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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

—

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 24, 2015

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

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• (1005)
[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

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

I should point out to this place that all petitions that I am presenting today relate to the same subject, that being the grain industry.

The other interesting point I would make is that these petitions were delivered by members of all of the recognized parties in the House, which clearly exemplifies the fact that the grain industry is not only important to western Canadians but to all Canadians. Because of that, I believe it appropriate for me to say a few words as to not only the responses to the petitions themselves but to some of the rationale behind the government's position relating to the grain industry.

Let me, if I may, just for a moment or two, give some of the answers that we have provided to members of this place who have questioned and petitioned the government on the grain industry. The Government of Canada notes the concerns raised by the petitioners regarding farmers' rights to save, use and exchange seeds, both domestically and internationally, and the petitioners' support for the international agricultural aid policies. The Government of Canada understands that many farmers place considerable value on having the ability to save seeds.

In conclusion, let me present these petitions as delivered.

* * *

[Translation]

MILITARY CONTRIBUTION AGAINST ISIL

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a little less than six months ago, I stood in this place to address the House about the rise of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq

and the Levant and the threat it poses, not only for that region, but for the broader global community, and in particular for Canada and the Canadian public.

[English]

Back in October, I also spoke of the need to work with the international community in pursuing an aggressive course of action against ISIL, something that the House endorsed. Today, I am here to report on the evolution of the situation, to note that the direction and resolve of our allies and partners in dealing with this threat has not changed, and to propose that Canada renew its commitment to the international coalition and its mission.

[Translation]

ISIL has established a self-proclaimed caliphate that covers a vast territory from around Aleppo in Syria to the outskirts of Baghdad in Iraq. From that territory, it has launched a terrorist jihad not only against the region, but on a global scale.

[English]

The good news is this. The territorial spread of ISIL, something occurring at a truly terrifying pace in the spring and summer of last year, has been more or less halted. Indeed, ISIL has been somewhat pushed back at the margins. In significant part, this is because of the breadth and intensity of the international opposition that it has provoked not just in the west but in the majority of the Muslim world, both Shia and Sunni, and specifically in Arab nations. Nevertheless, ISIL's territorial hold remains substantial and its leadership and networking of wider jihadist forces has continued.

[Translation]

Just as the so-called Islamic State threatened it would do, it has carried out or inspired attacks throughout its network across the globe, including right here in Canada, as I am sure everyone remembers, and in one case, not far from the House of Commons. ISIL has made it clear that it targets, by name, Canada and Canadians.

[English]

ISIL has made it clear that it targets by name Canada and Canadians. Why? It is for the same reason it targets so many groups, in fact for the same reason it targets most of humanity. In ISIL's view, anyone who does not accept its perverted version of religion should be killed. It is as self-evident to them as it seems insane to us, but it is far from an idle threat.

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[Translation]

ISIL does not kill just enemy combatants. It also kills journalists covering the conflict, aid workers helping innocent civilians and, of course, innocent civilians themselves.

[English]

In fact in its crimes, ISIL targets innocent men, women and children, particularly the most vulnerable and peaceful ethnic and religious minorities.

Why do we know these things? Not because, as is so often the case, the behaviour of brutal regimes inevitably becomes public knowledge. No, we know these things because ISIL brags about them.

[Translation]

The so-called Islamic State does more than brag. It broadcasts its assassinations, committed in the most barbaric way possible, using high-quality video productions, which is unprecedented in the troubling history of human atrocities.

●(1010)

[English]

Canada, along with roughly 60 other members of the United Nations, has taken action. We have provided staff officers to the coalition's military command. We have transported arms from donor countries to Iraqi forces directly engaged with advancing ISIL terrorists. In fact, early on in this mission, we provided the largest such airlift support.

We have committed Canadian soldiers to advise and assist Iraqi Kurdish forces defending their homes in northern Iraq.

[Translation]

We have taken part in air strikes that have allowed us to hit ISIL targets in Iraq directly.

[English]

Our Royal Canadian Air Force CF-18s have made strategic air strikes against ISIL targets in Iraq in the coalition's air campaign. Canada's highly capable CP-140 Aurora surveillance aircraft have made possible the coalition's effective precision bombing.

[Translation]

Reconnaissance and logistical support, as well as the expertise provided by the Canadian Armed Forces, have been an integral part of the international mission.

[English]

Canada is also helping those combatting regional terrorist financing networks, and we are working in concert with others to stem the flow of foreign fighters to the region.

[Translation]

Of course, we have also offered assistance to civilians who have been displaced in the region.

[English]

In fact, among the nations of the world, we have been one of the biggest providers of humanitarian assistance. I am glad to say that in

the last six months we have helped feed 1.7 million people in Iraq, provide shelter and relief supplies to 1.25 million people, and give some education to at least 0.5 million children.

Beyond that, we have also been helping to support more than 200,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq with food, water, shelter and protection. There is no either/or here between military action and humanitarian aid. The situation desperately needs both, and Canada has vigorously been providing both, and so have a wide range of our international partners.

The upshot is this: there has been no lessening or weakening of the global consensus that ISIL must be resisted and resisted by force.

[Translation]

That is why, today, the Minister of Foreign Affairs will be tabling a motion seeking the support of the House for the government's decision to renew our military mission against the so-called Islamic State for 12 months. Our objectives remain the same. We intend to continue to degrade the capacities of the so-called Islamic State, that is, to degrade its ability to engage in large-scale military movement, to operate bases in the open, to expand its presence in the region and to propagate attacks outside the region.

[English]

Specifically, we will extend our air combat mission, that is our air strike capability, our air-to-air refuelling capability, our Aurora surveillance mission, and the deployment of air crew and support personnel.

[Translation]

The government is also seeking the support of the House for its decision to explicitly expand the air combat mission to include Syria. The government recognizes that ISIL's power base, indeed the so-called caliphate's capital, is in Syria. ISIL's fighters and much of its heavier equipment are moving freely across the Iraqi border into Syria, in part for better protection against our air strikes. In our view, ISIL must cease to have any safe haven in Syria.

●(1015)

[English]

Let me also be clear that in expanding our air strikes into Syria, the government has now decided we will not seek the express consent of the Syrian government. Instead we will work closely with our American and other allies who have already been carrying out such operations against ISIL over Syria in recent months.

[Translation]

In asking the House to support the government's decision to renew this mission for the next 12 months, it is our intention for the same period that members of Canada's special forces will continue their non-combat mission to advise and assist the Iraqi forces and increase their capabilities to combat the so-called Islamic State.

Routine Proceedings

[English]

We share the view of President Obama and others that we must avoid if we can taking on ground combat responsibilities in this region. We seek to have the Iraqis do this themselves and our role there is to help them do that. Of course, Canada's humanitarian work will go on.

[Translation]

We do not need to choose between fighting the so-called Islamic State and helping its victims.

[English]

We will continue to do both.

[Translation]

I would simply like to conclude by saying this: Canadians know that we cannot make the dangers of the world disappear just by ignoring them.

[English]

Canadians did not invent the threat of jihadi terrorism and we certainly did not invite it, nor as this global threat becomes ever more serious can we protect ourselves, our communities by choosing to ignore it. That is why a strong majority of Canadians have supported our government's mission against ISIL. Canadians understand that it is not merely in the wider interests of the international community, but specifically in Canada's national interest.

[Translation]

It is never easy to make a decision that requires our men and women in uniform to accept the risks that any mission entails. The recent death of Sergeant Andrew Doiron reminded us that, sadly, these risks are all too real.

[English]

Yet the Canadian Armed Forces never waver in defending our country, our family and our values. We are humbled and eternally grateful for their service and sacrifice.

On Thursday, the House will debate the motion put forward by the Minister of Foreign Affairs for a renewed mission against ISIL.

[Translation]

I ask all members to support this motion.

[English]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, asking our brave Canadian women and men in uniform to risk their lives overseas is the most sacred duty that a prime minister has. Seeking approval from this House makes us all responsible for their lives. Seeking a mandate like this must be undertaken, therefore, with the utmost responsibility.

I listened very carefully as the Prime Minister spoke just now, and nothing I heard today has convinced me that the Conservatives are taking this duty with the seriousness it deserves.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that we have had this debate before. On September 30, just six months ago, I stood in this House and asked the Prime Minister specifically whether Canadian troops

would be involved in directing air strikes in Iraq, in painting targets. I asked him twice, as a matter of fact, and twice the Prime Minister specifically denied it. We now know that simply was not true. I also asked the Prime Minister if Canadian troops would be accompanying Iraqi forces to the front line. Again, the Prime Minister categorically denied that, and again we now know that simply was not true. They say that truth is the first casualty of war. It has become clear that the current government has taken that saying to heart.

• (1020)

[Translation]

Little by little, without any transparency and with one contradictory statement after another by the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Conservatives have pushed Canada into a war in Iraq—a war that is not ours to fight. It is a quagmire that has gone on for over a decade, a conflict that has already cost the life of Sergeant Andrew Joseph Doiron, as the Prime Minister just said.

Here we are six months later. This Prime Minister and this government are now asking for permission to extend the deployment in Iraq and to specifically add—the Prime Minister just said so—Syria as a new theatre of operations.

The Prime Minister is asking for our trust so that he can put our troops in danger. Frankly, he has not earned that trust.

[English]

The Prime Minister has not earned that trust because he misled Canadians from the start. It is simply unconscionable that the current Conservative government would ask for the authority to extend the mission in Iraq when so many things it has told Canadians about the mission up until now have been false.

It begs the question: Do they not know the answers or do they not want Canadians to know the answers? The women and men who put their lives on the line deserve better; Canadians deserve better.

If we all agree that it is the Prime Minister's sacred duty to send our troops into war, then it is the official opposition's sacred duty to scrutinize that decision to make sure it is the right one.

Military planners will tell us that, for a mission to succeed, it must have two things. It must have a well-defined objective and a well-defined exit strategy. This mission has neither. The Conservatives simply have no plan. They have no strategy, other than the obvious political one, and that is putting our troops in danger.

