will go directly to families when they need it the most.

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## INFRASTRUCTURE

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, residents in eastern Ontario have been waiting more than six months for an answer from the federal government on key infrastructure dollars.

Back in July, several projects, like the Morrisburg streetscape project and the Kemptville County Road 43 widening, were approved by the Ontario government. With no reply from the current government, another construction season has been lost to get shovels in the ground.

### Oral Questions

When will the federal government's dither-and-delay approach end so municipalities in rural eastern Ontario can get these projects built?

**Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government will always stand with Canadians, particularly those in small rural communities, to ensure they maintain the health and vitality of their communities by investing in infrastructure.

We are working closely with municipalities as well as the provinces that are nominating initiatives. We have a small communities fund carved out in our infrastructure envelope worth \$2 billion. We look forward to connecting Canadians in smaller communities so we can all thrive.

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### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in August, the Chief of Police for the city of Toronto shared the shocking news that over 300 people accused of firearms charges were walking free on bail, free to terrorize the GTA.

Criminals know the punishment does not fit the crime. They know they have a long list of rights and their victims have none.

Why is the Liberal government putting the rights of criminals before the rights of their victims and innocent firearms owners in places like Parry Sound—Muskoka?

**Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we take the safety of all Canadians in every community very seriously. That is precisely why our government is going to strengthen gun control. We are going to ensure that police and prosecutors have the tools and resources they need to keep their communities safe. We are going to invest in kids and communities to help them make better decisions.

We are taking real action to deal with violence in all our communities. We are taking action to keep our neighbourhoods safe and to deal with gun and gang violence. We are taking real action to reduce rural crime. We are taking real action to reduce violence against women and vulnerable people.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

### CANADIAN HERITAGE

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, media are reporting that a public servant at the Department of Canadian Heritage was punished for criticizing the Prime Minister. Manjot Bains said in an interview that she was shocked when she saw the Prime Minister do blackface. She said it did not make sense for anyone to do that, regardless of the year. When the interview was brought to the attention of her superiors, she was reprimanded.

Could the government confirm if this media report is true?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our world-class public servants do incredible work for Canadians and we thank them for their efforts.

Employees at the Ministry of Canadian Heritage work under a specific set of rules stated in its code of conduct. This is in addition to the rules of the Public Service Commission set out for all civil servants.

There is an ongoing grievance on this specific case and we cannot further comment.

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[Translation]

### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mrs. Lyne Bessette (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, November 19 was Women's Entrepreneurship Day. It was an opportunity to reflect on the advancement of women entrepreneurs. We still have a lot of work to do, but the future is promising, as 39% of the new businesses created in 2018 are led by women.

Can the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade provide the House with an update on the women's entrepreneurship strategy?

[English]

**Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as this is my first time speaking in the House, I want to thank the people of Markham—Thornhill for their confidence in me to represent them here.

Our government is committed to the success of women entrepreneurs and women-led and owned businesses. It is why we invested \$2 billion in the first ever women's entrepreneurship strategy. This investment is going to add up to \$150 billion to the Canadian economy by 2026.

We are proud to double the number of female entrepreneurs, helping them export and create more good jobs for middle-class Canadians.

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### FISHERIES AND OCEANS

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on the west coast we are facing a wild salmon emergency with disastrous effects for our region. Historic lows in wild salmon returns and the near extinction of some iconic runs require urgent action from the government. The situation has been getting worse. We need new investment now for Pacific wild salmon habitat restoration, enhancement and protection.

Will the minister let Pacific wild salmon go the way of the Atlantic cod or will she address this crisis with an emergency relief package? Will she act now?

*The Address*

**Hon. Bernadette Jordan (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time I rise in the House, I want to thank the people of South Shore—St. Margarets for re-electing me. I would also like to congratulate the hon. member across the way for his re-election. I look forward to working with him on issues that are important to all Canadians.

Wild Pacific salmon are extremely important to our economy and our culture in B.C. We know how important that is. That is why we will continue to work with our stakeholder groups and our partners to make sure that we continue to work with this important species.

We look forward to working across the way with all members of the House to deal with these issues.

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**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the government is considering approving the Teck Frontier Mine in northern Alberta. It will become one of the largest oil sands mines in Canada and generate a massive increase in carbon emissions, destroying nearly 3,000 hectares of old-growth forest and 14,000 hectares of wetlands.

Some affected first nations were not consulted because they are in the Northwest Territories. They oppose this project.

Will the government do the right thing and say no to Teck Frontier?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my colleague that under the new Impact Assessment Act we will do our homework. We oversee fair and thorough environmental assessments that are grounded in science, evidence and indigenous traditional knowledge.

This is a major project. We are very conscious of what our government will need to decide on in the next year or so in the context of a range of factors.

• (1510)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Christine Normandin:** Mr. Speaker, I seek the unanimous consent of the House to move the following motion: That this House resolve to grant Raif Badawi honorary Canadian citizenship.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**The Speaker:** I am sorry, but I cannot hear what the hon. member is saying and I know that other members cannot hear her either. If we cannot hear her, it is hard to determine whether we agree with her or not. I will allow the hon. member for Saint-Jean to continue.

**Ms. Christine Normandin:** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat my motion: That this House resolve to grant Raif Badawi honorary Canadian citizenship.

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

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

[*English*]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to rise today. I think it is only our second Thursday and will be our last Thursday question before we rise for the Christmas holidays, so I will begin by wishing everyone in this place a very merry Christmas, happy holidays and the very best of health and happiness for 2020.

I also want to wish you a very merry Christmas, Mr. Speaker. Congratulations again on being elected as our Speaker, and I hope that your 2020 is a very good year.

On behalf of all of us in the Conservative caucus, I wish the clerks, the pages, everyone who serves and looks after us in such an excellent way and everyone on the Hill a very merry Christmas and all the best in the new year.

I also would like to ask our hon. government House leader if he could please let us know the business for the rest of this week.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will resume debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. We will continue this debate tomorrow as well.

I would like to sincerely thank all parties for their co-operation in the past week. At the same time, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members a very merry Christmas, a happy Hanukkah and the warmest regards for the holidays. May everyone profit from the time away with their families and friends.

In a like manner, I want to thank the people who make this place run as smoothly as it does, beginning with the Clerk, Mr. Charles Robert, and his most capable team of House officers, as well as the pages, the interpreters and the support staff of the House who feed us, keep this place clean and keep us safe.

May this special time of year bring peace and joy. I offer my heartfelt wishes to all for a very happy new year.

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**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

[*English*]

**RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

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

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time today with the member for Kelowna—Lake Country.

*The Address*

I would like to start by thanking the residents of Northumberland—Peterborough South for allowing me the great honour to rise and speak today.

I would also like to take a moment to thank the leader of Her Majesty's official opposition for his service to the party, Parliament and the country. I look forward to serving in Parliament with him and continuing his great work.

Members are of course aware of the hon. member's accomplishments: He was the youngest Speaker ever in Canada, he increased the size of our caucus dramatically and he won the popular vote. However, I would like to relate a story of what happened during the campaign, as I think it highlights a part of his character that we may not all be aware of.

He came out to visit my riding, the beautiful riding of Northumberland—Peterborough South. My son was there and was a bit upset: He was moved away from his dad and did not like it. The Leader of the Opposition went over to my son, cheered him up, grabbed one of his hands and we started to swing him. We swung him once, twice, three times and he would not let us stop. The wild part was that whenever we went to any other political event, and I apologize for the breach in protocol in using a member's name, but my son would ask, "Is Andrew Scheer going to be there?" I am definitely the second-most popular politician in my house.

Once again I thank, from the bottom of my heart, the Leader of the Opposition for his great service to his country and what he did for my family personally. I would not be here without him.

On a different note, I want to thank the Prime Minister for his conciliatory tone in the Speech from the Throne. However, to solve the many issues we are facing today, change will require more than a change in tone. We need substance. We need willingness from the government to partner with a party that received the most votes in the last federal election. Canadians elected us not just to speak but to act. We need to act for those who are struggling the most.

During the last five months of the campaign, I door-knocked with our team, knocking on over 40,000 doors, and heard over and over again that times are getting tougher and things are getting more expensive. We need to act for those people. We need to make things better for the average Canadian.

The average Canadian now spends more on taxes than on food, clothing and shelter combined. This is being felt by our most vulnerable. Young Canadians looking to start their lives are finding it harder and harder to pay their rent or mortgage. The idea of saving for a rainy day, which will happen with the shocks in the economy, is not there any more. Folks out there right now are trying to make it from payment to payment and, quite frankly, these are not always being made. Nearly half of Canadians are within \$200 of not making their payments. Sadly, there are many folks who are not making their payments at all, as personal bankruptcies are reaching decade highs.

Our millennials and those before asked our generation and the generations before for an opportunity. Instead, all they got was legalized marijuana. The generations that preceded them felt the dignity and honour of working, of building equity in their businesses and homes, but increasingly the youth of our generation are being

denied that opportunity. We need to give them back the opportunity to not just get by but get ahead.

We need to act and we need to act soon for the underemployed and unemployed. We have had the worst job losses since 2008. Personal prosperity does not start with a government program; it starts with a great job or a new business.

Canadian small businesses provide more than 70% of the jobs in the private sector, yet the finance minister looks at business owners simply as a way to avoid taxes. I do not think that is right.

Businesses in Canada are not optimistic about the future. Over the last five years, we have seen a 20% reduction in investments in equipment and plants. When they look forward, they do not see good things to come. Government needs to get out of the way of business owners to make sure they can do what they do best: create jobs. We need to cut the red tape now, not five years from now, not 10 years from now.

● (1515)

At the heart of many of these issues is the productivity gap, which has only been exacerbated over the last four years. Canadians contribute \$50 to the GDP per hour of work. In contrast, our neighbours to the south contribute \$60, or better yet, Switzerland contributes \$65 and Ireland 84.

What is the big deal? How does it affect us? It has a real impact on Canadians, because it is lowering our wages. If we want life to be more affordable, if we want Canadians to be more prosperous, we must increase our productivity, because this has brought down our average wages to \$19. In contrast, in the United States it is \$23, or better yet, it is almost double that in Switzerland, at \$33.

When we increase productivity, we increase the wealth of our nation, wealth that can be used by parents to help feed their children, by students to pay for university, by the unemployed to be employed and by seniors to retire with dignity. Despite the overwhelming evidence that productivity will make life better for all Canadians, the word "productivity" was mentioned in the throne speech exactly zero times.

The Speech from the Throne was replete with messages that would suppress productivity instead of increasing it. It did not contain any measures to improve the drivers of productivity, such as innovation, technology, small business and, notably, any support for the resource sector. Canadians involved in the resource sector contribute a remarkable \$600 per hour to the GDP. If we want to increase the wealth of our nation, we need to continue to invest in the resource sector.

*The Address*

When we enhance the productivity of our nation, we necessarily create jobs, increase income and increase the size of the middle class. Of equal importance, we also increase tax revenue, which can be used to increase our funding for important social programs like health care, the environment and, perhaps most importantly, our military.

People within my riding and the rest of Canada need jobs, higher incomes and more affordable goods and services. Quite frankly, the Speech from the Throne did not provide those things. We have a choice to make: We can continue to watch our productivity slip down the spiral underneath the tremendous weight of failed policies, increased regulation and excessive taxation, or we can decide to take a different path and instead climb the staircase of prosperity.

Our nation is depending on us coming to Parliament and to our committees, supporting not just our party's ideas, but the best ideas. This is our reality. If we do not act together, if the government does not compromise with the party that won the most seats in the last election, we will further alienate our regions and drive a deeper wedge into our wonderful country.

We will need more than a conciliatory tone. We need an openness to a different direction, a more productive direction, a movement away from that downward productivity spiral and a movement up the staircase of prosperity.

● (1520)

**Mr. Nathaniel Erskine-Smith (Beaches—East York, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate hearing the member's comments about productivity. According to Clean Energy Canada, the number of jobs in the clean energy sector grew by 2.2% a year between 2010 and 2017, nearly 60% faster than the Canadian average otherwise. We did see in the throne speech a commitment to clean tech in the platform. As the provinces realize, we see a commitment to reducing taxes for companies investing in clean tech.

I wonder what the member thinks about incentivizing one of our fastest-growing sectors.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, I would echo my hon. colleague's comments in that we need to reduce taxation and increase incentives and investments. However, we should not cherry-pick. That is what the free market is for. The free market is the best way to choose the winners and losers.

When government picks the winners and losers in our economy, we are ultimately all losers.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for talking about working-class people and jobs in the resource sector. I live in British Columbia, where we have had the perfect storm. We have had a curtailment in the forestry sector. We have had record-low salmon returns. Our commercial fleet did not even get fishing until the end of August. People are desperate. They are losing their homes and their houses.

We are calling on the minister and the government to extend EI and provide training, resources and investments in these strategic areas, in the fishing area and in the forestry sector, so that we can maximize our profit.

We call on the government to support a bill from my colleague from South Okanagan—West Kootenay, who tabled a bill so that the government would buy Canadian lumber and use it in building infrastructure.

Does the member support these initiatives and calling on the government to fast-track this process and support these families, especially with Christmas fast approaching?

I think we should stand together and ask the government to take urgent action. This is affecting these families and affecting coastal communities. We need the government to take urgent steps right now to provide relief to these families and to these really important sectors of the Canadian economy.

● (1525)

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly share the hon. member's worry and concern for those individuals who are suffering during this most wonderful time of Christmas. No family should be suffering at this point. I believe that the government should do everything possible, not only for those immediate crises, but going forward.

If we have an economy that is rolling, one that is not losing 71,000 jobs, one that is not driving people into personal bankruptcy, we can avoid those tragedies throughout our country. We need to focus on the free market. We need to focus on our economy so that we have no one struggling in a country as rich and wealthy as ours, as ultimately we will be judged by the folks who are the most unfortunate in our society.

We have to do everything we can. We need to continue to invest in business and in the private sector and grow that engine that will provide prosperity for all.

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Yukon, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, you are doing a great job.

I appreciated the tone and positivity of the member's speech. I am going to quote a line from the throne speech. It says, "A clear majority of Canadians voted for ambitious climate action now." I am wondering what the member's plan would be for that if the Conservatives were in government.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, we had the most comprehensive climate change plan ever introduced in Canada. The reality is that climate change is a global problem and it requires a global solution. We want to invest in technology, invest in clean tech, and we are for all of the above when it comes to energy production.

*The Address*

We believe in investment in technology. I have said this to many high schools throughout Northumberland—Peterborough South as I travelled around: The cure for some of our greatest ills may be in this room right now. I am hoping that the solution is right there, maybe at the University of Toronto or the University of Ottawa. I am so looking forward to our future, and it is so bright. I look forward to great solutions coming forward.

Ultimately we could shut down our economy today and that would not meaningfully affect climate change, but if we develop that technology, at the University of Ottawa or the University of Toronto or York University, where I went to school, and export it to China and India, then we could really tackle the huge problem of climate change.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Northumberland—Peterborough South for splitting his time with me.

I would like to thank the constituents of Kelowna—Lake Country for putting their trust in me to represent them as their member of Parliament. I thank all the donors and the hundreds of friends, family members and volunteers who put in countless hours. I thank my husband Larry Gray, my son Daniel Gray, my immediate family and all of my friends. It was a family decision, and it was a huge family effort.

Kelowna—Lake Country is a wonderful mix of urban and rural, and we are one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada, which creates opportunities and challenges.

We have a diverse mix of businesses, including farms, wineries, microbreweries, aerospace, film and animation, and arts and culture. We have tourism and outdoor recreation, including lake sports, golfing, hiking, cycling and skiing, all at our back door, along with sports fishing, shooting and hunting.

Our largest employment sectors are professional services, health care, technology, trade and construction. We have a thriving municipally owned airport, the 10th busiest in Canada, as well as Okanagan College and the University of British Columbia, Okanagan.

I would like to step back for a moment to bring forth the reasons I decided to run to become a member of Parliament, which go back over two years.

The Prime Minister came to Kelowna to speak at a town hall at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan, and I went there as a Kelowna city councillor to hear the Prime Minister speak. I am sitting, in this House, the approximate distance from the Prime Minister's seat that I was that day.

After hearing the Prime Minister answer question after question about the tax changes he was proposing at the time, which would negatively affect families and small businesses, as a mother and small business owner myself, I knew first-hand how out of touch the Prime Minister was. It compelled me to run.

Let us not forget that at the time of these proposed small-business tax changes over two years ago, 35 organizations from across the country came together in an unprecedented way to form the Coalition for Small Business Tax Fairness, a unified voice to oppose the federal government's tax proposals.

President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Perrin Beatty, said, "I've never seen an issue that has generated greater concern among our members.... To make matters worse, allotting only 75 days for comment in the midst of the summer holidays is not a consultation. It's a stealth attack on farmers and family businesses."

Not all the originally proposed tax changes were implemented. However, many were, including changes to passive investments and income splitting.

I have spoken with thousands of constituents in my riding across Kelowna—Lake Country who have been negatively affected by the small-business tax changes. There are farmers who cannot retire, families who are paying considerably more in personal income tax and spouses who had to go back to work and stop volunteering at their children's school.

One family's story really resonated with me. They had to make the tough decision last year to not buy RESPs for the children. These are real people, with real-life situations. I rose in this House a couple of days ago to ask the government to repeal these tax changes and, in typical fashion, the response from the finance minister was out of touch with how these failed policies truly affect people.

In addition to being engaged in the community every day, I door-knocked for an entire year. Come snow, sleet or summer heat, I personally knocked on over 30,000 doors and with my incredible team of volunteers, we knocked on over 55,000.

We talked to people on their doorsteps, and I realized that the concerns I had with the government were not mine alone. I heard many issues consistently across my riding. People were not just concerned, but they felt as though their voices were not being heard.

Their concerns included the rising cost of living, overall affordability, mental health and addiction on our streets, the desire to work hard and get ahead, constituents in the resource sector losing their jobs, business tax changes, government red tape, infringement on personal freedoms and rights, clean air and water and cumbersome temporary farm worker procedures.

*The Address*

Kelowna is experiencing an addictions crisis that affects our entire community. Mental health and addiction is a topic I have personally spent a lot of time focusing on by meeting with individual residents, community groups, government officials, treatment homes, first responders and health professionals. It is clear that there is little focus on building a system of care that includes treatment and recovery. Constituents and neighbourhoods are feeling like their concerns are not being heard.

We need to hold criminals accountable for the flow of illicit fentanyl. We need laws that target criminals and keep them off our streets, and we need to better equip our police. We need to focus on helping Canadians struggling with addiction through recovery and prevention. This is a gap. There is nothing in the throne speech addressing this.

● (1530)

We need to amend the Canadian drugs and substances strategy and fully implement actionable items that address getting people out of addiction, including direct funding for addictions treatment and recovery centres. I implore the government to make this a federal priority.

Tolko Industries in Kelowna announced the permanent closure of its mill, meaning that 127 people who were laid off recently will now add to the mill's total of 217 permanent jobs lost. This brings the total jobs lost in the forestry sector in British Columbia alone to 4,000. These are well-paying jobs that support families in our community.

I have spoken to many people in the forestry industry and their message is similar: There is not a lack of renewable resources available and the costs and regulations associated with provincial and federal governments are making it more difficult to operate.

There is no mention of the softwood lumber agreement in the throne speech. Canada has filed trade complaints against the United States in the past and has won. However, when our local companies pay tariffs up front, it adds substantially to their immediate costs. The federal government needs to negotiate a softwood lumber agreement to end this dispute, give certainty to the industry and get people back to work.

My community of Kelowna—Lake Country is strongly tied to the prairie provinces economically. I meet people every day who live and work between B.C. and Alberta in the oil and gas sector. We used to have direct flights from Kelowna to Fort McMurray. Those have been cancelled due to the economic downturn. The throne speech says nothing about what the government is going to do about getting people back to work. We need to ensure that we have stable regulations within the energy sector in order to attract and keep investment in Canada. We need to get people back to work.

It does not matter whether they are students, families or retirees, I hear from people every day about the affordability of everything. I saw with all my door-knocking where multiple generations are living together, as many people are trying to figure out how they are going to get ahead. We need to keep taxes low while at the same time not get further into debt as a country. People are concerned about paying higher taxes in the future to pay off debt for decisions

being made today by the Liberals. There is nothing in the throne speech that talks about when we are going to get back to a balanced budget.

Something that is important to my constituents in Kelowna—Lake Country is to protect our watershed from invasive zebra and quagga mussels. There is nothing in the throne speech about protecting water sources. When these invasive mussels get into a lake, they change the ecology, basically taking over, making beaches un-walkable in bare feet and attaching onto infrastructure in water. Many people get drinking water from our lakes. A study showed it would cost \$40 million per year in the Okanagan alone in economic losses and direct costs to manage if these get into our lakes.

I had the honour of chairing the Okanagan Basin Water Board, which is the organization spearheading this in British Columbia. We met with the fisheries and oceans minister here in Ottawa to elevate the issue when the invasive mussels presented themselves just south of the border in the United States and moved west to Manitoba. The allocation of resources from the government was nominal and it did nothing to protect the Okanagan basin or western Canada from these invasive mussels progressing west.

Last, I am honoured to have been asked to serve as the shadow cabinet minister for interprovincial trade. This will bring the voices of Kelowna—Lake Country and British Columbia forward at an elevated level to hold the government to account. The free movement of goods, services and people across provincial borders is imperative. Red tape stifles business. We have free trade agreements with other countries but not within our own country. As an entrepreneur working in the British Columbia wine industry for 27 years, I saw first-hand how interprovincial trade barriers made it challenging to expand markets within our local British Columbia wineries.

It is no secret that our country is currently divided. Internal trade disputes have escalated between provinces, creating uncertainty. The government must take national unity seriously, reduce regulations and free up the movement of goods and services.

My commitment is to continue to be active and engaged in my community while being a strong voice in this House for the constituents of Kelowna—Lake Country.

● (1535)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate a number of the comments that the member raised, in particular, the issue of water management. In the province of Manitoba, Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipeg are massive bodies of water. There is a great deal of concern in regard to water management in general, whether it is on the Prairies, in British Columbia or anywhere in Canada, even right into our oceans.

*The Address*

I am hopeful that in the coming months and years we will see a higher sense of co-operation in the standing committees to look at potential studies that would ultimately see a higher sense of co-operation. The member made reference indirectly through her comments on trade that as a national government we cannot do it alone and we need to work with other stakeholders, in particular, our provinces and territories and indigenous people and so forth.

I would like to get the member's thoughts on the need for co-operation that goes even beyond the House of Commons, but it sure would be nice to see it here on the floor of the House.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Mr. Speaker, water is a very important resource to many of our communities. It really involves all levels of government working together. Different jurisdictions have different levels of authority. For example, I know that in the Okanagan with the Okanagan Lake system it is the Province of B.C. that manages the water flows throughout the lake system, which can affect usage by residents and also affect fish.

There are a lot of other ways that we can work together. At the federal level there are different funding opportunities in order to protect our lake and water systems. It is something that I think collectively is probably important to everyone and is something we can definitely work together on.

• (1540)

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise and welcome the new member for Kelowna—Lake Country to the House. My partner and I know her riding well. We spend our summer holidays there every year. I look forward to working with her in this House.

I was very pleased to see her identify the omission of the opioid crisis in the throne speech, and I want to ask her about another omission I see in that throne speech. A year ago, the government adopted the 90-90-90 targets of the UNAIDS organization, which would allow us to eliminate HIV, to eradicate this epidemic once and for all. What we have seen since that time is no new programs to actually make those goals a reality.

In the last three years, we have seen a spike in HIV infections in British Columbia, and in particular in the north Okanagan and among indigenous people.

Does the member share my concern about the Liberals' lack of action on this great opportunity to eliminate HIV-AIDS once and for all?

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Mr. Speaker, anytime people have health care issues, it is definitely important. We know that there are different levels of authority and we need to respect that, but I believe it is definitely important to all of us.

**The Speaker:** I have to interrupt the hon. member. She will have one minute and 21 seconds remaining upon our return to this debate.

**ROYAL ASSENT**

• (1605)

[*Translation*]

A message was delivered by the Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, it is the pleasure of Her Excellency the Governor General that this honourable House do attend her immediately in the chamber of the Senate.

Accordingly, the Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

*And being returned:*

**The Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that when the House went up to the Senate chamber Her Excellency the Governor General was pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the royal assent to Bill C-2, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2020.

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

[*English*]

**RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

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

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to welcome with all enthusiasm the new member of Parliament for Kelowna—Lake Country. She has done so much in her community already and she will do so much more, especially given her story today of how much door-knocking she has done. I know her volunteers, family members and the community are so happy to see her in this role.

Christy Clark, the former premier of my province, once called Kelowna the “cradle of free enterprise”. Today, the member has talked about how important small business is to both the Okanagan and the way of life we have. In British Columbia, we pride ourselves on asking government to get out of the way. The member of Parliament for Kelowna—Lake Country has mentioned some of the activities she would like to do to help small businesses in her riding. Could she mention one or two of those things today? I think we would all love to hear some of her intentions in the days ahead.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Madam Speaker, small business absolutely is the backbone of our economy. Of course, we have some large and medium-size businesses as well, but certainly, we have a lot of small business owners. Basically, what I hear is that people are willing to take risks, they put their house on the line, and it should be okay for them to want to get ahead. I have heard business owners, who are quite frustrated, ask why they should continue to stay in business, because they are working seven days a week, 12 hours a day. Some of the tax changes that I spoke about repealing would definitely be helpful to them.

*The Address*

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, before I begin I wish to inform you I will be splitting my time with the member for Milton.

I want to express my overwhelming gratitude to the people of Whitby. I am so happy to be here. It is such an honour to be sitting in the House and to have the opportunity to serve at the highest level of our democracy. I am elated by the fact that the people of Whitby chose me and the Liberal Party to represent them in the House.

I also want to thank each and every member of the House on their election. I also thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for his years of service. I would like to acknowledge the many exceptional people who made profound contributions to my campaign. No matter how small or large their involvement was, I am forever indebted to them and touched by their generosity and all they gave. They inspired me every day, and continue to do so. There are too many people to name, but I want them all to know that they paved the way for me to be here. I thank them for putting their confidence in me. I will never take for granted the great privilege it is to serve in the House.

I would like to also thank four generations of women in my life who have been the bedrock of my family: my grandmother, mother, sister, my wife, and my eight-year-old little girl. These strong, resilient women have supported me in so many ways and really provided a foundation of love and support for me throughout my life. I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

I also want to acknowledge my father for his 30 or more years of service in the public service. He was a police officer for the Peel region and served on the National Parole Board. I thank my dad for always being a great role model to me and showing me what a life of service is really about.

I want to state something plainly and clearly with all the force and conviction that I feel for it: The Liberal Party of Canada is truly the reason I ran in this election.

Before entering federal politics, I was an entrepreneur, a sort of special type of entrepreneur: a social entrepreneur. I built a mission-based consulting company, specializing in social innovation. That is right, social innovation. What does that mean? Social innovation is applying new approaches to society's toughest and most persistent challenges. I spent over a decade working with teams of people, mostly in the non-profit and charitable sector, but in many cases across all sectors, to facilitate inclusive, consultative processes using design-thinking and collective-impact approaches that generated innovative solutions to achieve systemic change. I have worked on ocean protection, energy efficiency, food security, affordable housing, children's health and nutrition, environmental monitoring, waste reduction, workforce development, child care settlement, seniors care, education, mental health, diversity and inclusion and many more.

In over 350 projects, I studied the persistent social challenges and took the many perspectives of stakeholders into account to generate innovative solutions with many stakeholders.

Based on these experiences, I see that the Liberal Party in the last term really stepped up to the plate. It consulted the key stakeholders on these important issues and matters to Canadians, and gathered

research and engaged partners and actors from across Canada in formulating solutions and strategies for change. It made evidence-based decisions and then committed significant and appropriate resources to make strategic investments in addressing the many issues that matter to Canadians.

This is the very definition of good governance. Since joining the party, I have been absolutely awestruck at how open, authentic, supportive and hard-working the people in this government really are, including our cabinet and leader. Responsive, accountable, visionary, strategic and hard-working: I think these are what Canadians want in their government and why we have been chosen to deliver on this for another term.

During this election, the people of Whitby shared many stories, experiences and concerns with me at their front door. They talked about the many challenges they were facing in their daily lives and their concerns about their families and preserving their quality of life. They identified pressing issues that are important to them and that should be top of mind for this government moving forward. These included supporting our seniors, addressing climate change, building a stronger local economy, making home ownership more attainable for many and developing a central infrastructure to reduce commute times. They talked about the pressures they experienced from the rising cost of living.

● (1610)

I heard about the challenges experienced by parents who had children with developmental disabilities. I heard about the need for community safety and the need for youth mental health supports and programming and many others.

The most prevalent issues for Whitby that I will discuss today are seniors, climate change and local economic development.

In supporting our seniors, I will say that it was a pleasure to meet many of our seniors across Whitby over the course of the fall. I visited many seniors homes and talked to hundreds of seniors. As we know, a higher proportion of the population is reaching the age of retirement, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have engaged with seniors and heard their feelings and concerns.

Many talked about income security, the rising cost of living and the limited availability of affordable housing options that are really geared to their needs, and the challenges they have experienced in accessing health care. People told me about the cost of medication and dental care, which is putting additional strain on them.

*The Address*

Our government over its last term began addressing all of these issues in our communities, including making the largest contribution in history to the Canada pension plan, increasing old age security and the guaranteed income supplement, and returning the age of retirement to 65 after the previous Conservative government raised it to 67. We also laid the foundation for national universal pharmacare, and the national housing strategy certainly focuses on the needs of seniors. I was extremely happy to hear that seniors were explicitly mentioned multiple times in the Speech from the Throne. It is clear that our seniors are top of mind and important to us in addressing their needs moving forward.