Our brave men and women are involved in fire fights with ISIS on the ground, contrary to their clear undertaking. For the Prime Minister to still deny that Canadian troops are involved in combat is simply ludicrous. The death of Sergeant Doiron reminded us all that the risk of deployment on the front line is real. This House cannot turn a blind eye to this fact, despite the Prime Minister's assertions.

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The truth is that our allies, the Americans for instance, do not even get close to the front line. In their role of targeting air strikes, the Canadian soldiers are performing a task that so far even the U.S. military has been unwilling to perform.

General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, has repeatedly said that the U.S. would consider directing attacks from the ground but that it has not done so yet. Why not, and why are Canadian troops doing it?

• (1025)

[*Translation*]

Clearly, the lack of clear objectives did not stop this Prime Minister from supporting George W. Bush's war in 2003. However, history shows that Canada was right in choosing not to participate at the time.

However, it is clear today that our Prime Minister is not at all concerned about the lack of clear objectives. He seems to want his war in Iraq, just as he wanted it in 2003, regardless of the consequences. Canada initially joined the war in Iraq for a 30-day mission. Thirty days became six months. Now, six months later, the government wants to add another year. What will happen then? That is the question. The Conservatives do not know. Canadians do not know. What is worse, the Conservatives refuse to say.

We need to remember Canada's involvement in the war in Afghanistan, a war that, for Canada, also started with our special forces participating in some very limited operations. At the time, facing insults and jeers, Alexa McDonough and the NDP caucus asked the government the necessary questions, tough questions. Then, as now, the initial mission transformed over time, which led us into a quagmire, as we predicted.

The deployment in Afghanistan became the longest military mission in Canada's history: 160 soldiers were killed, more than 1,000 were wounded and thousands of others suffered and still suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

[*English*]

It is the height of irresponsibility for a government to decide to enter a war without a clear plan, without a clear beginning and a well-defined end. However, that is exactly what the Conservatives are doing in Iraq. The government is taking Canada from mission creep to mission leap.

New Democrats are proud to have stood up to the Prime Minister's misguided war from the very beginning. The fact is that Canada has no place in this war. This is not—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Thomas Mulcair: Mr. Speaker, this is not a UN mission. It is not even a NATO mission. Despite attempts to give appearances to the contrary, it is not a NATO mission. UN missions and NATO missions are the kinds of internationally sanctioned campaigns that New Democrats can and have been able to get behind.

In 2011—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I did not hear any noise when the Right Hon. Prime Minister was speaking. I will ask members to extend the same courtesy to the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair: Mr. Speaker, in 2011, when Moammar Gadhafi started dropping bombs on his own civilian population, New Democrats supported the international efforts to protect Libyans. That effort was sanctioned by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973. Of course, when the mission of protection of the civilian population became one of a so-called regime change, it was New Democrats who asked the right question—to replace it with what? Ask the Americans how that worked out in Benghazi.

Now, years later, with everything we have seen unfold in Libya, it is clear that the NDP was right to ask those questions then. Unlike that original mission in Libya, the war in Iraq does not have the support of the United Nations. Let us be clear about that.

Here it is important to note that the UN Security Council has indeed passed three resolutions dealing with Iraq. None authorizes a military mission. However, the Security Council is requiring action on preventing the flow of foreign fighters and financing of terrorist organizations, including ISIS and ISIL. Pressuring regional governments to prevent financial transfers to them is a real diplomatic effort that Canada can and should prioritize. That would be effective. The truth is that air strikes are being used as an effective recruitment tool for ISIS.

• (1030)

[*Translation*]

The United States has been mired in Iraq for over a decade, and the Americans see no light at the end of the tunnel. Would the Prime Minister have us believe that he will be able to successfully use military force to impose a solution in Iraq when everyone else has failed in the past 10 years? I do not think so.

Now the Prime Minister wants to move ahead with this plan and help the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad, a dictator of the worst kind, a war criminal who uses chemical weapons against his own people and bombs schools and hospitals with impunity and without reservation.

[*English*]

It is especially disturbing to see the Prime Minister now openly considering an alliance of sorts with the brutal dictator and war criminal Bashar al-Assad. The Prime Minister has already said that any Canadian military involvement in Syria—something the government is now proposing, as members just heard—would require the permission of the Assad regime.

This is a regime that continues to commit the most atrocious war crimes. It is a regime that not only uses chemical weapons on civilians, but it uses snipers against women and children. It is a regime that actually collaborated with ISIS.

It is hard to believe the Prime Minister when he says that the mission is about preventing atrocities when he is willing to work with one of the worst perpetrators of atrocities in the world today.

Paul Heinbecker, Canada's last ambassador to the UN Security Council, said it best. He said:

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If out of fear of Islamic State and of a desire to stop them, the Coalition were to ally itself, de facto or de jure, with Bashar al-Assad for fleeting tactical advantage, it would be the ultimate betrayal of the Syrian innocents. And of our own values.

Simply put, our women and men in uniform have no place being in Iraq and they certainly have no place being in Syria.

Mark my words, when New Democrats form government on October 19, we are going to pull our troops out. We are going to bring them home.

[*Translation*]

I am sure that everyone in the House only wants what is best for the Iraqi people, but escalating military action is not going to help the people of Iraq. The insurgents, factions and clans feed off these interventions to radicalize the population, recruit militants and undermine local governments. These groups, such as the Islamic State, benefit from the weak Iraqi government and the little support it gets from its own people. Iraq is in no position to maintain peace and security within its own borders. More bombs, more destruction and more deaths are not going to change that.

[*English*]

Canada can play a more positive role in resolving this crisis. We can do that by helping Turkey, our NATO ally, cope with 1.5 million refugees who have poured over its border. We can do that by using every diplomatic, humanitarian, and financial resource at our disposal to strengthen the political institutions in Iraq, and yes, in Syria.

It is simply not enough to say that we have to do something. We need to ask ourselves what is the right thing to do. The question should not be whether it is a combat role or nothing. It is a false choice offered by the Prime Minister. The question should be what is the most effective thing Canada can do.

There is a desperate need for humanitarian support. There were reports from a committee of this Parliament this week of children freezing to death in refugee camps. Canada could have helped with winterizing those camps.

There is also a desperate need for greater diplomacy. Local frustrations and ineffective outreach brought about the rise of ISIS. Only effective, inclusive, and representative governance can end the threat from extremism in the region.

There is a need for a strong campaign to counter extremist messaging, exposing the brutality of ISIS and the lack of religious basis for its atrocities. It starts right here at home with proactive engagement with the communities to prevent radicalization. However, that is something that cannot be achieved when the Prime Minister singles out Canada's Muslim population instead of reaching out to its members.

● (1035)

[*Translation*]

The motion the government is moving does not do any of that. That is why the official opposition made up of the New Democratic Party of Canada will not support this motion, will not support extending the war in Iraq, and will not support expanding this war to Syria. That is clearly not the right path to take.

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the Prime Minister's statement.

We have learned a lot over the six months that have passed since the government decided to participate in the war in Iraq.

[*English*]

Last fall, the Prime Minister stood in this House and told Parliament that Canadian troops were not accompanying the Iraqi forces into combat. In the weeks and months that followed, a very different story emerged. We now know that our 30-day non-combat advise and assist effort became a six-month-long engagement, and then evolved into one in which Canadian troops were active on the front lines, regularly engaging in direct combat.

[*Translation*]

We learned of the tragic death of Sergeant Andrew Joseph Doiron, who was killed in the line of duty. That was the first death of a member of the Canadian Forces in this war.

I know that I speak on behalf of all members of the House when I say that we will continue to pay tribute to Sergeant Doiron and his courage. Our thoughts remain with his loved ones.

[*English*]

That tragic loss of life should also serve as an important reminder. At the end of every decision to enter combat stands a brave Canadian in harm's way, because they have the courage to serve and because we made the decision to send them to war.

The men and women who serve in our military are well-trained professionals, deeply committed to their country and very good at what they do. We in the Liberal Party have never been opposed to employing the lethal force of which they are capable when it clearly serves Canada's national interest to do so. We will never be.

However, in every case, that national interest must be clearly and rationally articulated. The mission designed to uphold that interest must have transparent objectives and a responsible plan to achieve them.

The government has been steadily drawing Canada deeper into a combat role in Iraq. It now wants to expand that war into Syria. Further, it has done all this without clearly articulating the mission's objectives. As a result, neither members of this House nor Canadians have any way to know when or whether we have achieved those objectives.

The Conservatives have no exit strategy beyond an illusory end date set for next March. Involvement in direct combat in this war does not serve Canada's interests, nor will it provide a constructive solution to the catastrophic humanitarian crisis in this region. Now the Prime Minister seeks to deepen our involvement and expand it into the Syrian civil war.

Last fall, because the Prime Minister failed to offer a clear and responsible plan, one that limited our participation to a true non-combat role and better reflected the broad scope of Canada's capabilities, we said that we would not support his motion to go to war in Iraq.

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The four core principles we articulated in October still stand today: one, Canada has a role to play in confronting humanitarian crises in the world; two, when a government considers deploying our men and women in uniform, there must be a clear mission and a clear role for Canada; three, the case for deploying our forces must be made openly and transparently, based on clear, reliable, dispassionately presented facts; and four, Canada's role must reflect the broad scope of Canadian capabilities and how best we can help.

● (1040)

In the fall, we expressed grave concern that the Prime Minister intended to involve Canada in a longer, deeper combat engagement than he was leading the House to believe at the time. Today, with the government's motion, we know those concerns were well-founded.

We will not support the government's decision to deepen this combat mission and expand it into Syria.

[*Translation*]

Canadians need to know what the Prime Minister is getting them into. The United Nations is telling us that, after four years of all-out war, over 11 million Syrians—over half the population—have been driven from their homes. Syrians are fleeing their country by the millions, and this exodus of refugees is causing a terrible crisis. In five years of combat, over 210,000 Syrians have been killed, including over 10,000 children.