Again, we are making seniors a priority by increasing old age security for people over age 75 and implementing national pharmacare with dental benefits and increasing the survivor benefit by 25%. There are a significant number of things in the platform that are really going to help support our seniors.

The next issue I want to talk about briefly is action on climate change. This is the top issue for my constituents. Many times over they told me of their great concerns about flooding and other environmental disasters. We have taken their needs seriously, and in the throne speech it was good to hear many references to climate action. In fact, our government has done more on climate change than probably any other government in Canadian history, and has always listened to science-based research and data. We have taken international targets seriously and are putting in place instruments and tools to achieve the long-term behavioural change that will address the causes of the issue.

We are making positive steps forward. We declared a national climate emergency. We put a price on pollutants. We protected 14% of Canada's coastal and marine ecosystem. We developed a pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change with the input of stakeholders from across the country. This framework allowed each province and territory to have input and set targets for reduced emissions by building resilience while growing our economy at the same time. This is a really balanced approach, thinking that the environment and the economy can go hand in hand.

We are doing and committing to a lot more in the platform for this term. I am really proud to see things in there like planting two billion trees, protecting 25% of our land and oceans by 2025 and, eventually, by 2050, getting to zero carbon emissions.

We know that we have to move to electric vehicles, support green infrastructure and increase the energy efficiency in people's homes. We are making it easier for them to do that.

• (1615)

Lastly, my constituents wanted the government to help build a stronger local economy, and there are many opportunities to do that. The most important thing for me is to acknowledge the track record of success of our Liberal government since the last term. We have created just under one million jobs, reduced poverty significantly, invested in infrastructure, invested an unprecedented amount in R and D and innovation in high-growth industries, supported the skilled trades, invested in small business and have set up regional economic agencies, development agencies and more. I think—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The member's time is up. I apologize for not giving him the one-minute warning. The member may be able to incorporate the rest of his speech into questions and comments.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, since this is the first time that I rise in the House, I will start out by thanking the people of Beauport-Limoilou for entrusting me with the mandate to represent them. I thank them for their confidence and the hard work they all do every day to improve their lives in the riding.

I would like to ask my colleague a question.

Granted, the Liberal government has made a number of changes to improve Canada's situation in terms of climate change. Nevertheless, it spent several billion dollars to purchase the Trans Mountain pipeline that will carry oil to the Pacific near Vancouver, potentially threatening certain species, including salmon. Then there is the so-called new NAFTA, which turns its back on Quebec's green aluminum industry.

How can we really improve the climate if we are also taking actions such as these?

• (1620)

[*English*]

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, our government is taking a balanced approach to addressing climate change and building the economy at the same time. This is a sophisticated approach. It does not mean that we take extreme sides one way or another; we have to do both at the same time. We have to look at the environmental impacts of these major investments in infrastructure and to take Canadian workers' lives and jobs, their livelihoods, seriously all across the country. We need to support those industries as well as mitigate the risk to climate change.

We know that moving to a low carbon economy is going to take time. In the interim, we need to support our workers and get our oil to market.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to welcome the member for Whitby to the House of Commons.

I was reading a letter from 11,000 scientists who are involved in studying our climate and who declare unequivocally that planet earth is facing a climate emergency. I take great stock in what scientists are saying.

The member was talking about how he values evidence-based decision-making. Scientists are stating unequivocally that we are facing a climate emergency, yet his government has gone ahead and bought a bitumen oil-exporting pipeline and plans to triple its exports.

Can the member try to qualify how he can support such a project, how his government can support such a project, yet firmly believe in evidence-based decision-making?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Madam Speaker, my hon. colleague's question is one that other people also have. It is a common question. The evidence is clear that we are facing a climate emergency and we need to take it seriously. Our government is really stepping up to address that issue.

The progressive measures in the platform are really working toward reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. It would be great if we could reach those targets more quickly. It is what we intend to do if we can get the co-operation of industry and the many other stakeholders involved in this work.

**Mr. Adam van Koevorden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth and to the Minister of Canadian Heritage (Sport), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, while I had the occasion to stand up in the House yesterday, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my neighbours in Milton for the opportunity to serve here, congratulate you on your nomination as Deputy Speaker, and congratulate every member in this House for their election to the 43rd Canadian Parliament. I would like to reiterate the sense of honour and privilege that I feel in having the opportunity to serve my neighbours in Milton.

My neighbours and I ran a really long campaign, over a year. We knocked on doors for about 400 days. We spoke to a lot of our neighbours, and those are the first people I want to thank, the people who sent me here to represent them.

I would also like to thank my campaign manager, Geoff Carpenter, a team of volunteers, my mother Beata, my dad Joe, my brother Luke and my dog Cairo. He is an Egyptian street dog and he is a bit temperamental. A lot of the volunteers will recognize that. Sometimes when they came into the office, he was a bit “barky”. I also thank the neighbours who put up with some of the barking, because it was a bit trying at times.

I would also like to thank the former member who represented Milton, Lisa Raitt. She did a great job of representing Milton for nine years, and I know that I have big shoes to fill.

I made a promise to my neighbours to bring their voice to Ottawa and not just amplify my own or Ottawa's voice in Milton. I am going to go through a couple of the things that I heard at my neighbours' doors or during appointments with people at my office since I have been elected. I would like to talk about a couple of those issues, because I think they are really important.

Whether it was at the door, at a town hall with Fridays for Future in Milton or with GASP, a lot of people in Milton want to talk about the environment, because it is a global crisis, as many of the questions earlier today raised.

### *The Address*

I would like to read a quote from a climate scientist named Professor Katharine Hayhoe:

Does a thermometer give us different answers depending on if we're Liberal or Conservative?

Of course, the answer is no. If a thermometer is telling us that the planet is warming up, then we need to do our job in order to make a switch to clean energy and find cleaner sources of energy with more efficient ways of using it. We need to lower our emissions.

We have a responsibility to youth, particularly youth like Greta Thunberg and the thousands of young people she has inspired to be young activists, to do a better job as legislators and users of that energy.

As somebody who studied science in university, I want to take an evidence-based, scientific approach to some of these solutions. Carbon pricing has won a Nobel Prize in economics because it is a very, very effective solution. I am glad that our government has stepped in to make sure that everybody follows a carbon pricing scheme. Investments in green energy and green infrastructure across the country will continue to bring our goal of being at zero by 2050 all the closer.

There are some local resource extraction projects, aggregate mines, and a proposed intermodal infrastructure project, which my neighbours are vociferously opposed to. I will ensure that their perspectives are heard in this House.

Second, the topic of immigration came up a lot. When I was 26 years old, I had the honour of carrying our flag into the opening ceremonies of the Bird's Nest stadium at the Olympic Games. When I was the flag-bearer for Team Canada at the Olympics and one of my teammates started singing “O Canada”, quickly about 300 of my teammates and sporting heroes joined in. As I turned around and raised the flag, my eyes swept across the parade of athletes from different countries around the world, and I noticed something: Team Italy looked like Italians and Team Norway looked like Norwegians. When I faced Team Canada, much like this House, we looked like the world. That diversity is something that I do not think we can take for granted. It is something for which we have got to be consistent champions.

My profile as an athlete and my platform as an athlete allowed me to do a lot of great work with organizations like Right to Play and WaterAid as an athlete ambassador and somebody who could bring light to really important projects around the world.

*The Address*

I was a little bit disheartened to hear in other platforms a commitment to lower the amount of foreign aid that we give to other countries and the work that we do there. I think foreign aid is a really important investment in global security. It is an investment in our own security here in Canada and it is an acknowledgement that we have it really good in Canada. We live in one of the greatest countries in the world and we are very fortunate. Part of recognizing that is recognizing the obligation that we have globally to do a little bit of work around the world.

The best part of campaigning was learning so much about other cultures. I travelled a lot as an athlete, but my year at people's doors was a totally new look into what diversity and multiculturalism looks like in Milton. I want to thank all the different communities that welcomed me in whether they were Pakistani, Cameroonian or Nigerian. Whether I was welcomed into their kitchens, churches, temples, gurdwaras, mosques or hockey rinks, it was a really cool experience. I got to know a lot of people from different cultures whom I probably would not have known otherwise. I am more prepared than I ever have been to express their needs, concerns and issues here in the House of Commons.

• (1625)

Individuals and families are coming from all over Canada, and they would like to start a life in Milton. Not only is that great for the diversity of our country, but it is also great for our economy. It is one of the reasons we have grown so quickly in the last four years.

I am happy that our government is renewing our commitments to NATO, foreign aid and the United Nations peacekeeping efforts. We are focused on decreasing gender inequality around the world.

A lot of the work that I did with WaterAid and with Right To Play seized upon ensuring that girls and young women have access to education, to sport and, most notably, to hygiene and sanitation. WaterAid is doing incredible work, and I am happy to be able to highlight that today.

Diversity is the strength of this nation, and whether it is through my role as MP for a diverse community like Milton, or as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth and to the Minister of Canadian Heritage for Sport, I will continue to be a champion for all of these values.

I grew up in community housing in north Oakville. Co-ops are not a place where poverty exists at all. Co-ops are a solution to poverty, and the Chautauqua Co-op where I grew up is evidence of that. Just in June of this year, my co-op, my home, Chautauqua Co-op, paid off a 35-year mortgage. That means that, for the last 35 years, the Chautauqua Co-op has been providing a safe and secure place for over 80 families to live, every single year.

We need to create more affordable housing in this country. As I said, I am a co-op kid. My mom has been building co-ops and managing co-ops for over 30 years. I sat on the board of directors at a co-op when I was 13 or 14 years old, and I realized that one of the ways that we can relieve poverty is to ensure that there is less profit and that when people pay the rent, they do not need to ensure that somebody else is making a buck. It is a really great solution, and I am always going to be a vocal advocate for co-op housing.

Parents should not have to pick between paying the rent, putting food on the table and sending their kids to sports. I can honestly say that I would not have competed at the Olympic Games if it were not for co-op housing, and I hope kids in the future will continue to have those opportunities and parents will not have to make tough decisions about putting food on the table or sending their kids to sports. There should not be any financial barriers between a healthy and active lifestyle and the goals and aspirations of Canada's youth. I believe that developing physical literacy is just as important as reading, writing and math.

I am glad that we have a \$40-billion housing strategy in the Liberal Party platform, and I am really excited to be working on it.

I would like to touch on some issues around national universal pharmacare.

Just last week would have been my friend Simon Ibell's 43rd birthday. Simon Ibell was a man who committed his life to fighting for opportunities, but he also talked a lot about rare disease advocacy and the orphan drug program. Canada needs a rare disease platform, and it should live within our national universal pharmacare.

In addition to Simon's story, I touch upon my dad's story. My dad, Joe, has Parkinson's disease. As a retired guy, he has difficulty in accessing some of the affordable medication that he needs to carry on with his life.

I would like to talk about some of the parents in my riding, who have talked about some of these issues as well.

Brandon and Chrissy's son has spinal muscular atrophy, and there is a heavy price tag on the treatment for this rare disease. We need pharmacare for Wyatt and other children too, like Chloe, Lennon and Eva, as well as retired adults like my dad. A young girl I met at the door named Chloe has type 1 diabetes. There has to be a solution for young girls like Chloe. A young boy named Liam in my riding has cystic fibrosis, and the medicine costs upwards of \$100,000 to treat his disease.

While it is not directly related to pharma, I heard from parents of autistic kids like Max, Dante and many others, who desperately want to see the federal government take on a national autism strategy. I was heartened to hear the Prime Minister mention that recently in a speech.

The highlight of my campaign this summer was actually on the water. I went up to Camp Oochigeas and I sat down for breakfast. Oochigeas provides a camping experience to young kids whose lives have been affected by cancer. I was really excited to see that I was sitting next to a young boy named Matteo, whose mom I met at the doors. Matteo is recovering from cancer. I was thrilled to take him on the water in a canoe. We had a really good day.

*The Address*

As an athlete, I worked with my colleagues and teams from other countries for our mutual benefit. Whether people live in Pond Inlet, Nunavut; Prince George, British Columbia; Fredericton, New Brunswick; Trois-Rivières, Quebec; or Milton, Ontario, they deserve a government that is fighting for them and Canada harder than it works for election or re-election. Members will notice that I fit in a riding from each of the parties.

The election is over. It is time that we stop fighting about team red, team orange, team green and team blue, and start fighting for team Canada. We as parliamentarians have an obligation to perform our duties with respect and integrity, and I believe it is possible to disagree without being disagreeable. We ought to conduct ourselves in this distinguished House with conduct becoming of the office that we are all privileged to hold. Sportsmanship is just as important to me in the House as it was on the water.

With that, I wish every member of the House and everybody watching a merry Christmas, a happy holiday and a prosperous new year.

• (1630)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the fact that you gave the member a few extra seconds to finish.

I thank my colleague for his speech. It was wonderful for him to have recognized Lisa Raitt and also his father, and I thank him for doing that.

However, regarding pharmacare, the member mentioned that he had spoken with a person who was suffering from type 1 diabetes and another person who had autism. I wonder if he is aware that his own government attacked people suffering from type 1 diabetes and autism by withdrawing support and forcing them to requalify for the tax benefit they used to receive. The government actually went out and disqualified innumerable people who were receiving the disability tax credit for type 1 diabetes and autism.

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Madam Speaker, I, like my Liberal colleagues, am proud of investments that we have made in health in the last four years, and proud of the investments that we will continue to make.

I met with people from advocacy groups, from the Diabetes Coalition as well as others, over the course of the last year, and I am sorry, but it was not the Liberals that they were complaining about. The provincial cuts that my neighbours and others are experiencing are the reason they are complaining. I have not heard the complaints that the member mentioned from any of my constituents. However, if the member would like to meet for a coffee, in the vein of sportsmanship, I would be happy to listen.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

This is the first time I am rising to speak in the House. I want to thank my family, as well as the people of Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou who elected me. I am proud to represent them.

I attended a networking event for indigenous communities and mayors in my riding. It was a productive day focused on business. I want to commend Dr. Ted Moses for working hard to improve relations between the north and the south. The first-ever Cree law was adopted, and their independent governance is fascinating.

More than ever, we need to make sure that we are respecting treaties and their interpretation, if we are to break free from the colonialism that this country's first nations suffered and still suffer to this day. This should be one of the priorities in the throne speech.

[*English*]

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Madam Speaker, I did not hear much of a question in my hon. colleague's remarks, but I am happy to stand up and talk about the importance of indigenous inclusion.

I am grateful to Inuit people for providing a boat that I used for many years. As a white guy from Oakville, I always express gratitude to indigenous people for the artifacts that we often use. Many are not aware that lacrosse, for example, is an indigenous sport, and kayaking as well. I think acknowledging that is a very important aspect of truth and reconciliation.

I am happy to talk more on that topic, because our government's track record speaks for itself on truth and reconciliation, although there is far more work that needs to be done by all parties in this House.