[*English*]

Canadians need to know that this is happening in Syria, but they also need to know who is largely responsible. The Syrian people have, for years, been oppressed and terrorized by their own government under the rule of Bashar al-Assad. This is a man who has used chemical weapons on his own citizens and whose regime is responsible for torturing and killing many more innocent people than even ISIL.

[*Translation*]

We cannot support a mission that could very well consolidate Assad's power in Syria.

[*English*]

Beyond our concerns about dubious alliances, the government's desire to expand Canada's presence into Syria represents a worrying trend. We can call it evolution or escalation or mission creep. Whatever term is preferred, the pattern is the same.

First we discovered that our role included ground combat operations, despite the Prime Minister's assurances to the contrary. Now we are being asked to expand our involvement into Syria. It is hard to believe the proposed timeline, given the public musings of the ministers of defence and foreign affairs. Indeed, the Minister of Foreign Affairs explicitly compared this war to Afghanistan, stating that we are in this for the longer term. In Afghanistan, the longer term meant a decade.

[*Translation*]

I am more sad about this than angry. However, how can we trust a government that so openly misled Canadians? This government is proposing that the Canadian Forces participate in a vague combat mission with no clear end point, and we cannot support that.

[*English*]

One thing is clear: Canada has a role to play in the campaign against ISIL. That role must serve our national interests. The one being proposed today by the Prime Minister does not meet that test.

● (1045)

[*Translation*]

The Liberal Party that I represent knows that Canadians want to respond to the horrors that the Islamic State is inflicting on people in the region. Canadians are appalled at the Islamic State's ruthlessness and the terror it is spreading, and rightly so. We understand that feeling and we share it. However, we also know that in a situation as complex and volatile as the one the international community is facing in Syria and Iraq, we cannot let our outrage interfere with our judgment.

Canada has an obvious interest in training Iraqi troops in order to fight and eliminate the Islamic State, but it is not in our interest to keep getting more deeply involved in such a combat mission. We can and we should provide that training far from the front lines.

[*English*]

Along with our allies and through the auspices of the United Nations, Canada should provide more help through a well-funded and well-planned humanitarian aid effort. The refugee crisis alone threatens the region's security, overwhelming countries from Lebanon to Turkey, from Syria itself to Jordan. Here at home, we should significantly expand our refugee targets and give more victims of war the opportunity to start a new life in Canada.

These calamities are in urgent need of a constructive, coordinated international effort, both through the United Nations and beyond it. It is the kind of effort that ought to be Canada's calling card in the global community. We will have much more to say about this in the days and months ahead.

While all three parties have different views on what our role should be, let there be no doubt that we all offer our resolute and wholehearted support to the brave men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Today the government is asking for the House to support deepening Canada's involvement in the war in Iraq and to expand that involvement into a combat mission in Syria. The Liberal Party will not support the government's motion.

The Speaker: I see that the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is rising. Is there unanimous consent to allow her to speak?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: There is no consent.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 16th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights in relation to the subject matter of Bill C-583, an act to amend the Criminal Code in relation to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

The committee requests a 45-day extension to consider it.

* * *

• (1050)

PETITIONS

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by a number of my constituents from Guelph that calls on the Canadian government to negotiate with the Chinese government a 10-year multiple-entry tourist and business visa for Canadians visiting China.

The petitioners point out that China and the U.S. have already negotiated a reciprocal 10-year visa agreement that benefits the citizens of both of those countries. The petitioners urge the government to level the playing field and obtain this benefit for Canadian citizens as soon as possible.

PALESTINE

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, violent conflict claims innocent victims. Whatever our view on responsibility and blame, we can all feel compassion for the innocent victims.

Hundreds of my constituents have signed a petition calling on the Government of Canada to issue visas necessary for 100 severely injured Palestinian children and their parents or guardians to receive expert medical treatment in Canada. They note that the Ontario government of Kathleen Wynne, doctors, nurses, and hospitals, including the Kingston General Hospital in my riding, have all committed to help, including waiving fees.

The only thing left is to issue visas and to bring these severely injured, innocent Palestinian children here to Canada for treatment.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present today.

The first is from petitioners who believe that the current impaired driving laws are too lenient. They are calling on Parliament to put in place mandatory sentences for those convicted of impaired driving. The petitioners want the offence of impaired driving causing death to be redefined as vehicular manslaughter.

PROSTITUTION

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am presenting calls for tougher laws in this country against prostitution.

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SEX SELECTION

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the third petition I am presenting, the petitioners note that there was a poll done that determined that 92% of Canadians are against sex selection pregnancy termination. The petitioners are calling on Parliament to condemn the practice of gender selection abortions.

TRUCK LICENSES

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present this petition on behalf of my constituents in Surrey and Newton. The petitioners are calling on the government to revoke Port Metro Vancouver's decision to deny licences for port access to affected trucking companies and drivers. Like the petitioners, I too feel that Port Metro Vancouver's arbitrary selection process under the new truck licensing system is not consistent, fair, or transparent.

There are over 50 trucking companies and over 550 drivers who have been shut out of its port and are out of work. These are good-paying, middle-class jobs. I am worried about more job losses for the people of Surrey and surrounding areas.

The provincial and federal governments should work together to end future disruptions and to help these families. The petitioners and I look forward to the minister's response.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions today.

The first is to protect the southern resident killer whales of the area around southern Vancouver Island. They are really an important and quite endangered species and are threatened by the use of acoustic instrumentation, seismic testing, and increased vessel transport.

Hundreds of my constituents and those from the Vancouver region are calling for the protection of the critically endangered southern resident killer whales.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am presenting relates to Bill C-51, the so-called anti-terrorism act.

This one has also been signed by residents from throughout my riding and from London, Toronto, and Ottawa, Ontario.

CANADA POST

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have several petitions today.

The first is in regard to Canada Post Corporation's downgrading of services while at the same time it is increasing the cost of those services and is imposing an additional unnecessary burden on the daily lives of seniors, the disabled, and those residing in rural, remote, or marginalized communities.

S. O. 52

I have received several thousand signatures so far on the Canada Post issue.

• (1055)

HOME CHILDREN

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I choose to present is regarding the British home children.

Many British home children and their descendants have been victimized by an immigration policy that unfairly and systematically uprooted families and sought to sever essential yet basic family ties.

Every year, petitioners call on Parliament to offer an unequivocal, sincere, and public apology to those home children who died while being ashamed of their history and deprived of their families, to the living yet elderly home children who continue to bear the weight of that past, and to the descendants of home children who continue to feel the void passed down through generations while they continue to search out relatives lost as a result of a system that, in many instances, victimized them under the guise of protection.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Andrew Saxton (North Vancouver, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today in regard to a petition signed by over 200 residents of North Vancouver and the surrounding area.

The signatories are asking the Government of Canada to call on the Iranian authorities to release Mohammad Ali Taheri, a prisoner of conscience who is to be tried for “spreading corruption on earth”, a charge that possibly carries the death penalty in Iran. The petitioners also ask that Mr. Taheri be protected from torture and ill treatment while he is wrongfully imprisoned.

I am pleased to rise in this House to make the petitioners' concerns about Mr. Taheri's situation known.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I wish to table a notice of a ways and means motion to amend the Income Tax Act.

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

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

MARINE TRANSPORTATION

The Speaker: The Chair has notice of a request for an emergency debate from the hon. member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, and I will hear him now.

Hon. Gerry Byrne (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 52, I would request that you rule on my request on an urgent matter regarding the ongoing delays and cancellations of the federally obligated ferry service to and from Newfoundland and Labrador. This is a growing and dire situation. It has been noted by many responsible individuals within Newfoundland and Labrador who have knowledge of the situation that there are indeed food shortages occurring in certain areas.

Marine Atlantic is a federal crown corporation that enacts a constitutional obligation on the part of Canada to operate, in accordance with the traffic offering, a freight and passenger service between North Sydney, Nova Scotia and Port-au-Basques, Newfoundland. The terms of union, which were enacted in 1949, prescribed this as a constitutional obligation. Further, that constitutional obligation exists, as stated in the terms of union, as traffic offers.

Ice conditions are one part of the question that needs to be debated and answered by the government. What exactly is causing these consistent delays and cancellations? Yes, there are ice conditions that are affecting the ferry service, but I would also note that it is the Government of Canada that operates the fleet of icebreaking services in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Given the fact that a constitutional obligation exists on the part of Canada to maintain this in accordance with the traffic offering, for the government to simply say that ice is impeding those operations, while it in fact holds the tools to continue to maintain these freight and passenger services, in accordance with the traffic offering, is not a fair statement.

I will also add to this request I raise under Standing Order 52 that it also is incumbent upon the Speaker to consider the fact that this matter of an essential service designation was raised by Canada in 2003. The Canadian Industrial Relations Board heard a case by petitioners and ruled that the constitutionally obligated Marine Atlantic ferry service was deemed an essential service and that its operation was critical to the health and safety of all Newfoundland and Labradorians.

I would point out that 90% of all perishable goods, 90% of all food items and groceries, enter the province by way of the gulf ferry service. Its failure to operate over the last several days and weeks means that those grocery items are in short supply. The fact that the Canadian government has not been able to provide adequate icebreaking services has led to a situation whereby the health and safety of Newfoundland and Labradorians is now in question.

Business of Supply

Given the fact that a constitutional obligation exists on the part of Canada to operate this ferry service; given the fact that there has already been a quasi-judicial board ruling that states that this service is indeed an essential service and must be maintained, or health and safety will be compromised; given the fact that the Government of Canada operates and maintains the means for this service to continue to operate under all conditions, including with the provision of icebreaking services; given the fact that the Government of Canada also makes decisions with regard to the particular specifications of the ferries they employ for the operation of this service; given the fact that there has already been noted a serious health and safety concern that needs to be alleviated immediately; given the fact that there are no relative means for the House to pursue this question, as this is a complex issue for which concerns raised during question period would not necessarily be able to provide adequate answers not only for Parliament but for Canadians in general; and given the fact that a question has to be put, after an exploration of the facts, we would implore the Speaker to allow this emergency debate to occur so that the government can put forward its position on these matters and inform Parliament and all Canadians as to how exactly this evolved into this circumstance and what exactly it wants to do about it.

This is a matter of grave urgency, and I ask you, Mr. Speaker, if you would provide us with an opportunity to further debate it.

• (1100)

SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker: I thank the hon. member for raising this matter. While I am sure it is important to the member and the region he represents, I am not sure it meets the test for an emergency debate at this time.

I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement, government orders will be extended by 42 minutes.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF MICROBEADS

The Speaker: Since today is the final allotted day for the supply period ending March 26, 2015, the House will go through the usual procedures to consider and dispose of the supply bills.

In view of recent practices, do hon. members agree that the bills be distributed now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP) moved:

That, in the opinion of the House, microbeads in consumer products entering the environment could have serious harmful effects, and therefore the government should take immediate measures to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed by the government under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

I am proud to stand here to debate our motion and to start the process for banning microbeads in products that we use everyday. The time has come for us to begin that step toward protecting the health of our ecosystems and our health as humans. I am pleased that the NDP is dedicating this entire day of debate to the issue of microbeads.

My only regret is that my colleague from Windsor West is not here today because this is his motion, not mine. The MP for Windsor West has been working tirelessly with industry, environment groups and citizen action groups on this issue. Unfortunately, he is not here today to see his work culminate in an opposition day motion and a debate in the House because his grandmother passed away last week. He is speaking at her funeral today, and he is with his family.

We are real people in the House and we have real joys and real sorrows. This is a moment of sorrow for our colleague from Windsor West. He is with his family where he should be, celebrating the long life and legacy of Marion Masse, affectionately known as “Ma”, who lived a long 96 years. Our thoughts are with the member and his family.

We will carry on with this debate. It is officially in my name because one needs to be here for the motion to be in one's name. However, we know in our hearts that it is the member's hard work that actually brought this motion to the House.

What are we debating? Microbeads are these tiny little beads of plastic, and members would be amazed what they are in. They are in so many different products. Think about those products that you use to create that rosy glow you have, Mr. Speaker, and exfoliate your skin. They are in those abrasive toothpastes we use or in the body wash we use in the shower.

It may be okay to use these microbeads on our skin, but it is not okay to use them once they get into the environment and our ecosystems, and they are not okay for our health. These microbeads are plastic. A tube of toothpaste has tens of thousands of these tiny plastic beads in them. We brush our teeth and they go down the drain into our waterways. We wash our face and millions of these tiny plastic beads go right down the drain and end up in our lakes, our rivers and our oceans. That is not what we intended.

These plastic microbeads are so small that they are consumed by a variety of marine life. We have seen them in plankton. Plankton is about the smallest thing we can get, yet these microbeads are it. We have seen them in shellfish and in mollusks. We know that fish are ingesting them. We start with small fish, but then go up the food chain to larger fish. Think about the microbeads that are accumulating in these fish and mollusks. They are being eaten by birds, seals, whales and us. At the end of this food chain, we are ingesting marine life that has tiny beads of plastic in it.

Business of Supply

Animals are suffering because of this plastic. We have seen cases of asphyxiation where animals cannot breathe. We have seen fish guts filled with plastic and fish that have starved to death because they cannot eat anymore as they are so filled with plastic. We have seen disruption at the cellular level. We know this is having an impact on the very cells of marine life. There is something terribly wrong here. I do not know that having that rosy glow is worth it when we see these beads go right down the drain and into our ecosystem like this.

We also know that these tiny beads are almost like sponges and they absorb other toxins from the water. We know they absorb DDT and PCBs. They are in everything, from mollusks to fish to seals. At the end of the day what happens when we eat that wildlife?

• (1105)

How did this happen? Our grandparents would add oatmeal to soap to have that abrasive quality. We used to use natural products like oatmeal, ground almonds or sea salt. However, in the seventies, these little plastic beads were developed and they really took off in the 1990s. Now we almost cannot buy a product without these microbeads in it. They are pervasive, they are everywhere. I will admit, I have fallen into this trap. Jojoba beads are in my face wash, and I did not do the investigation to find out what that meant. Unbeknownst to me, I am flushing plastic down my drain along with everybody else. We do not realize these plastics are in our products.

Plastic beads are in toothpaste. Last night I did a Facebook post at the end of the evening, so it was a little too late for most of my folks on the east coast to pick up on this post, but other people commented on it. I had a number of posts from dental hygienists. They said that they were seeing these microbeads build up behind people's gum line, and they have to peel this plastic out from behind their gums, which is then causing even more gum disease and damage to our teeth. We did not expect that to happen. These are the unintended consequences of having put plastics into products we use every day.

A lot of people on my Facebook posts admitted they had no idea. They just assumed it was something like oatmeal or that these jojoba beads must be something positive and natural. That is not the case. More education is needed on this issue for sure, but we also need action to ban these microbeads from our products.

On the education front, Environmental Defence and Ecojustice in particular have done a lot of work on this issue. Environmental Defence has done a great job of raising awareness around microbeads. It has talked to me about this and has said that there has been incredible pickup from the community at large, that people are interested in this issue, that they do not realize the microbeads are there and that they are really concerned about what it means for our environment and our health.

Environmental Defence has done really good work at the provincial level. For example, in Ontario a private member's bill is working its way through the Ontario legislature. I believe it passed second reading, and Environmental Defence has been promoting that work.

Environmental Defence has also worked on a petition to deal with this at the federal level. If we have one province doing X and one province doing Y, we end up with a patchwork and it does not help

anybody, including industry. Therefore, Environmental Defence has talked about the fact that this should come from the federal level.

How do we do it? Environmental Defence has started with a petition. The critics for the environment and the Minister of the Environment get emails from people. This weekend I received 2,500 contacts from this petition. I know there are almost 7,000 signatures on it already. Environmental Defence is working with Ecojustice, the Lake Ontario Waterkeeper and the Ottawa Riverkeeper. They have written a letter to the Minister of the Environment asking her basically what we are asking for in our motion today, which is to take the first step of listing this as a toxic substances under CEPA, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, so we can do an assessment and take that first step toward banning these microbeads.

A lot of people think we are taking on the cosmetics industry. A lot of industry has voluntarily banned these beads. I am happy to report that Colgate-Palmolive and Unilever, for example, have taken the steps to ban these beads, but they want an even playing field. They want to ensure that everybody is adhering to this, and they want regulation.

I am holding in my hand a letter from the Canadian Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association. It talks about our motion. It points out the work of my colleague from Windsor West and says that this is the general advice and direction for which its industry is most supportive. Therefore, we are not getting push back from industry.

We really need to act and ban these microbeads. The best way to deal with pollution is to prevent it in the first place. We are on board, the environment groups are on board and industry is on board. I look forward to the debate in the House today. I hope the government is on board with this as well and that we can act swiftly to get rid of these microbeads before it is too late.

• (1110)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for bringing this issue forward. I listened intently to her speech.

Could she make available for the House her evidence that there are impacts on humans from the ingestion of fish? My understanding is the current studies we have do not demonstrate that there is an impact on humans. Could she make those studies available to the House?

Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe I asserted that there were impacts on human health. I believe I asserted that these beads could absorb DDT and PCBs. I asserted that we were eating that fish, so there was a conclusion to be drawn there.

Business of Supply

I can certainly table the studies I have seen, with consent from the House. It might take me a little while to get them translated, but I can table the studies showing that these beads are absorptive of other toxins. I would be happy to table any other reports I have read about the fact that they cause blockages, asphyxiation and starvation in fish. This is a real issue.

I hope the parliamentary secretary is talking to his dental hygienist as well. There is first-hand knowledge on this stuff. If it is accumulating behind our gums, for the love of God, can we not just say that this stuff should not be in toothpaste? We are not asking for the world.

• (1115)

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for raising this matter in the House. Clearly, the extent of potential harm is much broader than I had understood.

How were these corporations allowed to include these microbeads into consumer products that, if not directly impact human health, clearly would impact species that we may rely on for our health and existence? How did this occur without some kind of thorough environmental impact assessment to prevent this from happening?

Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, I wish I could turn the floor over to my colleague for a 10-minute speech, because she is a real expert in this area. She knows about the gaps that we have in our approvals, whether it is via Health Canada or Environment Canada, and the way we test products and pharmaceuticals even, and the impacts that has downstream.

We need to close some of these gaps. I do not know the full history with this product, but I know there was testing on whether these microbeads would do damage to my precious skin. However, where is the testing that needs to be done down the line?

We talk about downstream effects. This is literally downstream. What happens downstream when these tiny pieces of plastic are ingested? How can there be that big a hole in our regulatory process that we do not take this into account when we know it will go directly into the drain; from face to drain?

This is a huge problem and we need to address it. It involves not only Health Canada but Environment Canada as well.

Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC): Mr. Speaker, to correct the hon. member for Halifax, jojoba beads are not microbeads; they are natural. Where is the hon. member getting her facts from?

Ms. Megan Leslie: Mr. Speaker, that is like instant correction. I have never seen this from that side of the House. Usually the talking points are written eight years in advance.

The product I use has jojoba beads and microbeads. I can bring it in and table it.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, by moving this motion, we are trying to ban the use of microbeads in consumer products. Since the 1990s, these products have become veritable vectors of these microbeads, which end up poisoning our ecosystems because they are ingested by various

marine organisms. Slowly but surely we are indirectly poisoning ourselves with our consumer products.

These microbeads take up the most toxic substances, which can ultimately poison us. It is not just consumer products that introduce microplastics into the environment. For example, when we wash our clothes, microplastics can be shed by the nylon and the fabric. However, compared to other ways that microplastics enter the environment, especially by the degradation of plastic products, consumer products are the easiest to target in order to eliminate microbeads. Since it is so easy to do it, we must do it.

Last October, Francine Plourde did an exposé on microbeads on the Radio-Canada program *Les années lumière*. It exposed the insidious plastics chain that has led us to move this motion calling on the government to take immediate measures to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

The study carried out by McGill University researchers, together with the Government of Quebec, examined the significant presence of polluting microbeads in the sediment of our St. Lawrence River. She told us that, in some spots, the researchers found more than 1,000 microbeads per litre of sediment, which is much higher than what is being found in the world's most contaminated marine sediments. An analysis of the structures of the microbeads found points to the same microbeads that are in consumer products.