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by congratulating my friend, the hon. MP for Milton, on his election.

In response to the Speech from the Throne, my question deals with the situation facing west coast wild salmon.

The riding I represent, Skeena—Bulkley Valley, is named after the Skeena River, which is one of British Columbia's great wild salmon systems. Many people in the House will be familiar with the story of my colourful predecessor, Jim Fulton, who at one point took a wild fish, brought it across the aisle and slapped it on the prime minister's desk.

Skeena wild salmon are in crisis. A recent study showed that salmon numbers have dropped by three-quarters over the last century, yet in the throne speech there was not a single mention of the situation facing British Columbia's wild salmon.

My question is this: Does the member not agree that this was an egregious omission?

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden:** Madam Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague across the floor. I would also acknowledge that we mutually hold ridings that were held by great former members. We both have large shoes to fill, in the case of Nathan Cullen, of course.

*The Address*

As a kayaker, I have spent a lot of time around salmon. Also, my riding of Milton has a few creeks, and salmon also spawn up a creek all the way to Milton, to the Mill Pond.

I acknowledge that there are a lot of endangered species, but I do not recall hearing of any animals mentioned in the throne speech, other than humans, and I do not mean to devalue or delegitimize the importance of the west coast salmon. I think it is a very important topic of discussion. In the spirit of environmental conservation, I think our record is also quite good. We have conserved more terrestrial, marine and coastal waterway than any other party in history.

I would be more than happy to talk with my colleague about salmon, perhaps over some lox.

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** 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 Edmonton Strathcona, The Economy; and the hon. member for Northumberland—Peterborough South, The Environment.

[*English*]

**Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will take this opportunity to wish all a merry Christmas, a happy Hanukkah and a happy new year. I hope that members spend much quality time with their families, friends and neighbours in their communities.

I am honoured to rise today in response to the Speech from the Throne. It is my first time rising in the House in the 43rd Parliament. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my constituents for putting their faith in me to represent them once again in the House. I truly believe that by working together, we can make all our communities that much better. I thank my team that worked tirelessly day in and day out. I thank all of the volunteers who supported me, knocked on doors, installed signs, made phone calls and everything in between. I truly would not be here if not for many individuals who helped me over the past few months.

I thank my family. I thank Leanna, my rock in life, for coming along on this journey with me. I thank Logan, Jordan, Tyler and Jake and my grandson Hudson for supporting me. I thank my mom Claudette and my father George Wayne for not only being there for me and helping me, but also continuing to be there for me on a daily basis. I would not be in this House representing Niagara Centre if it were not for all of the people close to me, especially those throughout my community and the nation. From the bottom of my heart, I say to each and every one of these individuals those two words that we, quite frankly, do not say enough: “thank you”. I would be remiss if I did not extend congratulations to all members who have been elected to represent Canadians in this House and all who ran for those positions in the past year.

The Speech from the Throne is a blueprint for the government to show Canadians where we are and where we want to be. It is an opportunity for all of us in the House to discuss with vigour and passion the role and direction of this government, but equally as important, the role of all 338 members of the House of Commons.

I look forward to having discussions here today and well into the future with respect to everyone's interests. First is the action on skilled trades. We have made remarkable strides in this area since being elected almost five years ago. However, as we celebrate this achievement, we know there is much more to do. Once again, to progress is by working together.

Some provinces and regions across this great nation are struggling to find workers to fill the important positions in our economy that our industries are attempting to fill. My region of Niagara is no exception. Niagara, not unlike other jurisdictions, is beginning to experience a skilled trades shortage. There is a need for welders, pipefitters, boilermakers, seafarers, tile setters, plumbers, technicians, cooks, chefs and other hands-on, hard-working skilled tradespeople.

Thanks to the efforts of the former minister of employment, workforce development and labour, our government has significantly boosted federal support to the provinces, as well as the territories, by \$2.7 billion over six years. This is to help more unemployed, underemployed and those wanting to be retrained to get into the workforce, to strengthen our workforce and, therefore, to strengthen our overall national economy. We have invested \$225 million over four years to identify and fill skill gaps in the economy to help Canadians be best prepared for that new economy. Additional investments in collaboration with our partners will see us collectively work to eliminate the skilled trades shortage.

We have cut taxes. We have made it more affordable for Canadians. Canadians and this government created the environment for more than one million new jobs in just four years.

● (1640)

With an economy that is strong and with steadily declining debt relative to the size of our economy, Canada now has the best performance and the best balance sheet in the G7. This is thanks to the efforts of all of us, once again working together toward those common goals. Together we have helped 900,000 people out of poverty. At the same time, we know that we need to be prepared for whatever challenges are to come our way in the future.

Our plan will see tax cuts for all but the wealthiest Canadians. This week our government has taken steps to amend the Income Tax Act to lower taxes for the middle class and people working extremely hard to join it. Nearly 20 million Canadians will benefit. This will save a single person close to \$300 a year. For families, including families led by a single parent, the savings will be closer to \$600 a year.

*The Address*

I have seen first-hand in my riding and throughout the Niagara region the positive impact the Canada child benefit has had on many individuals and many families. Young families are able to afford items like school supplies and sports equipment, and join different organizations. This adds to the quality of life that they well deserve as Canadians. For the very first time, the benefit gives more money every month to nine out of 10 families. It has lifted 300,000 children out of poverty. We will give up to \$1,000 more to families to help when the costs of raising kids are the highest by boosting the Canada child benefit by 15% for children under the age of one. We will make sure families get more money right away by making maternity and parental benefits tax-free.

We have heard today about the new NAFTA supporting trade and strengthening our economy. Thanks must be extended to all the Canadians from every corner of this country, from all walks of life and from all political points of view, who joined this government in this effort. This includes the Prime Minister. It includes the Deputy Prime Minister. It includes the NAFTA Council and the premiers. Regardless of what party's flag is being flown, kudos to each and every one of us working together to come to this achievement. The new NAFTA represents Canadian jobs, in particular in Niagara and certainly for Canada, this great nation. This new agreement will reinforce the strong economic ties between three countries, and support well-paying middle-class jobs for Canadians.

Transportation and infrastructure are things that are key to the nation, particularly in my riding of Niagara, being a border region. Canada's national transportation infrastructure comprises 26 airports, 18 port authorities, 45,000 kilometres of track and 38,000 kilometres of roadway, as well as our Great Lakes, our St. Lawrence and, once again in our region of Niagara, the Welland Canal.

Let us dig a bit deeper into what we have in Niagara that contributes to strengthening the overall Canadian national interests and economy. In Niagara we have the Welland Canal, the Queen Elizabeth Highway, Highway 406, local airports, all located within a one-day's drive of over 44% of North America's annual income. Niagara is a perfect example of how different modes of transport integrating distributional logistics will strengthen our nation's international trade performance. The gateways for trade in goods between Canada and its trade partners are vital. Without them, our strengthened supply chains cannot flow with fluidity.

This is why I was honoured to work on the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities throughout the last Parliament, to work together with all parties in the establishment of a Canadian transportation and logistics strategy.

● (1645)

I am looking forward to building on the progress that the committee made and will continue to make, such as the alignment of our transportation assets to strengthen, for example, the Great Lakes binational region. This will include the economies, the social and the environmental responsibilities that we have that are attached to the Great Lakes.

We put forward new abandoned vessel legislation to ensure that polluters will pay for their mess, not middle-class Canadians. We will stand up for Canadian travellers and ensure they are treated

with fairness and respect by amending the Transportation Modernization Act.

We will address key bottlenecks with the national trade corridors fund. Through working together with colleagues on all sides of the House and with Canadians with respect to transport and infrastructure issues in Ottawa, I was also pleased to run on a platform that included creating a national infrastructure fund, funding public transit and ensuring that all municipalities continue to have stable and direct funding for strategies and priorities established by them. This will fund local projects based on the work done by the wonderful teams at the municipal level, the local level, the community level. We will continue to work with members of the House to improve transportation infrastructure for Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

With respect to housing, we will work hard to address affordability, taking action to invest in affordable housing and make it easier for more people to buy their first home. We have invested millions, for example, in the city of Welland in my riding to build more affordable housing and continue to work with Niagara Regional Housing to ensure we strengthen affordable housing throughout the Niagara region.

Fighting climate change is the defining challenge of our time and a defining moment of this Parliament. It is a sentiment shared by Canadians overwhelmingly voted in favour of immediate and ambitious action to combat climate change. Our environment is important to all Canadians because without a protected environment, we have no future to live in and even our health could be at risk.

Clean air and clean water are musts in this day and age. New technologies are paramount and need to be created to help us deal with the issue of climate change. We are committed to protecting the environment by setting a target to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, putting a price on pollution, protecting and conserving nature and reducing plastic pollution within our environment.

We are committed to developing new technologies. We are committed to improving the environment we live in and protecting Canadians from harmful substances. Our government cares about attaining a cleaner and safer environment for all Canadians.

With respect to seniors, Canadians are living longer than ever before. Today's seniors are also facing rising health care costs. The number of seniors who rely on monthly benefits to make ends meet rises as Canadians, our neighbours, our family members and our friends age. We lowered the age of eligibility for old age security from 67 to 65. We moved forward with this change because we know it boosts seniors' retirement savings by thousands of dollars and lets them retire at an earlier age.

*The Address*

To make life more affordable for people as they age, we will move forward with an increase in the old age security benefit by 10% for seniors when they turn 75 and will continue to raise it along with inflation. This will help to lift more than 20,000 seniors out of poverty, two-thirds of whom are women, and will give greater financial security to more than three million seniors every year. For most seniors, it will mean up to \$729 in additional financial help every year once they reach the age of 75.

• (1650)

We will move forward with more help for seniors who have lost their partners. We will work with the provinces and territories to give even more support to survivors by increasing the Canada pension plan. This increase, worth up to \$2,080 in additional benefits every year, will give more than 1.2 million seniors more money and greater peace of mind at a time when they need it most.

I see this in Niagara every day. Whether at Portal Village in the city of Port Colborne, at Villa de Rose in the city of Welland or Cobble Stone Gardens Retirement Residence in the city of Thorold, seniors need investment so they can retire in comfort, as they deserve. Our seniors built this country, they built our communities and they are the foundation, our guides, our place where we learn who we are and where we come from, therefore navigating where we go from here.

The Speech from the Throne is a road map for where we want to go in this new Parliament. It is our guide, working for Canadians. Yes, we have work to do. We will keep fighting for families, for our children, for climate action, for seniors, for indigenous communities, for Canada on the world stage.

With this in mind, I am looking forward to getting down to work with all 338 members of the House, Canadians with the same interests, finding mechanisms, finding action plans to then satisfy the needs of all 338 ridings throughout this great nation. We can only do this by working together toward the common goals of all Canadians.

We must never underestimate the impact we have on others, our families, friends and neighbours, all of us throughout this great nation. Whether it be from the House of Commons, or within our communities, or representing an organization, or as a member of provincial parliaments or territories, or as mayors, councillors or volunteers, we must never underestimate the impact we have on others. It could be one word, one sentence or one action in a mall, on a sidewalk or in the halls of the House of Commons that can change someone's life forever. The responsibility we have as Canadians is to affect others in a positive way, and we have that opportunity.

Within the House, we as parliamentarians must adhere to a mindset of equality for all 338 ridings throughout our great nation. Regardless of who represents those individual ridings or what party they may belong to, we need to meet the expectations of Canadians.

We are Canada. As President Obama said in the House, "The world needs more Canada." With that, it is therefore incumbent upon us to ensure we are nationally together strengthening the Canadian values, leading by example in this great nation, but, equally important, internationally, standing shoulder to shoulder as Canadi-

ans. However, it starts with vision, followed by working closer together as a stronger nation. Only we as leaders within our communities, beginning in the House of Commons, and working with our partners can we achieve and therefore become a better nation because of what we achieve here together.

• (1655)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Madam Speaker, you may be surprised that I agree to a certain extent with my esteemed colleague opposite. I, too, believe in the parties working together. If it is possible to work together to move forward on bills and motions, we can do it and I believe that our constituents are watching.

However, on the free trade agreement, I must disagree with my esteemed colleague because it hurts our region. People are not just saying it, they are truly worried because aluminum is the economic backbone of our region. Unfortunately, this agreement attacks our aluminum industry and fails to protect it in the same way as it does the steel industry.

I can work with my esteemed colleagues, but I represent Lac-Saint-Jean, and my constituents are watching me and asking me to take action. I cannot just sit back and do nothing. I must get to the bottom of issues and fight for my constituents, because that is what they are asking me to do.

If my colleague were in my place, what would he do?

• (1700)

[*English*]

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Madam Speaker, that is what we are all do here. We fight for the interests of our riding and, in this case, the best economic interests of our riding.

I give credit to the minister, the Prime Minister and, more important, the teams that were there on a daily basis, negotiating this agreement. It is a good agreement for Canada. It has prepared and strengthened us to ensure we have a better footprint with respect to our economic performance internationally.

There are great components of the agreement, which include our steel and aluminum industries. As part of the agreement, there must be a 70% content of aluminum in the product. I would only assume that over time, when we discuss the agreement five, 10 or 15 years down the road, it would be strengthened as well.

We look forward to this agreement being put in place, which would connect us to the other two agreements, the CETA and the TPP. That attaches us to 1.8 billion consumers worldwide, which enhances Canada. Although our population is 38 million, our economic population would be 1.8 billion. I am sure the member's riding could take full advantage—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** With respect to questions and comments, I want to remind the members to look this way so I can let them know if their time is running out.

Questions and comments. The hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I congratulate the member for Niagara Centre on his re-election.

I want to speak about dental care. So many Canadians across this great land suffer from poor oral health and cannot afford to go to a dentist. Members of the NDP caucus met with constituents who had to cover their mouth while speaking to us because they were so embarrassed by the state of their teeth. We know that poor oral health can lead to further health complications. It is a real barrier to social mobility.

The government recently tabled a ways and means motion. The NDP has countered that proposal by making it apply to people who earn \$90,000 or less, using the resulting savings to invest in a national dental care program, thereby providing some real economic relief to people who desperately need it.

Will my hon. colleague support such a measure and give that real help to the people who need it? If he is not prepared to make that commitment, perhaps he can inform the House as to how much longer Canadians will have to wait for that kind of service.

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Madam Speaker, that is a very important question. It was a very important issue during the campaign and in the last session in the House.

I have been discussing that issue with a lot of our different agencies. The short answer is, yes, I agree with what you are saying. I believe that over time, once we have the full pharmacare program in place in the next year or two, we will start to look at dental. I will even go as far as saying we will look at vision and hearing to be added to that as well. Therefore, over time, in a responsible fashion, especially as it relates to our fiscal responsibilities, we would have a full health care program that would include pharmacare, dental, hearing and vision.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I would remind the member to address his questions and comments to the Chair.

Questions and comments. The hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member delivered a strong and cogent speech and a strong, comprehensive statement on what our government did in the previous Parliament and what it plans to do going forward. I truly enjoyed listening to it.