The term microplastics generally refers to plastic particles smaller than five millimetres in diameter. Microbeads found in cosmetics are always less than one millimetre in diameter.

I will try to explain the cycle of microbeads in a few points. First, thousands of cosmetic products use plastic microbeads, generally in exfoliants and cleansing products.

In 2009, Fendall and Sewell, from the University of Auckland, found that microbeads pass into waste water and sewer systems directly because they are too small to be retained by the filters used at sewage treatment plants. That is how they end up in marine environments and eventually in the food chain.

Although the full extent and consequences are hard to quantify, the accumulation of plastic in the marine environment is now recognized as a serious, global environmental issue. Some specialists have even said that it is like putting a plastic bag over the head of our marine environment. I do not have to explain that having a plastic bag over one's head does not usually end well. The impact that this kind of pollution is having on marine biodiversity and human health is causing grave concern among scientists.

Business of Supply

I would like to share some scientific findings with the House. Marine species are unable to distinguish between food and microplastics, and therefore often end up indiscriminately feeding on microplastics. In an overview published for the Convention on Biological Diversity, it was shown that over 663 different species were adversely affected by marine debris, with approximately 11% of reported cases specifically related to the ingestion of microplastics. Some species of fish excrete plastic easily, but others do not and therefore accumulate plastic internally.

For instance, one study found that around 35% of 670 fish examined, from six different species, had plastic in their stomachs. The highest number of plastic fragments found in one fish alone was 83.

● (1120)

In terms of human health, it has been proven that microplastics attract and absorb persistent organic pollutants.

Pollutants such as PCBs and DDT are already present in the environment. Relatively high concentrations of these persistent organic pollutants, or POPs, have been detected on the surface of microplastics.

International Pellet Watch, coordinated by Professor Takada of the University of Tokyo, is currently researching this. Professor Takada's scientific work shows that some persistent organic pollutants have been found in the tissues of seabirds after the birds ingested microplastics carrying these pollutants.

In theory, POPs ingested by animals should be able to bind to the fragments of plastic that are swallowed before being naturally expelled. However, these pieces of plastic have been found in the intestines and tissues of fish and other seafood regularly consumed by humans.

Scientists are concerned that these POPs will eventually accumulate in the food chain as they are transmitted from species to species and that they could end up having negative consequences for human beings.

Toxic chemicals, such as plasticizers and flame retardants, that are added to plastics during manufacturing can be released into the environment and can threaten marine animals. Some of the most common plasticizers have been found in fish, marine mammals and mollusks.

Currently, in terms of human health, most of the studies are based on animal models. We do not know the health risks, but since there are potential risks, it would be totally unethical to experiment on human beings. That is why studies are based on animal models, particularly rats, to determine the potential effects on humans.

Any studies involving humans would be long-term observational studies, but the problem with such studies is that by the time the potential consequences for human beings become clear, it could be too late because the toxic effects will already be present.

I can cite some potential effects of products derived from synthetic organic chemistry. For example, aldicarb is highly toxic to the nervous system. Benzene can damage chromosomes and cause leukemia, anemia, and blood disorders. When it comes to vinyl

chloride, we often talk about damage to the liver, kidneys and lungs, and cardiovascular and gastrointestinal problems. It is also a carcinogen and a suspected mutagen. A mutagen causes genetic mutation, including in vitro. Chloroform could cause damage to the liver and the kidneys. It is a suspected carcinogen. Dioxins are carcinogens and mutagens that can affect the skin. When we talk about ethylene dibromide, we are talking about cancer and male sterility. Polychlorinated biphenyl can cause damage to the liver, kidneys and lungs. Carbon tetrachloride is a carcinogen. It affects the liver, kidneys, lungs, and central nervous system. High doses of trichloroethylene damage the liver, kidneys, central nervous system and the skin. It is a carcinogen and a suspected mutagen.

As you can see, there are many chemical substances associated with plastic microbeads, which are potentially hazardous to human health. It is quite worrisome.

I have here another study on the many effects of these chemical substances. The study indicates that children and pregnant women are the most affected. What is more, these substances have a huge impact on male reproductive health, including problems with undescended testicles, poor sperm quality, and changes in testosterone levels. The male reproductive system is particularly sensitive to exposure to these chemicals.

Waiting to see what effects these chemicals will have on humans before taking action comes with serious risk. That is why I would recommend that we err on the side of caution when it comes to plastic microbeads. Although there are few studies on humans, there are many studies based on animal models that are very good. I can name several for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment if he would like. It would be my pleasure.

● (1125)

If we want to respect the principle discussed at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, we should exercise caution with respect to plastic microbeads and vote for the motion moved by my colleague from Halifax.

[*English*]

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my colleague could elaborate a little more on some of the terms she used.

She seems to jump from potential effects to poisoning, which is the term she actually used. I cannot remember the exact quote, but she stated that we are being poisoned. It is very important when we are dealing with these important issues that we not be alarmist in any way whatsoever. I realize that most studies on fish mortality show issues with plastic.

Therefore, my question to her is this. Does she have any specific evidence that separates the impacts of microbeads from the broader issue of plastic waste and does she have any evidence of human poisoning effects that she could bring forward? Where she is getting her information from?

Business of Supply

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the toxic substances I mentioned, the verdict is already in: these toxic substances are harmful to human beings. There is growing evidence that the toxic substances present in water are connected to plastic microbeads, which behave somewhat like sponges.

Some very interesting studies cite other studies on the animal model. Unfortunately, these studies are only available in English. However, I read a particularly interesting article entitled “Plastics, the environment and human health: current consensus and future trends” by Thompson, Moore, vom Saal and H. Swan. I could provide the member with the cover if he would like to read it. However, I cannot table it in the House because I only have an English copy. Several studies point out the potential risks.

The researchers say that we cannot afford to wait and see whether or not the risks manifest themselves. In fact, if we wait for the biological risks to manifest themselves, it will be too late to reverse their effects. We should apply the precautionary principle to plastic microbeads because of their potential adverse effects. In this case, when we talk about potential harm to reproductive functions and the mutagenicity that can harm chromosomes, it is very important to be cautious.

• (1130)

[English]

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is an interesting and important topic. Of course, it is necessary to be grounded in science and to speak with scientific accuracy.

I am certain that my colleague from the opposite side understands the difference between microplastics and microbeads that are specifically engineered. It would benefit the House if she were to explain that distinction and the different consequences that might ensue from microplastics generally as distinct from microbeads that are specifically engineered.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore: Mr. Speaker, I can repeat part of my speech, because I already explained this.

The term microplastics generally refers to plastic particles smaller than 5 millimetres in diameter. There are other characteristics. I do not want to get into too much detail, because I do not have 20 minutes to answer the question.

Microbeads are generally found in cosmetics and certain products. We are talking about particles smaller than 1 millimetre in diameter. Plastic microbeads often act as sponges. They absorb existing chemicals in the marine environment and in the environment that came from somewhere else. When fish ingest the microbeads, these particles end up in the organisms and, as a result, end up in the food chain. They can eventually end up in human beings, through the food chain. That is how it works.

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of this motion. I will let the House know that I will be

sharing my time with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

It is a pleasure to provide the House with an update on the actions that our government has taken to protect the health of Canadian families and the environment from the risks posed by pollution and harmful substances. This is an issue that our government has championed since taking office in 2006. For that reason, I am pleased to provide a summary of a few of these activities.

First of all, as we know, chemicals used safely provide untold benefits for Canadians, supporting innovation across virtually every sector of the Canadian economy from medicine to manufacturing and from transportation to high technology. Our government has taken steps, including an investment of over \$800 million to ensure that chemicals used in our homes, businesses, and public spaces are properly managed and that risks to Canadians are minimized, regardless of whether these chemicals are new to industry or have been used for decades.

Our government's chemicals management plan, initially announced by the Prime Minister in 2006, has set an ambitious agenda to ensure the safety of all chemicals used in Canada. This program has made Canada a world leader in assessing and regulating chemicals used in industrial and consumer products. This work has a direct impact on the health of all Canadians and the environment in which we live.

In 2006, our government invested \$300 million for Environment Canada and Health Canada to take rapid action on chemicals, using a transparent, whole-of-government approach to ensure that all potential sources of exposure were investigated, whether they be through air, water, food products, or any other source. This funding was renewed in budget 2011, when our government invested a further \$506 million over five years to ensure that this work would continue at full speed.

In addition to providing Canadians with greater security in the health of the environment, the direction our government has taken is important to the chemicals industry, with which we have also worked very closely. The science-based decisions taken under the chemicals management plan provide businesses with investment certainty and stability, and promote research and development into new processes and safer alternatives to those that have been identified as being of concern.

We have taken major strides under the chemicals management plan to address chemicals identified as having potential risks to human health or the environment. We have worked through the assessment of more than 2,700 substances in commerce to date. They are substances that have been in use in Canada for many years without ever having been evaluated by the government for their safety. We have set for ourselves the goal of completing the evaluation of approximately 4,300 substances by 2020.

Business of Supply

At the same time, under the chemicals management plan, the government has screened more than 3,000 substances new to Canada prior to their entry into the Canadian market. We have applied any necessary conditions or other measures to ensure that any of these new chemicals are used safely when they reach our borders. For any substance found to pose a risk, our government uses a suite of tools and legislation to ensure that they are not used in ways that could lead to harm to Canadians or their environment. To date, we have taken action on more than 60 chemicals or groups of chemicals that have been scientifically shown to be harmful to the environment or human health. We have also published more than 60 risk management measures that are customized based on a number of factors, such as where releases occur and populations that are identified as being most at risk.

The chemicals management plan is also an adaptive program able to react to new priorities, such as microbeads in the environment. Microplastics are increasingly found in the environment and take on a number of forms, including manufactured microbeads used for a variety of applications and the natural breakdown of plastic debris in the environment.

Through the chemicals management plan, the impacts of microplastics, including microbeads, on ecosystems are being investigated, and our government is closely following new developments on microplastics as they become available. We will continue to raise this issue with our counterparts in the United States and Ontario under the Great Lakes agenda, as well as with our counterparts who actively participate in the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. Our government's chemical management plan will also prioritize microbeads for assessment.

• (1135)

The government is also working internationally by actively participating in discussions on the prevention of marine plastic pollution, notably through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the United Nations. Domestically, we continue to work with industry to promote sound stewardship of potential pollutants. Several companies from the personal care and cosmetic sectors have already publicly committed to stop using synthetic microbeads. In addition, the Canadian Plastics Industry Association promotes Operation Clean Sweep in Canada, an international voluntary program to prevent plastic pellet losses in the environment.

Our country's thousands of lakes and rivers are a vital part of Canada's natural heritage and a legacy for future generations of Canadians, from supporting biodiversity and healthy aquatic ecosystems, to opening up countless possibilities for recreation, to sustaining our drinking water. For this reason, another key element in our government's commitment to ensuring a safe and clean environment is the measures we have taken to strengthen regulations for water protection. Since 2006, our government has committed \$2.3 billion to waste water infrastructures, through various programs.

In addition to these investments, our government's waste water systems effluent regulations, developed with provinces, municipalities and other stakeholders, will help to protect Canada's water quality, ultimately improving ecosystem health.

The new standards will ensure untreated and undertreated sewage are not dumped into our country's waterways. The estimated benefits to Canadians and our economy include improved health of fish and aquatic systems and increasing safety for recreational activities that are part of our tourism industry.

For the waste water systems that do not meet the new standards, there will be time for municipalities to plan and budget funds to complete the upgrades.

I am sure all members would agree that our water is precious. These measures will help us address the largest source of pollution to our lakes and rivers, and in doing so we will help protect Canadians and their environment.

There is no question that protecting the health of Canadians and their environment is a key priority of our government. This priority is clearly reflected through measures such as those I have just described.

With respect to chemicals in the environment, this continues to be a key priority for our government to ensure that Canadians are fully protected and informed. I would urge all my hon. colleagues to support this motion.

• (1140)

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his speech, for letting us know that he plans to vote for the motion, and for encouraging his colleagues to support it. That is wonderful news. I like applauding the member, from time to time.

I have a question about next steps. Our motion says the government should take immediate measures to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. However, we know there are a lot of steps that would have to happen. Therefore, I wonder if the parliamentary secretary could tell us where the government is at in terms of what does come next.

If microbeads are added to the priority substances list, or if they agree that other jurisdictions have implemented a ban, does it mean that is going to trigger an assessment here automatically? I wonder if he knows if the Minister of the Environment or the Minister of Health intend to seek importers and manufacturers of microbeads to identify themselves and how they would be involved in the process.

Any word on next steps would be really valuable.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, we have to base our decisions on science. What we have is the chemicals management plan, which represents a major undertaking by our government that will benefit Canadians for generations to come. Building on the success of the chemicals management plan, we will prioritize microbeads for assessment. Environment Canada will initiate a scientific review to assess the effects of microbeads within Canada's environment. What is really important is that the expert advice will inform potential future actions on microbeads.

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We are also calling for this issue to be on the agenda at the next meeting with the provincial and territorial environment ministers in the summer. Also, we are paying attention to different states in the United States, whether it is California, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, or Wisconsin, and even the U.S. Congress. We are following all the science of this issue.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was glad to hear that we are going to be supporting the motion. I certainly think it is an important thing on which to move forward. However, it is also important to have a very correct record in terms of what is happening. I did the hear opposition talking about the effects of other chemicals binding. Therefore, it is important to drill down. We talked about the chemicals management plan and how we are actually reducing these harmful chemicals in our environment. I wonder if the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment could talk about whether there are any current known health effects from microbeads specifically.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, there are different scientific studies that talk about microplastics and microbeads. We really have to rely on the science that is out there. That is why I was asking my colleagues across the way if they had any specific evidence to bring forward on the health effects to humans, to increase the knowledge of the House with respect to this debate. As of this time, I am not aware of any scientific studies that point to any health impacts of microbeads on humans.

[Translation]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague spoke about water purification systems and municipal waste water systems.

Over the course of my reading on the cycle of microbeads, I learned that purification and filtration systems are often unable to filter out microbeads because they are too small. This means that they remain in our marine systems.

As for the potential upgrades to purification systems, no one was convinced that it would be possible to develop systems effective enough to keep microbeads out. Reducing them at the source is the most effective method.

Does my colleague agree that, in light of the significant costs and the time associated with upgrading purification systems, the most effective strategy is to reduce microbeads at the source?

•(1145)

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, we all realize that sometimes prevention is the best medicine. My colleague from Halifax was quite correct when she stated that the industry is already taking quite substantial voluntary measures to reduce microbeads in their products. There has been research and work done on including more natural substances, such as using sugar or salt as facial scrubs, using baking soda for polishing teeth, and things along those lines, because prevention is the best medicine.

Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and for Western Economic Diversification, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the debate on today's motion. As we heard from the Parliamentary Secretary to the

Minister of the Environment, it is something that we believe is important for prioritizing in future reviews.

Our government is committed to ensuring we protect the environment so that all Canadians will have clean air, water, and land and so that these gifts will remain available for their children long into the future. We take our responsibilities as stewards of these natural resources very seriously, and we take a careful, science-based approach when it comes to the rules and regulations that oversee them.

There is no difference when it comes to the regulation of the cosmetic industry. Manufacturers are required to meet strong standards when it comes to assessing any health or safety risks of these products, and they are given a thorough review.

My colleague discussed the chemicals management plan in some depth. I would like to add to the debate in terms of Health Canada's role in regulating the cosmetic industry.

The Government of Canada has some of the most stringent regulations for cosmetics in the world. Our government restricts or prohibits the use of substances that may cause harm to Canadians, and we respond to emerging issues with a risk-based approach. When necessary, we act with targeted enforcement and make regulatory changes as needed.

Health Canada takes this risk-based approach very seriously in regulating cosmetics and other consumer products. That means that the department considers both the properties of the substance in products as well as the amount that Canadians are exposed to under normal conditions of use to determine whether there is a risk that needs to be addressed.

The motion before us today has raised the question that microbeads and consumer products could have serious harmful effects and proposes that the government take measures to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed by the government under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

In cosmetics and personal care products, microbeads are made of plastics like polyethylene, polypropylene, and nylon. These substances also have many other known uses in cosmetics, such as acting as binding and bulking agents, stabilizers, film formers, and skin conditioning agents.

All cosmetics sold in Canada must be safe to use and must meet the requirements of the Food and Drugs Act and the Cosmetic Regulations. A key requirement of the Cosmetic Regulations is that manufacturers or importers must notify Health Canada within 10 days of the first sale of the product, and the notification must include information about the product's formulation.

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The Cosmetic Regulations also require manufacturers or importers to disclose all ingredients on the product label, using the International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients name. This requirement allows consumers to check for possible ingredients to which they may be sensitive or that they choose to avoid, thereby allowing for more informed decisions regarding product purchase and use. This requirement also helps the department review the product's ingredients for harmful substances. This is the same naming convention used in the European Union and in the United States.

In addition, the labels of approved personal care products include the product's recommended use or purpose, which may include health claims, dosage information, medicinal and non-medicinal ingredients, and any warnings or cautions associated with the product.

Health Canada takes into consideration each of these factors when considering the impact on human health. Presently, none of the plastic substances that commonly make up microbeads have raised human safety concerns as currently used in cosmetics. Canadians can rest assured that if any concerns for human health are identified, Health Canada will take the appropriate action.

The ingredients used to make microbeads are considered non-medicinal and will be listed on the product's label. This requirement ensures that Canadian consumers are able to make informed decisions about the personal care products they purchase and use them in the appropriate manner.

Health Canada also has a cosmetic ingredient hot list, which is an administrative tool used to communicate to manufacturers and others that certain substances, when present in a cosmetic, may contravene the general prohibition found in section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act or a provision of the Cosmetic Regulations.

• (1150)

Departmental officials closely follow international scientific and regulatory reports and regularly review the safety of cosmetic ingredients. As well, stakeholders are welcome to submit proposed changes to the hot list to Health Canada.

As I said from the outset, we take the environmental health of Canadians very seriously. For this reason, in 2006 the government launched the chemicals management plan to strengthen efforts to protect human health and the environment from the risk of chemicals.

This chemicals management plan is a world-leading approach to chemical management that has been widely endorsed by industry and non-governmental organizations alike. It is a joint program between Environment Canada and Health Canada. We heard earlier how many chemicals have been assessed over the last number of years, and it is certainly an extraordinary number.

Some of the chemicals that are used to make microbeads are among the chemicals to be assessed in the future under the chemicals management plan, and if concerns are identified, Health Canada will take action.

The reviews that have taken place under this plan are not just an academic exercise. This process is providing real results for

Canadians and is resulting in strong action against problem chemicals when they are identified.

To date, the plan has resulted in 26 new substances being added to the cosmetic ingredient hot list. In addition, two existing hot list items have been amended to provide more protection for the health of Canadians.

In our budget of 2011, the government made sure that the management of chemicals was a top priority. The chemicals management plan received more than \$506 million in additional funding over the next five years, so I think it is very clear that we do take the health and safety of Canadians seriously. The importance of consumer product safety is something that we all share. Under the chemicals management plan, the Food and Drugs Act, and the Cosmetic Regulations, the government addresses such issues as microbeads in cosmetics. If emerging science shows a risk to human health, the government will act swiftly.

In conclusion, I think we have good systems in place. We have science that continues to emerge, and what we need to do is respond to the scientific evidence.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I heard what my Conservative colleagues said. If I am not mistaken, they are going to support the motion. However, there is one thing that concerns me. How is it that, since microbeads arrived in Canada, the federal government—regardless of which department is responsible for approving this sort of product, whether it be Health Canada or Environment Canada—has never looked at the toxic risk microbeads pose to people's health and the impact they have on the environment?