The member spoke a lot about infrastructure or what I like to call hardware at this point. Of course, it is absolutely important that we invest in infrastructure, because in this day and age, if a country does not invest in infrastructure, it will get left behind.

However, there are other initiatives that our government took that could be called software, such as the investment in the Canada child benefit and the investment in the Canada training benefit. These are sometimes looked at as spending and often we are criti-

### *The Address*

cized because of spending items. However, they are in fact investments in the future, because healthy children grow up to be healthy workers. Parents who get the Canada child benefit can afford to invest in RESPs and so forth. Obviously, if workers can retrain, they can get the skills needed to solve the environmental and other scientific challenges we face in this modern and complex world.

I would like to hear the member's comments on that distinction and why even those expenditures that seem like soft expenditures are in fact investments in the future of the country.

• (1705)

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Madam Speaker, it is a great question, because sometimes we only see the face of it and do not see the residual benefits of those investments.

The member is correct. For every investment we make, whether it be through the child care benefit or old age security or whether it be infrastructure with respect to the roads, water pipes and things of that nature, there are other benefits attached. However, it is all about investing in our communities. It is all about community and investing in Canadians.

When we do make an investment in some of those programs, whether it be the Canada child benefit, or a road or waterway, it does not have just one direct effect but many more, especially when it comes to people.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I must begin by commending my colleague across the way and congratulating him on his speech, the tone of which was quite unifying. That is precisely the tone we hope to maintain during future discussions in the House. He can count on our collaboration.

I want to come back to the situation of seniors that he mentioned in his speech. The Speech from the Throne announced measures that talk about increasing old age security. However, the government seems to want to continue to wait until seniors turn 75 before improving their living conditions.

I would like to ask my esteemed colleague whether he thinks it would be better to lower the age to 65, as we have been proposing for some time now given that poverty does not wait until a person turns 75. Often people are in need as soon as they reach retirement age. I would like my colleague's thoughts on that.

*The Address**[English]*

**Mr. Vance Badawey:** Madam Speaker, the one thing I did in the last term, and will continue to do, was speak with a lot of our seniors, different seniors' organizations and seniors' homes. I have made that a habit, as much as I can, when I get back to my riding. I have heard loud and clear that it is at age 75 when there is a greater need.

The member is correct that there are times at a younger age when there is a greater need. That is the reason we have other programs to fill those gaps.

However, in our dialogue with seniors and organizations such as CARP, we heard that age 75 was when greater needs started to hit and hit hard. For example, when companions pass on, survivors are left alone. That is when this would be especially needed. Those are the reasons we designated age 75 to have that program begin.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague, the member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix.

Before getting to the subject at hand, I will take advantage of the fact that I have a little more time than I had the last time I spoke to also highlight the contribution of those close to me in this great political adventure. First, I thank the many volunteers who worked countless hours during the election campaign. Everyone here knows how absolutely crucial they are; we are all very aware of that.

I would also like to mention my trusted collaborator, who has become a friend along the way, which often happens, I think. I am talking about Gisèle, who takes care of everything in the riding with help from the wonderful Andrée-Anne and Marie-Christine. The people of Drummond will be well served.

I also want to highlight an invaluable presence in the lives of politicians: that of our spouses. To be fair, we cannot help but force a certain lifestyle upon them. It takes a great deal of understanding and support on their part to agree to get involved in the turmoil of politics, and sometimes even to pretend to like it. My beautiful wife, Caroline, did not choose to be in politics, but I thank her for accompanying me with great openness and growing enthusiasm.

As is the reality for thousands of families in Quebec these days, Caroline and I have a blended family, with a total of four children: Christophe, Alexandrine, Lily-Rose and Tom. With two boys and two girls, we have gender parity. I said "blended family", which implies a shared parenting arrangement with another parent. I feel compelled to point out how lucky I am to have an ex-spouse who understands the dedication required to be in politics and who takes on more than her share of the responsibilities towards our children, Lily-Rose and Tom, so they do not suffer too much from the repercussions of my new life. I therefore want to thank Marilou and acknowledge the value of the harmonious relationship we have created as parents who are separated. Clearly, this places me in a minority context in my private life, too. I can confirm that things are going well and I am feeling optimistic about this Parliament.

I want to wrap up my tributes with a few words about a pair of exceptional young people who have been surprisingly impassioned in recent months. I am talking about my parents, Henriette Jolin and Louis Champoux. One should never reveal a lady's age, so I will just say that their combined ages, including months, add up to 159 years. They were so passionate and energetic during the election campaign that I would not be surprised to see them running for office next time around.

I sincerely hope they will not be running against me, and with good reason. My great-grandfather, Émile Fortin, was the MP for Lévis in the 30th Parliament. His son, my great-uncle Louis Fortin, represented Montmagny-L'Islet from 1958 to 1962. He actually took over from Jean Lesage, who left Ottawa for Quebec City. The only generation with no elected officials in my family was my father's, and I am afraid he might suddenly be inclined to remedy that situation.

All of these people, my family and friends for whom I care deeply, have played vital roles along the way. I would not be here without them.

The Speech from the Throne gave us hope that some progress would be made on the issues that matter to Quebeckers. However, there is still a lot of work to do. We need to make sure the government walks the talk, as the saying goes.

In this Speech from the Throne, there was nothing about culture, nothing about language, and nothing about support for the media, in spite of promises made in the 2019 budget. Out of sight, out of mind, as they say, but we are going to make sure that these things do not stay out of mind, and we are going to work hard.

The Bloc Québécois put out many proposals in the months leading up to the election, and, of course, we continued to promote them on the campaign trail. Those proposals can be found in our platform. To no one's surprise, many of them resonated with our voters, and others also appeared in the throne speech, albeit in bits and pieces. I see this as an open door to discussion and even, in some cases, a good opportunity to work together.

Take the tax on web giants. The government has signalled its intention to act swiftly and impose a tax on GAFA, the Googles, Apples, Facebooks and Amazons of the world. That is good, but it is not enough. The proceeds should be considered not as a simple tax, but as a royalty to be distributed to content creators, artists and media outlets. Furthermore, we want 40% of the proceeds to go to francophone content creators and media outlets, not just for Quebec, but for Canada's francophone community as a whole. Francophone culture is at stake. This is no less than a matter of cultural survival.

• (1710)

It is also time to show that we will not wait for the OECD decisions or the whim of the Americans to demand that our creators receive decent compensation for their content. We need to step up and charge web giants GST to put an end to unfair competition.

Print media is in the midst of an unprecedented crisis. Newspapers are shutting down across the country because web giants are snapping up their advertising revenue once again. There was a 48% drop in advertising revenue between 2003 and 2016, and the situation has not improved over the last three years. The number of subscribers continues to fall.

Once again, the government is proposing an incomplete plan, but there may be room for improvement. I want to say that we will work together with the community, and with our colleagues in the House who are also concerned about this issue. We will ensure that a plan is developed and implemented to meet the needs of the media industry and its people.

However, this print media crisis has hit hard, and we must be very careful, because a similar crisis is brewing for electronic media. Once again, we need to protect our media against the all-powerful GAFAs. Our media are active members of our democracy, and even though they may not always make us look good, we must protect their independence and financial health by regulating all media sources fairly, regardless of where they come from.

Almost all my colleagues were quick to contact me to talk about problems with fibre optics and cellular coverage when it was announced that I would be my party's communications critic. I became very popular. I even recommend that all those looking for their soulmate put "communications critic" in their profile on dating sites. It works.

The federal government provided a program and money, but Quebec already had an effective and efficient program. It would have been much simpler to transfer the money to the Government of Quebec, which would have managed it based on priorities.

Regional Internet is not just a tale. It is the reality for many people, many small businesses and the majority of farmers, who cannot use milking machines, as do many dairy farms. That would allow them to manage their agricultural businesses much more efficiently.

Elected officials in absolutely charming small towns such as Saint-Pie-de-Guire and Sainte-Brigitte-des-Saults, or in many other places in the most beautiful of ridings, Drummond, which I recently spoke to you about, would love to attract SMEs or self-employed workers, but Internet access is so unreliable and cellular coverage is so inadequate that they cannot even consider it.

It is important to understand, to realize, that access to high-speed Internet is no longer a luxury and then to act accordingly. It is a service that is essential to regional economic development. If we want to attract businesses and create meaningful jobs in the regions, we need to accelerate the process, otherwise we will not succeed and our regions will continue to suffer.

Let me be clear. I am not throwing stones at big business. Companies work within the market parameters imposed on them. It is up to us, however, to ensure that those parameters are adjusted and

### *The Address*

adapted so that individuals and families are at the heart of our decisions and actions.

I would like to give a quick example. The municipality of Amherst, Quebec, still has to use a pager service to reach first responders in case of an emergency.

I have appealed to the government about this. The minister listened and showed that he cared about this issue. I even spoke with business people who are currently leaving the municipality. Everyone is open. All stakeholders are open to moving this file forward to enable the people of Amherst to get a more modern and effective system. All that is missing is a little goodwill and the necessary funding. This cannot wait. We cannot leave people in a municipality without access to emergency services. That is unacceptable.

In light of what I just said, it is clear that Quebec's specificity complicates the government's task in files as complex as culture and communications. That is why the Bloc Québécois will propose the creation of a Quebec CRTC, which would be better able to protect the francophone culture, language and media. Such an organization would also significantly ease the burden on the existing authority and would allow our two distinct cultures to flourish much more freely.

• (1715)

[*English*]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, there are, no doubt, a number of initiatives that take place in the province of Quebec that many other provinces could actually benefit from. One of those projects was providing a subsidy for purchasing an electric vehicle, and that was going over quite well. In the last federal budget, the government provided a similar program, which then went across Canada. The take-up on that has been exceptionally good.

I raise this because so many good things happen in different regions of our country, and the federal government plays such an important role in capturing those ideas and ensuring that there is a broader national application in many different ways. Hopefully we will see the same thing now with pharmacare.

I wonder if my friend could provide his thoughts on just how important that is.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Speaker, I thank the government member for his comment.

*The Address*

We certainly value collaboration and ideas from all over, and some good ideas have been copied very successfully, but some files are much more complicated. I will say that I know a lot of people who are taking advantage of the extra subsidy the federal government introduced in addition to what the Government of Quebec was already offering.

Some files are a lot more complicated and sensitive though. Telecommunications and high-speed Internet access in the regions, for example, might be managed better if responsibility for and oversight of these programs were transferred to the provinces.

• (1720)

[English]

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to bring up another thought that I have in terms of the throne speech.

In 2015, I was working at an NGO in the international development sector, and I was delighted when the Prime Minister said that Canada was back. What I did not realize at the time was that Canada was back, way back, in the list of OECD donor countries.

Today, Canada is in the bottom half of donor countries. Currently, Canada gives approximately a quarter of 1% of gross national income, the lowest we have been at in over 50 years. Embarrassingly, despite the platitudes and good words from the Liberal government, we currently invest even less than the Harper government did in making the world a safer and more prosperous place.

Canadians like my constituents in Alberta are proud of Canada's history of punching above its weight on the world stage. When will this government commit to significantly increasing ODA, finally reaching the 0.7%, as promised by Lester B. Pearson and achieved by many countries around the world, including Ireland and Norway?

[Translation]

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate my opposition colleague's very worthy comment.

Indeed, Canada has always had an excellent reputation internationally. While I appreciate the merits of the comment as well as the question itself and my colleague's good will, I do not think that question was really directed at me.

**Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for Drummond on his eloquence and aplomb in responding to the Speech from the Throne. The people of Drummond have themselves an MP who will do an excellent job of speaking on their behalf in the House.

After a hard-fought election, the Liberals and Conservatives joined forces on Tuesday to vote against what my colleague from Westmount calls our number-one priority: health.

I would like my colleague from Drummond to comment on that.

**Mr. Martin Champoux:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, which I did not talk much about in my response to the throne speech.

In my opinion, the solution is perfectly clear. It is simply to heed the calls from us and from all the provinces to increase health transfers to the provinces by 5.2%. That would be the right thing to do.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens (Beauport-Côte-de-Beaupré-Île d'Orléans-Charlevoix, BQ):** Madam Speaker, woman to woman, allow me to congratulate you on being appointed Assistant Deputy Speaker of the 43rd Parliament. You are doing all women proud.

Since this is my first time speaking in the House, I want to take a moment for acknowledgements. I may not always be as articulate and eloquent as my colleague, because I would rather sing my speech than say it. I am a singer-songwriter, so I would probably be more at ease.

I would like to applaud the voters in my riding who honoured our treasured democracy by voting on October 21. From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank my campaign volunteers, whose passion and energy are what got me here. I want to thank my loyal husband, Pascal, and my beautiful daughter, Marie-L'Eau, for their unfailing love and support. I love them. They are my guiding lights.

I also want to salute the entire arts community of Quebec, especially my fellow singer-songwriters and musicians, who share this passion with me. I think of them as good friends.

My thoughts are also with my late parents whose extraordinary guidance and devotion put me on the path that led me here. They would be so proud to see me represent the voice of Quebec in Parliament. To my large and wonderful family, my countless good friends and the 18,479 people who put their trust in me, I say thank you. I assure you that I am committed to all my constituents.

I was born on a very small bit of land, an island that became famous very early on. The French explorer Jacques Cartier, who had a harsh and trying crossing from Saint-Malo to the new world during his second trip in September 1535, found some land rich with hazelnuts and fish. That is why he named it l'Isle-aux-Coudres, or hazelnut island. Historians have said that this stopover was pivotal to the continuation of his trip to Stadacona, which later became the only francophone national capital of North America, Quebec City.

The islanders are very proud of this slice of history that belongs to them. I will take this opportunity to say hello to everyone, especially my friends, the people of Île-aux-Coudres, the *Marsouins* and *Marsouines*. That is what we call the people who live on this island. I will spare my colleagues the story of how this name came about. As a good *Marsouine*, I will tell you the story at an appropriate time.

Île-aux-Coudres has a lovely history full of symbolism, and its motto is that you must know where you come from to know where you are going. Culture is the principal driver.

Much later, this same small island continued to make its mark through time and space with the living memory of the islanders in the work of Quebec filmmaker and author, my friend Pierre Perrault. The National Film Board's documentary trilogy *La Trilogie de l'Île-aux-Coudres* was internationally recognized as a documentary masterpiece and its creator, Pierre Perrault, was recognized as one of the pioneers of direct cinema.

Quebec has something else to be very proud of today. I am proud to highlight some very good news for Quebec, which is again making its mark internationally, despite serious financial difficulties. Quebec does not lack talent. The Hollywood Critics Association just announced that Denis Villeneuve will receive the filmmaker of the decade award at the association's gala on January 9, 2020, for his body of work. We are pleased. This will go a long way to promoting Quebec's film industry abroad. On behalf of all members of this chamber, elected members and members of the Bloc Québécois, I extend our warmest congratulations.