I understand that these products are sold everywhere in the world and that this problem is not exclusive to Canada. However, I would like to know what process the Government of Canada used in the past to approve the use of these microbeads, which are found in products sold to Canadians and are being released into Canada's environment.

• (1155)

[*English*]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, there are two things. Our government is very proud of the chemicals management plan that we have in place. There is also the process with Health Canada and the cosmetic industry.

We have indicated that these products are not actually creating harm to human health, but we have heard that there is concern over the plastic going into the environment. We are going to prioritize this issue and do a scientific assessment to determine the best route forward.

We have put extraordinary resources, energy, and effort into the chemicals management plan, and it is certainly having very important and significant effects.

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with care to the hon. member's speech. While I understand that the government seems to be approaching this issue from a consumer protection point of view, we on this side of the House believe that it needs to be approached on a broader level.

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It is quite clear that microbeads are accumulating in our waterways. They are finding their way into plant and animal life. There is no question that these microbeads are having a serious toxic impact on our environment.

Would my hon. colleague agree with me that we need to act quickly, on a precautionary principle basis, to stop the further contamination of our waterways and environment with these microbeads while, as she points out, the government evaluates their safety, or does she think we should wait until there are demonstrable impacts on human health before the government acts?

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, it is important to indicate that there are not demonstrable effects on human health. We will prioritize this issue and make a science-based assessment in terms of the environment. The New Democrats need to take yes for an answer in terms of the need to look at this issue in regard to the impact on the environment, but it is also important for Canadians to hear that these ingredients are not causing a harmful effect when they currently use them in their cosmetics.

We have two things here. One is they are being used and are not creating a harmful effect on humans, but we do need to prioritize and have a look at them and make a decision based on science.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased to learn that the government is going to support our motion.

I think that my hon. colleague opposite understands that we are not saying that these plastic microbeads are dangerous if used on one's skin.

However, would she agree that we do not let people throw their plastic bags or any other garbage made of plastic into our waterways and that we should do exactly the same thing for all types of plastic waste, which, as we know, pollutes our environment and is dangerous for our ecosystems?

Does she also agree that we should act as quickly as possible to ban all types of plastic from our waterways, as we do with plastic bags and other plastic waste?

[*English*]

Mrs. Cathy McLeod: Mr. Speaker, one thing I would like to note is that there was some conversation around the absorption of microbeads and how they can absorb some chemicals.

One of the most important things that a government can do, should do, and is doing through our chemicals management plan is assessing and reducing in general any chemicals that are harmful to humans or to the environment. That is absolutely the most critical thing that the government can be focused on, and is focused on, in terms of chemicals in our environment.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about microbeads or small plastic beads in consumer products, which enter our environment and can have serious harmful effects.

The United Nations Environment Programme looked at plastic waste in the ocean in 2011. Since then, concern has grown over microplastics, particles up to five millimetres in diameter, either

manufactured or created when plastic breaks down. Fish, mussels, seabirds and sea plankton ingest microplastics and that is harmful.

A growing concern is the increasing use of microplastics in consumer products, namely microbeads in facial cleansers, gels and toothpaste, which are released into rivers, lakes and the oceans. Microbes have been discovered on microplastics at multiple locations in the North Atlantic. This so-called *plasticsphere* can help the transport of harmful algae species, microbes and pathogens. Microplastics are also a threat to larger organisms such as the endangered northern right whale.

Closer to home, scientists have found millions of these microbeads in just one square kilometre of parts of our Great Lakes as a result of a number of companies adding them to their consumer products. Sometimes microbeads are used to help exfoliate the skin. Other times they are added to products to make them sparkle.

Research by the Institute for Environmental Studies found that a 200-millilitre bottle contained as much as 21 grams of microplastics, or roughly one-tenth of its weight. Microbeads are commonly made of polyethylene or polypropylene and they range in size from .0004 to 1.24 millimetres, making them too small to be filtered out by wastewater treatment plants. As a result, these tiny beads pass through our wastewater treatment filters and end up in our lakes and rivers.

These beads are often buoyant and can soak up toxins like a sponge. Since they resemble the size of fish eggs, environmentalists are concerned that the microplastics are making their way into the food chain via fish, birds and mammals. Scientists have recently raised alarm, warning that microbeads might have harmful effects on human health. For example, some evidence suggests that microbeads can absorb persistent organic pollutants.

Research spanning all five Great Lakes was undertaken in 2012 and 2013. Unlike in the ocean where the researchers found “confetti-like” bits of degraded plastic up to five millimetres in size, the researchers trawling the Great Lakes found large amounts of really tiny plastic fragments and beads up to one millimetre. As they followed the flow of the water through the Great Lakes, the plastic count increased. The highest concentration was found in Lake Ontario with counts of up to 1.1 million plastic particles per square kilometre.

There is increasing momentum in the United States to get microbeads out of products. Last year, Illinois became the first state to pass legislation that would outright ban the sale of personal care products that contain microbeads by the end of 2019. Illinois Governor Pat Quinn said:

Banning microbeads will help ensure clean waters across Illinois and set an example for our nation to follow. Lake Michigan and the many rivers and lakes across our state are among our most important natural resources.

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Chemist Sherri Mason, an associate professor at the State University of New York, who conducted the first study that found microbeads floating in the Great Lakes, said that while she is glad to see Illinois leading the way, she is troubled by the far-off deadline. She said, “The later date means more microbeads are going down the drain before we're really taking the measures that need to be taken”.

● (1200)

Just this week, Governor Chris Christie signed legislation, making New Jersey the second state in the United States to ban the substances. The law prohibits the manufacturing, sale and promotion in the state of any personal care product with microbeads made from polyethylene.

Senator Christopher Bateman said:

By signing this bill into law, we are placing our state at the forefront of a national effort to eliminate the dangers this product poses to our environment and our water supply.... The only way to keep our drinking water safe and protect our beautiful rivers and lakes is to stop production and get these items off the shelves.

The law would be phased in, beginning with a ban on the production of products containing microbeads in January 2018. By January 2020, people would be prohibited from selling or promoting over-the-counter products containing the substances.

According to Environmental Defence, “A ban is looking promising in Indiana and lawmakers in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Vermont, Maine, California, New York, Ohio and Washington State have also considered, or are considering, new laws banning the beads”.

To reiterate, in the United States, two states, Illinois and New Jersey, have passed laws banning the use of microbeads in personal care products. Nine other states are considering similar measures. In Canada, a private member's bill to ban microbeads has been introduced in Ontario's legislature, but neither the federal government nor the other provinces have taken similar action.

In addition to legislative action, the Great Lakes & St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, a coalition of Canadian and U.S. mayors from 114 cities along the water bodies, has raised awareness about the microbead problem within their communities and pushed companies to eliminate them from their products. “We think we've done a pretty good job”, said executive director David Ullrich, though he acknowledges, “there is always more that the initiative could be doing”.

CBC reported in June 2014 that a number of personal care product manufacturers have promised to cut microbeads from their products in the coming years, but dates vary.

In January 2015, Australia, Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden and the Netherlands issued a joint call to ban the microplastics used in personal care products, saying the measure will protect marine ecosystems and seafood, such as mussels, from contamination. The joint statement was forwarded to the European Union's 28 environment ministers and stated that the elimination of microplastics in products and, in particular, in cosmetics “is of utmost priority”.

According to UNEP:

Although it is evident that alternatives to microplastics are available, hundreds of tons of microplastics are still being released onto the EU market each year. The

Netherlands is particularly worried because of concerns that seafood—including its national production of mussels—could suffer from micro-plastic pollution.

“There is still a large degree of uncertainty but what we already know gives us cause for concern,” the Netherlands state in its call for action. “In this case, the precautionary principle applies.”

Governments from around the world present at the first UN Environment Assembly adopted a resolution on marine plastic debris and microplastics. They called for strengthened action, in particular by addressing such materials at the source and requested UNEP to present scientific assessments on microplastics for consideration by the next session of the Assembly.

UNEP through the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) is also supporting initiatives such as the “Beat the Microbead”—a phone application that allows consumers to quickly identify personal care products containing microbeads—in its efforts to reduce influx of waste in the marine environment.

● (1205)

Concern is growing over the threat that widespread plastic waste poses to marine life, with conservative estimates of the overall financial damage of plastics to marine ecosystems standing at U.S. \$13 billion each year.

The UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director said:

Plastics have come to play a crucial role in modern life, but the environmental impacts of the way we use them cannot be ignored. These reports show that reducing, recycling and redesigning products that use plastics can bring multiple green economy benefits—from reducing economic damage to marine ecosystems and the tourism and fisheries industries, vital for many developing countries, to bringing savings and opportunities for innovation to companies while reducing reputational risks.

...in the polar regions, scientists have recently found tiny pieces of plastic trapped in sea ice. Transported by ocean currents across great distances, these contaminated particles eventually become a source of chemicals in our food. The key course of action is to prevent plastic debris from entering the environment in the first place, which translates into a single, powerful objective: reduce, reuse, recycle.

There have been many reliable reports of environmental damage due to plastic waste: illness or death when ingested by sea creatures such as turtles; entanglement of animals such as dolphins and whales; and damage to critical habitat such as coral reefs. There are also concerns about chemical contamination, invasive species spread by plastic fragments and economic damage to the fishery, fishing and tourism industries in many countries.

What recommendations have been put forth to address this issue?

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Companies should monitor their plastic use and publish the results in annual reports. Companies could commit to reducing the environmental impact of plastics through clear targets and deadlines, and innovate to increase resource efficiency and recycling. There should be an increased focus on awareness campaigns to discourage littering and prevent plastic waste from reaching the ocean. There should be an application that allows consumers to check whether a product contains microbeads. This is already available and is expanding its coverage internationally.

This is a motion that the NDP brought forward. We heard today that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment is asking people to support this motion. It is important.