• (1725)

I was asked to take on the role of culture critic in Parliament, and I want to question the government about a pressing, topical issue that is sadly missing from the throne speech: the cultural emergency. There is not only a climate emergency, but there is also a cultural emergency. We are in the midst of an unprecedented culture crisis.

Let us talk about this economic, social, historic, traditional and, as we have seen, international force that is culture. Culture sets us apart, defines us as a people and gives us a pointed and relevant view of ourselves.

Let us think of our writers, historians, novelists, biographers, poets, filmmakers, authors, actors, sculptors, directors, playwrights, circus performers and artisans who are crying out for help.

The culture that we love is in economic jeopardy. Our culture brings us freedom and immeasurable social benefits, but all of that is struggling for survival. Why is that? It is because culture relies on the economy, and the economy has experienced massive financial cuts.

Thus, culture and art do not have the resources needed to compete with the web giants around the world. However, some countries around the globe, such as France, Australia and New Zealand, have tackled the problem head-on and have taken action to fix it by taxing the various web platforms. Nothing of the sort is happening here. In Quebec, Netflix calls the shots.

Of course, project applications are increasing, and there is no shortage of labour in the industry, but government investments in culture have not kept up. Our wonderful and very popular television shows like *Les filles de Caleb*, some of which have been on the air for over 20 years and boast ratings of over three million viewers every week, have barely six or seven episodes left and smaller budgets. This is all because Netflix, like many other web giants, is still not paying its fair share of taxes. Our culture is being stifled and swallowed up by American giants.

During the election campaign, the government promised to quickly impose a tax of 3% of their total revenue on web giants like

### *The Address*

Netflix and redistribute those funds to culture. No such commitment was included in the throne speech, which worries us.

Large-scale productions can no longer be considered possible in Quebec. We have to stifle our bright ideas because of a lack of resources. What will happen to the joy and beauty that is spread thanks to our culture, not to mention the economic benefits?

In Quebec, the reality is that creators of French-language television content, with their limited financial resources, are being forced to compete with billion-dollar giants equipped with the latest technology and operating under extremely favourable conditions. This leads to the very real consequences we are seeing.

We keep going, yes, because we are fighters. In good times or bad, we keep going.

That is a very good reason for us to worry and to tell our friends that we will be there to collaborate with our neighbours and promote culture. This will help people like Pierre Perrault, Michel Brault, Gilles Vigneault and Gilles Pelletier, as well as friends closer by like Carol-Anne Pedneault, Daniel Gaudet, Simon Pedneault, Marilyn Castonguay, Claude Gauthier, Jacques Leblanc, Émile Nelligan and Octave Crémazie, succeed in standing out in today's culture.

• (1730)

[*English*]

**Hon. Larry Bagnell (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages (Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member's speech earned well-deserved applause, and I appreciate the positive manner in which she gave it. She made a great case for culture. I think she knows we are on her side. We reinstated a lot of programs to support culture. I want to commend her on the positivity of her speech and the attitude of all Bloc members, particularly the leader. I said the other day that this is the way Parliament should be: positive, articulate, making a case politely and dealing with issues, not personalities.

Why are your people called porpoises?

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind the member to address the Chair and not individual members.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his kind words. I think he is reaching out to us, and I am deeply touched.

*The Address*

I hope all of Quebec is seeing us listening and talking to one another and promising to improve conditions for our workers in the culture sector, as well as in production. Some of these projects lead to great triumphs, like the honour for Denis Villeneuve that was just announced today.

• (1735)

[English]

**Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member on her passionate speech and note that there are many parts I related to, especially the sense of place that she was able to convey. She spoke of a cultural emergency and it made me think of a situation facing the part of the world I represent where indigenous languages are in danger.

I wonder if the member could comment on the parallels that she sees. We have a commitment from the government to invest in indigenous language revitalization, but my feeling is that it is not nearly enough.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague sincerely.

In Quebec, indigenous culture is a part of us. Many of us have strong family ties to indigenous communities. Our cultures intersect on a regular basis and exist side by side. Florent Vollant, Elisapie and Koriass are people who are contributing to our culture and are very popular in Quebec.

In moving forward, we will certainly have to keep a close eye on the investments the government makes to raise public awareness of the urgent plight of indigenous peoples and their culture, which is suffering as much as the culture of Quebec and the Francophonie.

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague on her election and on her speech. I would like to reassure her that she is definitely eloquent enough and talented enough to be an MP. I do hope, however, that we will have the chance to hear her sing again because she sings as well as she speaks.

I would also like to congratulate you, Madam Speaker, on your election. It is good and even essential to move toward greater gender equality and for women to play a bigger role in our institutions. As the Bloc Qu b cois critic for gender equality, the status of women and seniors, that is of particular concern to me.

Speaking of seniors, during the most recent election campaign, many seniors' groups talked to me about the taxation of GAFA by drawing a parallel with the matter of weekly and regional newspapers. One of the newspapers that is in jeopardy, *La Voix de l'Est*, is located in the heart of my riding.

What would we do without these local newspapers? What would our community organizations, our arts organizations and our democracy do without them? Who will talk about us and report on our work to our constituents? I therefore intend—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Order. I am sorry, but there is not much time left and I have to give the member for Beauport—C te-de-Beaupr — le d'Orl ans—Charlevoix the opportunity to briefly respond.

The hon. member for Beauport—C te-de-Beaupr — le d'Orl ans—Charlevoix.

**Mrs. Caroline Desbiens:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and close comrade. The women of the Bloc Qu b cois are a tight-knit bunch. Yes, we will move all these projects forward. I am trying to be brief, so I will not list them all, but obviously my colleague and I are on the same page. We will keep a very close eye on all of those things.

[English]

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for New Brunswick Southwest.

Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate you on putting your name forward, going through the process and on your recent appointment. I also want to thank the voters of Battlefords—Lloydminster. They have given me a strong mandate. They sent me back to Ottawa to represent them to be their voice, the voice of rural communities, the voice of the taxpayers and families.

I know every single one of us in this place would not be here without our supporters, without our volunteers. I want to thank them because they are a very important part of helping us get here.

I am not too sure how many of my colleagues know, but over the summer, my husband and I welcomed a brand new baby girl. It is very important for me to express my thanks to my husband Adam and my children Annabelle and William on the birth of Victoria. Their love and their patience go a long way, especially in the middle of a campaign. We all know how sometimes we are not even home for dinner or sometimes to sleep, especially in a rural riding like mine. It is so big and I have to travel from community to community in order to reach constituents. I also want to honour my family members for their support in my desire and ability to serve in this place and be a voice in the nation. I am so appreciative of that.

On the note of door knocking, I spent a lot of time in the riding over the summer, sometimes with the baby in tow. Two weeks after I had her, I was out at events with baby in tow. The things that I heard at the door were sometimes quite sad. In conversations with people, I would ask how they were doing and they would say, "Well, I haven't been laid off yet. I still have a job. I was laid off six months ago and I found another job but I haven't been laid off from it yet." That is the anxiety and anguish that is being felt in my riding in Saskatchewan. It is the same thing in Alberta. People genuinely are scared about whether they are going to wake up and go to work and still have a job.

I live in a very unique city. I have mentioned before in this place that my city actually borders Alberta and Saskatchewan. Half of the residents live in Saskatchewan and half of them live in Alberta. It makes it quite a mess because we are one municipality. It gets very difficult when we have different provincial regulations covering one place.

*The Address*

There is a company that employs hundreds if not thousands of people within my riding. The day after the election, October 22, the company laid off 60-some people in my community. That is not including the hundreds of layoffs that happened in Calgary with the same company.

I want to put that into perspective. I do not know if I fully understand going into work one day, thinking it is going to be a normal day and then being told to go home. What kind of conversation would I have with my husband? "Look honey, I was laid off today. I am not sure what we are going to do. I think Christmas is going to look different. I am not sure if we can afford to have the kids in hockey or in dance anymore. Things need to be different." That is the reality where I live. People, with the struggles that they are dealing with day to day, feel ignored and just wonder if they are going to be able to get by.

● (1740)

The Prime Minister made a point of meeting with the premiers of the provinces. He also met with some of the mayors. The mayor of my community was very proactive. He reached out to my office and asked if we had a number for the Prime Minister because he wanted to talk to him. I found the number for the PMO, gave it to the mayor and he made a call. To his surprise, the Prime Minister called him back.

I am glad that the Prime Minister took the time to call him back. The mayor stressed that it is important for smaller cities to have a voice as well, not just big city mayors, and important that he hear what is impacting them, especially being in a western province like Saskatchewan. The mayor expressed to the Prime Minister the struggles of the people in my community and my region in not being able to get their agriculture products to market, for example, their canola, and not being able to get their energy products to market. The Prime Minister said that he understood.

What was troubling for me is, was that hope? Was it false hope? Was it a facade? Was it real? Was that conversation real and genuine? People today want authenticity. They want to be listened to. They want to be heard, actually heard.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that the government needs to listen harder and that it has been sent a message from Alberta and Saskatchewan that it needs to listen harder. I had a little bit of hope. I thought that this was great and wonderful, and that the government knows something is not right and is going to take the time to listen better and maybe turn some of that listening and consulting into action.

Then came the throne speech, and unless I missed it, I did not hear mention of the Trans Mountain pipeline. I know one thing that would definitely help the constituents in Battlefords—Lloydminster is being able to get gas to market. We heard a lot about the no-more-pipelines bill, Bill C-69, and also Bill C-48. Are those bills maybe some of the reasons some people are being laid off, because the atmosphere and environment for energy investment just are not there and it is too restrictive? I did not hear anything in the throne speech on how we are going to help get our oil to market, and maybe lessening the restrictions that have been created in the environment that we have.

Also, what is the government's goal right now to help farmers get their products to market? In my riding, there is a lot of farming, whether it is grain or cattle. Farming is one of those things that is year-round as there is always work to be done, but in the off-season, a lot of those farmers are hauling oil and water. They are trucking. They are doing things to pay the bills while they are not able to actively farm. It was really disappointing to hear that the government understood about not being able to get the beef and the canola to market and then hearing that the agriculture minister missed the deadline to file.

It saddens me because I thought the government was listening harder. I thought, in good faith, that because of those conversations and phone calls the Prime Minister was having with premiers and mayors across the country that something would come out of it. I am so sorry to say that my disappointment with this throne speech is just overwhelming in that real actions were not taken to help reduce and alleviate the western alienation that is happening.

● (1745)

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member on her newborn child. That is very exciting.

She talked a lot about struggles in rural communities. I come from a rural community myself in Kings—Hants and heard on the doorsteps too about affordability and the importance of investing to support rural communities. Does the member opposite believe that investing in the middle class and supporting individuals will lead to a better economic outcome? Will the member support the basic personal exemption going up to \$15,000 that we have put forward?

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Madam Speaker, if the government really cared about the middle class, we would not have an enforced carbon tax in my home province of Saskatchewan. I believe the Prime Minister and the government should respect the plans that Premier Kenney in Alberta and Premier Moe in Saskatchewan already have for the environment. The government should allow them to have their own in-province plans. It should allow Canadians to keep in their own pockets the money from the carbon tax that is going to the government, because families know best how to spend that money, which they earned, on their needs and priorities.

● (1750)

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the member's speech, what I did not hear enough about is seniors. Many seniors in our communities are struggling to make ends meet due to increased housing costs and medicines they cannot afford. We hear of seniors cutting pills in half or making a choice as to whether they will buy food or medicine, and living in pain, which is unacceptable. Some seniors cannot even pay for their basic needs.

*The Address*

The government promised that it would increase the OAS for seniors by 10% for those who are over 75 and increase the CPP by 25% for widows. We do not think that is enough to meet the cost of living today. The government did not allow people between 65 and 75 to benefit from its offer. We do not understand that. It seems that people who are 65 should have the same benefits as those who are 75 when they are retired, especially single women. In this country, over 30% of single women over 65 live in poverty.

Does my colleague support including those who are between 65 and 75? Does she support an even further increase for our seniors who are living on a basic pension?

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. I am all about making life more affordable for everybody, whether it is a young, single mom, a senior or someone who is going through that craziness of kids going to university and all of that. A great way to start that is to stop enforcing the carbon tax and allow Canadians to choose where they want to spend that money instead of putting it in the government's pocket.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I was inspired to hear how in the middle of the campaign the member was able to give birth and still continue on and raise a family at the same time.

We have heard a lot from the government about its new middle-class tax cut where, after the next three years, people can earn up to the \$15,000 before paying taxes. The member is a new mom again. She has three children. The Liberals' new tax cut would put an additional 76¢ a day into her pocket next year. She has three children. What is she going to do with all that extra money the government is going to provide her?

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk:** Mr. Speaker, if I was to get 76¢ a day, unfortunately, it would all go to the carbon tax for my increased gasoline bills at the pump and my increased home heating bills.

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today is the first time outside of question period that I rise to speak in this session. I would like to congratulate you on your elevation to the Speaker's chair as our deputy. The mantle carries a heavy burden to be fair-minded and I am sure you will again guide our House to the best of your ability. For that, we all congratulate you.

I have had the privilege of serving in this great House in a previous Parliament. Given that I represent a constituency in Atlantic Canada as a Conservative, members know that there is a gap in my political employment history. It is a rare honour to be elected to Parliament. It is an honour to serve and be sent here by constituents to represent them. For this, I thank the voters of New Brunswick Southwest for sending me back. The one promise I made during the election was to work hard every day to represent the voice of my constituents. It is a task I intend to take seriously and one I will work on every single day.

I must also thank my amazing wife, Kelly Williamson. Many of us know all too well that our spouses make the biggest sacrifice for us to be here. Kelly has been with me through good times and bad. She continues to be my closest confidante and my best friend. My thanks to Kelly. "*Je t'aime.*"

I would also be negligent today if I did not include in my address my mentor, the Hon. Greg Thompson. Greg was elected to Parliament six times. He served with distinction as minister of veterans affairs under the previous Conservative government. Greg passed away on the day before the election was called. It was a difficult moment for many of us at the start of that election campaign.

For those of us who have had the privilege of sitting on either side of the House with him, and for those who might know Greg only through Hansard, I can say this. Everything that was said about Greg is true. Greg did not do anything in half measures. Greg was never afraid to stand up, never afraid to speak out for his constituents. He truly represented the very best of us. My commitment is to follow Greg Thompson's high standard. Perhaps I will not always hit it, but I know at least I will always be on the right path.

In considering today's news, I wish to also acknowledge our Conservative leader. He is a friend, he is a good man and, importantly, he understands Canada.

In the last Parliament, when the federal government failed to appoint a minister for our region's economic development portfolio, when we nearly lost our seat on the Supreme Court, and when 32 Liberal MPs sat quietly, it was the federal Conservative leader and it was all Conservatives who defended those important priorities for Atlantic Canada. As well, it was Conservatives from outside the region who fought for the energy east pipeline, more so than New Brunswick Liberal MPs did in the last Parliament.

Failing to stand up for home is why the Liberals lost 40% of their seats in New Brunswick and they nearly lost the majority of them. We will win them next time.

I turn now to the matter at hand, the Speech from the Throne.

In several places, the Speech from the Throne talks about a mandate, yet this is very much a hung Parliament. Canadians gave no party a mandate, except a mandate to try to work together. The Liberals won the most seats, but won fewer votes than the Conservatives. The debate will continue, and a wise government will look to work collaboratively with other parties. Let me begin in a spirit of harmony or agreement.

I support the idea of cutting income taxes for Canadians. It is important to make home ownership more affordable for Canadians. It is important that governments' help families get ahead. The idea of providing clean water to indigenous communities is also important. We need to do more to tackle opioid abuse and as well, do more to help people battling mental health issues.

*The Address*

The government also needs to reduce red tape. We also need to work together on the NAFTA file, the free trade file, although on this one the government is getting off on the wrong foot already.

• (1755)

Those are the areas of the throne speech where I think we can find common cause.

Notably, the throne speech was silent on aquaculture and the traditional fisheries. This was a good thing, given the reckless promises made by the Prime Minister during the heat of the recent election.

Unfortunately, there are also a whole host of areas where we are on the wrong path. The ACOA minister continues to be a member from outside of our region. When it comes to scientific research dollars, innovation and R and D funding, the lion's share of that money ends up in areas outside of Atlantic Canada, which has a harmful economic impact on Atlantic Canada and areas outside of central Canada.

On rural Internet, the government is simply moving too slowly and is too focused on the big telecoms for solutions.

The government continues to target law-abiding, responsible firearm owners, not illegal guns and gangs.

Additionally, it has been equally silent on the forestry industry and on its inability to get an agreement with the United States in this regard. This is important for Canada as well as New Brunswick.

On deficits and rising taxes, all too often the Liberals' focus is elsewhere, and they have not made deficit elimination a priority, which they have promised to do time and time again.

I will discuss the two most pressing areas where we are going to have a challenge.

The first is the carbon tax. Workers at Flakeboard in my riding lost their jobs because of policies brought in by the government which raised energy prices. Marwood, another company, is a builder of wood products, with sales at home in Canada and in New England. It, too, is deeply concerned about the impact of ever-rising energy prices.

As well, the economy is sluggish. We have heard that 71,000 jobs were lost in November, and we are falling behind our international competitors. Last year, real gross domestic product expanded by 1.4% and population grew by 1.5%, which means on a per capita basis, things are shrinking. They are getting worse for Canadians and the economy. As a result, wages for working Canadians are not keeping up with the prices on just about everything. I will have more to say on this in the coming weeks and months in my role as the opposition labour critic.

Over these four years, we have seen one constant thing from the government. It has no discipline, and this has led to a decline for the entire country. This is true on the economy, it is true with our international standing, it is true with our institutions and now it is true on national unity. The Liberals are not a serious government. Canadians gave the government a humbling return in this Parliament. Unfortunately, I do not think it is enough to change its direc-

tion, so Conservatives will continue to offer a better course for Canada and a way forward.

• (1800)

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad my colleague touched on the subject of aquaculture.

It is also a big area of concern on Canada's other coast, in the riding I am proud to represent, but particularly in northern Vancouver Island. We know our wild salmon populations are feeling an incredible amount of stress right now. There is a real movement afoot to try to get those open-net fish farms out of the way of wild salmon migration routes. In the 42nd Parliament, my previous colleague, Fin Donnelly, tried to move those open-net fish farms to closed containment land-based systems.

Could my colleague inform the House what the Conservative Party's position is on that? I know the coastal residents of British Columbia would be very interested in that, given the threat fish farms pose to wild salmon populations.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Mr. Speaker, I am here today to speak for myself. I can tell members the concerns from my constituents. The technology the hon. member is proposing is unproven. It will drive up the price to produce farmed fish. It will drive up the price that families pay to put food on their table. It will kill Canadian jobs.

If we do not produce farmed fish in the east coast aquaculture, our international competitors will. Investment dollars will go elsewhere, whether it is to Scotland, to Chile or to other parts around this world. This is a growing industry, and it is a way to feed the world with safe and affordable farmed seafood.

That is the perspective from Atlantic Canada. We have this technology. It creates many good-paying jobs, not only on the water but also as white-collar jobs in the office in rural Canada.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a very specific question for the member opposite, related to tax cuts. The government is proposing tax cuts and tax relief for Canadians. Will the Conservative Party, in particular that member, support that?

**Mr. John Williamson:** Mr. Speaker, again, I will speak for myself here. I will have to look at the tax cuts. Too often with the Liberals, they will propose one thing and then deliver something else.

*The Address*

I have been talking about raising the basic personal exemption since I was head of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, when the Liberals were fighting that idea and refusing to lower taxes on working Canadians. Our side will give any legislation from the government a fair reading. If, in fact, taxes are to be cut, we will likely applaud that. We are going to read the fine print first. One has to read the fine print on any promise when it comes from the Liberals on spending and taxes.

• (1805)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member on being elected, and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you too.

I would like to ask my colleague a question about firearms. Discussions have focused on tightening the rules for assault weapons and handguns, but not shotguns, which means that hunters are not being targeted. When I asked a question earlier this week, I made the point that the weapon Marc L pine used in his anti-feminist attack on December 6, 1989, is still in circulation.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Mr. Speaker, I will just repeat that the solution is not to go after Canadians who are following the rules when they buy and use firearms. What we need to do is go after the people who use firearms illegally and do not obey current laws.

[*English*]

**Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, once again, congratulations on your role in our Parliament.

In my new role as the shadow minister for northern affairs and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, the one thing I am really concerned about is the lack of focus on the north by the government in the throne speech.

In the throne speech, the best that we got was “in the Far North or along the Canada-U.S. border—all Canadians want to make Canada a better place for themselves, their children and their communities.” That is all we got for the entire northern part of our country. I guess defining the north is difficult, because we are generally north wherever we set foot in Canadian territory.

Especially in those northern areas, we develop our resources. This is a government that said it is supposedly pro-north, but it is difficult to defend that. I will mention one thing that was very clear. Having a northern development strategy would have been good to hear. A national energy corridor to help get our resources to market would have been a great thing to hear in the throne speech.

A plan to restore ethics and accountability in the government is a general theme that we did not hear about. As the former chair of the ethics committee, I certainly know how lacking the Prime Minister is on that file.

There was also the lack of support for our energy workers, such as building the TMX, repealing Bill C-69 and Bill C-48. We did not hear about those either.

Why does that relate to the north? A lot of the natural resource projects are in the north. All that we have seen, even when we talk

about Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, is the Liberals really limit any new development in the northern part of our country.

It is not just the Conservatives who are saying this. We have leaders in the north who have already criticized the Liberal government. I will mention some of those individuals.

Former Nunavut premier Peter Taptuna said, “We do want to be getting to a state where we can make our own determination of our priorities, and the way to do that is gain meaningful revenue from resource development. At the same time, when one potential source of revenue is taken off the table, it puts us back at practically square one where Ottawa will make the decisions for us.”

I am referring to the moratorium on development in the north by the Liberal government. At the time, the leaders in the north were not made aware of that and it was very much a surprise. We have indigenous peoples across the north who want to develop their resources and a good economy for their people and for their benefit. What we saw from the government was a complete stifling of that opportunity.

Nunavut Premier Joe Savikataaq said, “No one in Nunavut asked for a carbon tax and no one in Nunavut agreed to it.” That is another aspect of what this particular leadership has addressed, which is the effects of the carbon tax on the north.

I live in northern B.C. and the member for Yukon across the way lives where it is a little colder than where I live. One thing I would think the Liberal member across the way can agree on is that heating our homes in the north really is not an option. It is not a luxury and it is not something we can choose not to do. We need to heat our homes just to stay alive in the winter months. That is why the carbon tax especially targets the north unfairly. I would have at least expected some kind of way to mitigate that effect on northern communities. They really have no choice, whether it is transportation or heating their homes.

I am going to mention another leader, Mervyn Gruben, mayor of the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk. It is a long quote, but I will read it for the benefit of members today. He said, “I agree the Liberals should be helping us. They shut down our offshore gasification and put a moratorium right across”, and I will use his language, “the whole freaking Arctic without even consulting us.” It might show his anger too with this decision. Obviously, they were expecting to develop those resources to help their people and it was stymied and shut down right there. He further stated, “They never said a word to us.”

Mayor Gruben's colleague said, "It's so easy to sit down here and make judgments on people and lives that are 3,500 clicks away, and make decisions on our behalf, especially with that moratorium on the Beaufort. That should be taken away, lifted, please and thank you. That is going to open up and give jobs to our people—training and all the stuff we're wishing for."

• (1810)

Merven Gruben also made another key statement, saying, "We're proud people who like to work for a living."

This is the opportunity they are looking for. They want to develop their resources, yet the government, which is supposed to be supporting the north, seems to be doing everything to get in the way of that development.

Mr. Merven Gruben also said:

I thank God we worked very closely with the Harper government and had the all-weather highway built into Tuk. It opened in November 2017, if some of you haven't heard, and now we are learning to work with tourism. We all know that's not the money and work that we were used to in the oil and gas days that we liked.

All that said, we are talking about the throne speech tonight. One thing I have not mentioned yet that alarms us in the north is the lack of a softwood lumber agreement. It is affecting many of the communities across the north.

We talked about gasification and oil and gas and referred a bit to mining, but there are great jobs in the forestry industry as well. There is lots of timber in the north. A lot of areas have not been logged for many years and the timber is sitting there, affecting hundreds of thousands of jobs across the country. It would greatly benefit the north if we signed a softwood lumber agreement. Even a signal from the Liberals that they wanted to get this done would have been appreciated by the folks in my riding and in the north, but we did not even get a signal.

As the House probably remembers, the last time this happened the government at least signalled. Maybe it is better for the Liberals not to say it; maybe that is where they are now. They did not even talk about a softwood lumber agreement.

The last time we heard about it was in 2015. In the first 100 days, the Prime Minister was supposed to sit down with the then President Obama and get a signed, sealed and delivered softwood lumber agreement. That did not happen.

Some have asked what the big deal is. The big deal is that the 20% tariff applied to our Canadian lumber has greatly affected the margins. A couple of years ago when we were making \$600 per thousand, it was still profitable, but with the market going down and stumpage rates affecting us in northern British Columbia, the 20% tariff is now really affecting the sale of lumber and timber to our neighbours. Despite this, it was once again ignored by the government.

As a bottom line, the throne speech signals the direction the government is supposed to be going. We do not see a whole lot for the north or the softwood lumber industry. The Liberals are working on language to talk back Bill C-69 and Bill C-48. They seem to be ramping it up. We heard what the Minister of Environment was talking about. There is gas project in B.C., another northern project,

### *The Address*

and one of the project partners is pulling out. Is that because of the carbon tax in Canada? Is that because of other signals the environment minister has given that the Liberals will not co-operating with that particular project? I do not know.

The bottom line is that Canadians need to work. Canadians in the north, in the file that I now represent, need to work. They need to be able to heat their homes, feed their families and keep a roof over their heads. It is unfortunate that the government does not seem to take that group of Canadians seriously.

• (1815)

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6:15 p.m., it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the subamendment and the amendment now before the House.

The question is on the amendment to the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment to the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment to the amendment will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

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

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Call in the members.

• (1850)

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** The question is as follows. Shall I dispense with reading the amendment to the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** No.

[*Chair read text of amendment to the amendment to House*]

• (1900)

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

(*Division No. 7*)

YEAS

Members

Angus	Ashton
Bachrach	Blaikie
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Boulerice
Cannings	Davies
Duvall	Garrison
Gazan	Green

*The Address*

Harris  
Johns  
Kwan  
Manly  
Mathysen  
Singh— 23

Hughes  
Julian  
MacGregor  
Masse  
McPherson

Joly  
Jordan  
Kelloway  
Kent  
Khera  
Kmiec  
Kram  
Kusie  
Lake  
Lambropoulos  
Lamoureux  
Lattanzio  
Lawrence  
Lefebvre  
Lemire  
Lewis (Essex)  
Lightbound  
Lobb  
Longfield  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
Maguire  
Marcil  
Martinez Ferrada  
Mazier  
McColeman  
McDonald  
McKay  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)  
Melillo  
Mendicino  
Miller  
Moore  
Morneau  
Morrissey  
Murray  
Ng  
O'Connell  
O'Regan  
Perron  
Plamondon  
Powlowski  
Ratansi  
Regan  
Rempel Garner  
Rodriguez  
Romanado  
Ruff  
Sahota (Brampton North)  
Sajjan  
Sangha  
Savard-Tremblay  
Schieffe  
Schulte  
Serré  
Shanahan  
Shields  
Shipley  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Simard  
Sloan  
Soroka  
Stanton  
Ste-Marie  
Stubbs  
Tabbara  
Thériault  
Tochor  
Trudel  
Uppal  
van Koeverden  
Vandal  
Vaughan

Jones  
Jowhari  
Kelly  
Khalid  
Kitchen  
Koutrakis  
Kurek  
Kusmierczyk  
Lalonde  
Lametti  
Lamouche  
Lauzon  
Lebouthillier  
Lehoux  
Levitt  
Liepert  
Lloyd  
Long  
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Maloney  
Martel  
May (Cambridge)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McCrimmon  
McGuinty  
McKenna  
McLean  
McLeod (Northwest Territories)  
Mendès  
Michaud  
Monsef  
Morantz  
Morrison  
Motz  
Nater  
Normandin  
Oliphant  
Patzner  
Petitpas Taylor  
Poilievre  
Qualtrough  
Redekopp  
Reid  
Robillard  
Rogers  
Rood  
Sahota (Calgary Skyview)  
Saini  
Samsom  
Sari  
Scarpaleggia  
Schmale  
Seeback  
Sgro  
Sheehan  
Shin  
Sidhu (Brampton East)  
Sikand  
Simms  
Sorbara  
Spengemann  
Steinley  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Tassi  
Therrien  
Trudeau  
Turnbull  
Van Bynen  
Van Popta  
Vandenbeld  
Vidal

## NAYS

## Members

Aboultaif  
Albas  
Alleslev  
Anand  
Arnold  
Arya  
Bagnell  
Baker  
Barlow  
Barsalou-Duval  
Beech  
Bennett  
Bergen  
Berthold  
Bessette  
Bibeau  
Blair  
Blanchette-Joncas  
Blois  
Brassard  
Brière  
Calkins  
Carrie  
Chabot  
Champoux  
Chen  
Chong  
Cormier  
Dabrusin  
Damoff  
Davidson  
Deltell  
Desbiens  
Dhaliwal  
Diotte  
Dong  
Dreeshen  
Dubourg  
Duguid  
Duncan (Etobicoke North)  
Easter  
El-Khoury  
Epp  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Fillmore  
Finnigan  
Fonseca  
Fortin  
Freeland  
Gallant  
Gaudreau  
Genuis  
Gill  
Godin  
Gourde  
Guilbeault  
Hallan  
Hardie  
Holland  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Jansen

Aitchison  
Alghabra  
Amos  
Anandasangaree  
Arseneault  
Badawey  
Bains  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Battiste  
Bendayan  
Benzen  
Bergeron  
Bérubé  
Bezan  
Bittle  
Blanchet  
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)  
Bragdon  
Bratina  
Brunelle-Duceppe  
Carr  
Casey  
Chagger  
Charbonneau  
Chiu  
Cooper  
Cumming  
Dalton  
Dancho  
DeBellefeuille  
d'Entremont  
Desilets  
Dhillon  
Doherty  
Dowdall  
Drouin  
Duclos  
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Dzerowicz  
Ehsassi  
Ellis  
Erskine-Smith  
Falk (Provencher)  
Fergus  
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)  
Fisher  
Fortier  
Fragiskatos  
Fry  
Garneau  
Généreux  
Gerretsen  
Gladu  
Gould  
Gray  
Hajdu  
Harder  
Hoback  
Housefather  
Hutchings  
Jaczek  
Jeneroux

Viersen  
Virani  
Wagantall  
Waugh  
Weiler  
Wong  
Young  
Zahid  
Zimmer

Vignola  
Vis  
Warkentin  
Webber  
Williamson  
Yip  
Yurdiga  
Zann  
Zuberi— 290

### PAIRED

#### Members

Beaulieu  
Fraser  
Pauzé

Boudrias  
LeBlanc  
Wilkinson— 6

**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment to the amendment lost.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the amendment 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 nays have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

● (1910)

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

(*Division No. 8*)

### YEAS

#### Members

Aboultaif  
Albas  
Arnold  
Barlow  
Benzen  
Berthold  
Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)  
Brassard  
Carrie  
Chong  
Cumming  
Dancho  
Deltell  
Diotte  
Dowdall  
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)  
Fast  
Gallant  
Genuis  
Godin  
Gray  
Harder  
Jansen

Aitchison  
Alleslev  
Baldinelli  
Barrett  
Bergen  
Bezan  
Bragdon  
Calkins  
Chiu  
Cooper  
Dalton  
Davidson  
d'Entremont  
Doherty  
Dreeshen  
Epp  
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Stubbs  
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Van Popta  
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Wagantall  
Waugh  
Williamson  
Yurdiga

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Angus  
Arya  
Bachrach  
Bagnell  
Baker  
Battiste  
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Harris	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
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Jowhari	Julian
Kelloway	Khalid
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Qualtrough	Ratansi
Regan	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota (Brampton North)
Saini	Sajjan
Samson	Sangha
Sarai	Savard-Tremblay
Scarpaleggia	Schieffe
Schulte	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sikand
Simard	Simms
Singh	Sorbara
Spengemann	Ste-Marie
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**PAIRED**

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**The Speaker:** I declare the amendment defeated.

**ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

● (1915)

[*English*]

## THE ECONOMY

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take a short moment to thank everyone in Edmonton Strathcona for electing me as a new member of Parliament. Edmonton Strathcona is a very special riding, home to great festivals, a thriving art scene, many post-secondary institutions, the francophone community, the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market, a beautiful river valley and so much more. I am incredibly honoured to be able to represent the people of Edmonton Strathcona in this House, and I am deeply grateful to everyone who helped elect me.

I want to particularly thank the wonderful team of staff and volunteers who supported my campaign, people like Erica, Gale, Tom, Epiphany, Eleanor, John and so many others who worked so hard. I would like to say a special thanks to my good friends Scott Parker and Megan Rich for being such incredible supports for me and for our campaign.

I would also like to take a moment to thank my family: my parents, my brothers and my wonderful children, Maclean and Keltie, and my husband Duncan, for supporting me and sharing me with my constituents and with the House. My gratitude to those who have supported me on this journey is immense, and it serves as fuel for my commitment and dedication to advocate on behalf of the citizens of Edmonton Strathcona and all Albertans.

We have a problem. On Monday, I asked the government what it was doing to support Albertans who have lost their jobs and cannot find work. I asked the government how it intends to support the over 20% of young men in Alberta who are unemployed. I asked the government how it was going to show, with actions not words, that it understands what is happening in Alberta and how it would show that it would do the right thing and fight alongside my colleagues and me to ensure that every Albertan has a good, family-sustaining job and that hard-working Albertans are equipped to work in the new economy.

I am proud to be the granddaughter of Daniel McCoy, one of the infamous McCoy brothers, who were pioneers in Alberta oil and gas. My husband and brother work in the sector, as did my father before his retirement. As with so many Albertans, my family's story is woven together with oil and gas. Like other families, I profoundly and personally understand what is at stake here.

For many years, Albertans benefited from the oil and gas industry, and the rest of Canada benefited from the wealth produced by Alberta workers. This wealth paid for health care, social programs and other initiatives that improved the lives of all Canadians. We were happy to contribute to a greater good.

Albertans need support for economic diversification, green energy, energy efficiency and transportation infrastructure. Albertans need employment, education and training support. Albertans need jobs. In November alone, over 18,000 jobs were lost.

Under Rachel Notley, Alberta took significant steps toward diversifying its economy and fighting climate change. Unfortunately, the province is now going backwards. Is the government prepared to offer real solutions to Albertans? Is it prepared to make serious investments in infrastructure, green energy and transportation, and in employment and education supports for Alberta workers?

• (1920)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before I go to the hon. parliamentary secretary, again, there is too much noise in the chamber. I would ask hon. members who wish to carry on conversations to go to their respective lobbies.

Also, members may not realize it, but when a member is standing and speaking in the chamber, other members are not to come in to the line between the member who is recognized and the Speaker. They should make their way on either side, or behind the Speaker's chair as necessary, but please do not come between the Speaker and the member who has been properly recognized. I would ask for members' co-operation in that.

We will go to the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages with responsibility to Western Economic Diversification Canada.

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages (Western Economic Diversification Canada) and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (Canada Water Agency), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time I rise in this House, I want to thank the amazing people of Winnipeg South for their continued support. I promise them that I will do my very best to serve them well over the next number of years.

I want to congratulate the hon. member for Edmonton Strathcona on her election. I thank her for her passionate address and for her question.

We know, as we move forward as a country, that we have to include all Canadians and ensure that everyone has a real and fair chance to succeed. This government worked hard in the last Parliament to support Albertans who are going through tough times, and we will continue to do so in this Parliament.

We recognize the challenges facing workers in our resource sector. With the lower prices on international commodities, there have been some very difficult times for workers, particularly in the prairies. That is why, after many years of trying and failing by previous governments, we are moving forward on building the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. There are shovels in the ground and thousands of Canadians hired to make sure that we can get our en-

### *Adjournment Proceedings*

ergy resources to new markets responsibly and sustainably. Our government is about partnering with westerners to develop the west's economy and advance its economic interests.

I am from the prairies. I have lived most of my life in the prairies. I am a University of Calgary graduate. I worked with farmers in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba over many years, and I know that westerners want to be heard and seen. Let me assure the hon. member that this government is listening and acting.

Our priority is to spur innovation, diversification and economic growth in communities across Canada, including Alberta. One key way our government supports Alberta is through the regional development agency focused on the west: Western Economic Diversification Canada, or WD for short.

Through WD, the federal government is partnering with Albertans and other western businesses and entrepreneurs to harness their skills and ingenuity. This partnership helps create the business environment and opportunities that will grow the economy. WD offers support to businesses that are starting up, want to scale up or need help getting their products and services to international markets.

Earlier this year, after engaging with westerners, WD developed the western Canada growth strategy. Grow West is a whole-of-government effort to build on a solid climate for investors, support small and medium-sized businesses and connect western enterprises to export markets and offshore supply chains.

As recently as September of 2019, our government announced over \$27 million in new investments for 23 projects across the city and surrounding areas. Over \$18 million was provided through business scale-up and productivity funding, which will support small and medium-sized businesses in Edmonton by providing interest-free loans for these projects. Another \$6 million was announced through the regional innovation ecosystems program for projects in Edmonton, supporting a diverse range of innovations in advanced manufacturing.

This government's support for Alberta does not stop there. However, I have a little too much to say and too little time, so I will end by saying that this government will continue to invest in Alberta and Albertans, because we know that when Alberta does well, Canada does well.

• (1925)

**Ms. Heather McPherson:** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, the comments the member made are in fact not going to help us with a just transition. Again the Liberal government is offering Alberta words instead of action, and we need more than just platitudes and lip service.

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People are hurting. We are not talking about statistics; we are not talking about job numbers. We are talking about real people and real families facing real challenges in my province. We need to see serious investment in new industries, new forms of energy production and training and apprenticeship for the new economy.

Will the Prime Minister provide a timeline for when Albertans can expect actual action? What steps are being taken to get Albertans working?

**Mr. Terry Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, I recognize the hon. member's passion for her province, her community and her constituents. I applaud her for that.

I want to assure her of our government's support for Albertans. We recognize Albertans want to use their own resourcefulness and talents to grow and diversify the western economy and indeed the Canadian economy. The investments made and the partnerships created by WD continue to move the Alberta economy forward, especially during tough economic times.

This government has not and will not stop innovating and finding new ways to create Alberta success stories with Alberta businesses and entrepreneurs. Our government is listening and we are taking action.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I will advise hon. members that during adjournment debates, much as in committee of the whole, members are able to sit in the seat of their choice and will be properly recognized. For the adjournment debate, they do not have to be in the seat they are usually in.

The hon. member for Northumberland—Peterborough South.

THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Philip Lawrence (Northumberland—Peterborough South, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to take this opportunity to thank the people who have put me in this seat. I thank my volunteers, my family and my campaign team. I specifically thank my wife, who sacrificed so much for me to be here. I really appreciate it.

I would also thank my two best canvassers. I had a gentleman by the name of Jerry Steadman. He was 74 years old and knocked on over 10,000 doors for me. My second-best canvasser was at the other end of the age spectrum. He was six years old and happens to be my son. I am not sure how many members have had the opportunity to door knock with someone like James, but it was a different opportunity. NDP and Green supporters would invite me into their homes, give my child chocolate bars and offer their support. To James and Jerry I offer great thanks.

I will mention a couple of issues going on in my constituency right now.

My constituency borders the wonderful waters of Lake Ontario. Along that shoreline the water is very high, and people are afraid, as the spring comes, that what happened the last couple of years will repeat: extreme flooding and property damage. I will continue to advocate for them and am concerned for them.

The other issue my constituents are worried about is rural Internet. Our children's ability to learn is impeded by slow Internet speed. Businesses' progress and success in rural Ontario are being

impeded because we do not have the Internet speed necessary for a modern business environment.

With that, I will get to my question. Last Friday, the government accepted Alberta's environmental plan. While the Prime Minister committed in the throne speech to working with other provinces, the good people of Ontario are still left waiting. Ontario has a balanced approach to the environment, promoting jobs and leading our country in job creation over the last couple of months, while also reducing emissions. Ontario is a national leader in greenhouse gas emission reductions.

When will the Liberals stop playing games and give Ontario an answer? Will it be in a day, will it be in a month, will it be in a year or at any time on the space-time continuum?

● (1930)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking all the people of Vaudreuil—Soulanges for granting me a second mandate in the House of Commons. I am eager to work hard for them in the months and years to come.

[*English*]

I would also like to congratulate my colleague from Northumberland—Peterborough South for having won his election.

The vast majority of Canadians voted for climate action in this past election, and our government is committed to moving forward with measures that will reduce our emissions and grow a clean economy. I look forward to working with all members in this place as we identify and move forward with solutions to tackle climate change. The Speech from the Throne made it very clear that our government will work with provinces and territories to find solutions, especially when it comes to climate change. Why? It is because Canadians are already feeling the impacts of climate change, from wildfires in the west to extreme flooding in the east. The costs of climate change are growing. I know this all too well, representing a riding that has experienced record flooding two out of the last three years.

Canadians know that we need to act. They want ambitious climate action. They want us to work together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build a strong, low-carbon economy, and so do we. Canadians also recognize that when it is free to pollute, there will be more of it. That is why they support a price on carbon pollution. A growing number of governments and experts understand that carbon pricing is one of the most effective tools we have for tackling climate change and growing the clean economy. It incentivizes Canadians to make clean choices, it helps to reduce emissions and it stimulates investments in climate action, including adaptation and clean innovation. That is why pricing carbon pollution is an essential part of our climate plan. The climate plan we developed with the provinces and territories offers them the flexibility to price carbon pollution in a way that makes sense for their circumstances. It also establishes a common standard to ensure that those plans are straight, stringent and effective, because establishing minimum national standards is integral to reducing nationwide greenhouse gas emissions.

We have worked hard to develop a price on carbon pollution pricing system that is practical and affordable, and that ensures Canadians are better off. When carbon pollution pricing went into effect across Canada, we ensured that all proceeds would be returned to the jurisdiction of origin. In fact, in the provinces and territories where the federal carbon pricing system is in place, such as Ontario, most families are getting more than they pay. This year, for example, an Ontario family of four received about \$307 through the climate action incentive. Our plan demonstrates that we can tackle climate change, while at the same time leaving families better off.

As part of our plan, we also have an annual benchmarking assessment process. We asked the provinces and territories to provide information on their carbon pricing systems to determine whether they meet the federal standard. We have received Ontario's proposal to implement its own provincial carbon pollution pricing system for heavy industry, and we are assessing that proposal.

One of our priorities in putting a price on carbon pollution has been ensuring stability and certainty for businesses and investors. This ensures businesses can plan for the future. That is why the federal benchmark lays out a path for carbon pricing until 2022, and that is why we take any changes to the system for industrial emit-

ters very seriously. The federal carbon pollution pricing system is in place in Ontario, and it is working. We are looking at Ontario's proposal, but we are doing our due diligence to make sure that carbon pricing remains stringent and effective.

We will continue to work with all jurisdictions, businesses, and indigenous peoples to advance the climate action Canadians expect.

**Mr. Philip Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, I have yet to receive an answer to my question, which was for a deadline. Will it be a month, a year, six months? I think it is a fairly simple question.

There is another question that I would put for the member. The Parliamentary Budget Officer, the Green Party and others would agree with me in saying the carbon tax is not effective at current rates. We would say from this side that we should invest in technology and global investments that will actually affect the global problem. They would say that we would need to double, triple or quadruple the carbon tax.

Will the Liberal government be increasing the carbon tax?

• (1935)

**Mr. Peter Schiefke:** Mr. Speaker, I will reiterate. We worked with provinces, territories and indigenous communities and businesses for two years to develop an approach to carbon pricing that worked for the different regions in our vast country. We have worked to ensure that it would be fair, effective and meet minimum stringency requirements.

In response to my hon. colleague's question, we will review the Government of Ontario's proposal, alongside the proposals of other provinces and territories, as quickly as possible. Protecting the environment and growing the economy go together. We will continue to work with provinces and territories to advance climate action while supporting good local jobs and making life more affordable for families.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:36 p.m.)



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