Since plastic particles can be ingested by marine organisms and potentially accumulate and deliver toxins through the food web, efforts should be stepped up to fill the knowledge gap.

These beads are affecting our water. The plastics absorb dangerous chemicals and are ingested by fish and other wildlife, causing DNA damage and even death. The link between the problem and the cause is clear. The beads found in the Great Lakes were tested and were found to have come from products like body wash, facial cleansers and toothpaste.

Microbeads is an important issue and this is an important debate. It is really positive to see this Parliament coming together and recognizing this problem. We have not always agreed when it comes to the environment. The government does not have a positive record when it comes to the environment.

The 2008 Climate Change Performance Index ranked Canada 56th of 57 countries in terms of tackling emissions. In 2009 and again in 2013, The Conference Board of Canada ranked Canada 15th of 17 wealthy industrial nations on environmental performance.

• (1210)

In 2010, Simon Fraser University ranked Canada 24th of 25 OECD nations on environmental performance. It is important that we are coming together and that everyone is saying that microbeads are an important issue.

The government also gutted environmental legislation of the last 50 years through economic plans 2012 and 2013, and Bills C-38 and C-45. It severely cut the budget to Environment Canada and cancelled the Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. Government scientists have been muzzled. The government's environmental policies have been criticized by policymakers, scientists, Canadians and the international community, and repeatedly by the prestigious international journal, *Nature*.

Water is the foundation of life, and it is essential for socio-economic systems and healthy ecosystems. The World Bank states that "Water is at the center of economic and social development" and is elemental across economic sectors, including agriculture, energy and industry. The government stripped federal oversight from thousands of Canadian waterways through Bill C-45 and reduced the protection of thousands of Canadian lakes.

Going forward, Canada needs a national water strategy, and our country is well placed to become a global leader in water. For example, the Canadian Water Network, a national network of centres

of excellence, can address practical challenges to be a source of new start-up companies and train the next generation of researchers and skilled workers.

Canada also has a relatively high level of water infrastructure regulation and water management systems. The most recent Conference Board of Canada report on the environment ranks Canada 4th of 17 peer countries in water quality. Canada also has a growing number of competitive water companies providing goods and services to world markets.

I thank the NDP for bringing this forward. I thank the parliamentary secretary for asking everyone to support this motion. I also hope the government will work to protect Canada's coastline, establish a network of marine protected areas in Canada's waters, encourage the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources, prioritize clean water, restore our freshwater ecosystems, work to clean up contaminated sediment, and protect and restore essential habitats.

• (1215)

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member raises a very important point, which is the cuts to the federal department of environment. While we are all here in this place, surprised in welcoming that the government appears to support this motion to take action on these beads, which can cause harm to the environment, it raises the question of the tens of thousands of toxins that have yet to be added to the list, let alone regulated. I include industrial mercury, which, to its credit, the Alberta government has regulated to require capture in the coal-fired power industry. Canada still has not.

Could she speak to the urgency of the issue and the capacity to possibly fast-track this through, given the fact that we already have a lot of documented evidence? Clearly, Europe is moving forward and some of the United States. We already have the Canada-U.S. clean energy dialogue that could serve as one mechanism we could use to move this matter forward more expeditiously.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her work on the environment over decades. She raises important points. There have been large cuts to Environment Canada. We need our scientists, and we need them to freely speak.

I used to consult for Environment Canada. It is heartbreaking when I return to a building that used to be filled with scientists, but where there are now empty floors, and I can name the building. It is sad when scientists cannot speak freely about their findings.

Business of Supply

We need to base any policies on good, scientific evidence. We need the science. We need scientists to speak freely. As my colleague says, the U.S. is moving forward. Legislation was passed yesterday. Europe is moving forward. This is an important motion and we need to support it.

• (1220)

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Etobicoke North for her support of this motion. However, I would like to make a clarification and then ask a question.

The member talked about a number of states in the United States of America that had taken action on this. I want to clarify that in fact only one, the state of Illinois, has taken action although many other states are considering doing so. Similar legislation is being discussed in Ohio, New York, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Colorado and New Jersey, but none of these states have yet put in place legally binding controls or prohibitions.

Would the member for Etobicoke North, and my friend from the environment committee for a number of years, agree that Canada should continue to collaborate with the one state that has legislated on the issue, Illinois, as well as the others that, like Canada, are considering such legislation?

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, my friend across the way and I had a good working relationship on the environment committee.

When I was writing this speech late last night, in the wee hours of the morning, I found out that Governor Chris Christie had passed legislation on microbeads yesterday. It is important that we always work with scientists from the United States and from around the world.

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is amazing. I know the environment file in general concerns her very much.

I am a bit worried because the two parliamentary secretaries who spoke earlier talked about health effects on humans as being a de facto condition of a substance being written down in Canadian law for the protection of the environment. However, article 64 says that the risk can be posed to the environment or to human health.

I am not sure if the government members understand that these are not two conditions that have to be met together, but that they are different conditions. It is either a health condition on human beings or on human health in general, or environmental risks. Would my colleague comment on that?

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I am a strong believer in the precautionary principle. We take action when there is evidence that something may be harmful.

The Liberal Party has consistently promoted policies aimed at protecting Canada's waterways. As I have said repeatedly, we will support this motion.

Environment and industry experts agree that microbeads must be phased out of use. A similar ban in the U.S. received bipartisan support and an Ontario Liberal member of the provincial legislature introduced a bill on March 9 to phase out microbeads. In 2011, the Liberal Party pledged to introduce a Canadian freshwater strategy

that would address pollution in the Great Lakes, Lake Winnipeg, the St. Lawrence River and other major bodies of water. In 2012, the party made the creation of a national water policy a priority resolution for our party.

• (1225)

Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine.

My speech on microbeads, small pieces of plastics found in consumer products like facial cleaners, shower gels and toothpastes, begins in the year 1997, 18 years ago, in the waters off the northeast coast of Newfoundland. An incident came to mind the instant I heard of this opposition day motion, outlining how microbeads could have serious health impacts and calling on the government to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed by the federal government under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

The year 1997 was the 500th anniversary of John Cabot's discovery of Newfoundland, and a great year in the history of the world it was, Newfoundland and Labrador being the God's country that it is. To mark the 500th anniversary of John Cabot's historic voyage from Bristol, England to Bonavista, Newfoundland, a recreation of the Cabot's ship, *The Matthew*, was built and sailed from Bristol to Bonavista.

I was in Bristol back then as a young journalist covering the launch of *The Matthew* for *The Telegram*, the daily newspaper in St. John's, Newfoundland. Hundreds of thousands of people watched *The Matthew* sail down the River Avon, and what a sight it was. Thousands more people were in Bonavista, Newfoundland weeks later, including the Queen of England, when *The Matthew* sailed into Bonavista. It was a grey and foggy day, just like the great Newfoundland song *Grey Foggy Day*.

Once *The Matthew* arrived in Newfoundland, over a period of several more weeks she proceeded to circumnavigate the island of Newfoundland. Every day Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, from secretaries to plumbers, lawyers to businessmen and reporters to politicians, took overnight trips on *The Matthew* from one leg to the next, one community to the next.

I sailed on *The Matthew* on the first overnight leg from Bonavista to nearby Grates Cove. That memory will always be with me. *The Matthew* was a wooden caravel, 78-feet long, weighing 50 tonnes, and she bobbed in the North Atlantic like a cork in a bottle.

It was nasty weather. Old-timers called that kind of weather a "capelin squall", a mixture of bone-chilling winds, rain and fog that typically hammers the Newfoundland coast in late June just as the capelin are coming inshore to spawn. I took my turn at the wheel, and I was on the deck of *The Matthew* the next morning when the sun rose and finally started to bum the fog to shreds. The very first thing I saw in the waters off Grates Cove was a plastic shopping bag. I will never forget it. I can say with certainty that John Cabot did not see a plastic shopping bag floating in the ocean. As legend has it, he was too busy dropping buckets over the side of *The Matthew*, pulling in cod.

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On a side note, there is a news story out today about how it may be another 10 years before the moratorium on northern cod is lifted, cod like John Cabot caught in buckets. By then, the ban on commercial fishing on northern cod, which was first brought down in 1992, will have lasted 33 years. As a Newfoundland and Labrador MP, I make it a point at every opportunity to hammer home to the government and the third party in the House that it will have been 33 years since the greatest industry in Newfoundland and Labrador failed as a result of complete mismanagement.

My apologies for yesterday during question period in this House when I lost it in my seat after a Conservative MP, the MP for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission, said that his government's management decisions are “always based on science”. My apologies for reacting to such a ridiculous statement. I should be used to such ridiculous statements. It is the fire in my belly. I apologize for that. Under the Conservative government, scientists are known more for being muzzled than anything else.

Let us get back to plastics. As I said at the start, microbeads are small, manufactured pieces of plastic used in consumer products, as has been pointed out, like facial cleansers, shower gels, and toothpaste. Microbeads have been found in high concentrations in the Great Lakes. If they are found there, in the Great Lakes, one can bet a bushel of plastic bags that they are found in the North Atlantic, in the waters off Newfoundland and Labrador, in the waters off the east coast, in the waters off the Maritimes.

There is a bid by Memorial University, the university in Newfoundland and Labrador, to study ocean plastics waste and codfish consumption in Newfoundland to see if there is a correlation between microbeads and the codfish we consume. Let us hope that the study actually goes through.

New Democrats, my party, believe that the best way to deal with pollution is to prevent pollution in the first place. It is hard to argue with that.

Microbeads were first patented for use as cleaners in 1972, but it was not until the 1960s that manufacturers started using them to replace more natural materials, such as almonds, oatmeal, and sea salt.

Alternatives to microbeads do exist. Because of that, they are not considered an essential ingredient in cosmetics and personal care products. If microbeads are not essential, and if they are known to cause harm to fish and other wildlife, are known to cause asphyxiation or the blockage of organs in marine mammals, and are found in fish that is eaten by people, why are we allowing microbeads?

Have we not learned yet that we put people first? We put people first by putting the environment first. Have we not learned that we put people first by preventing pollution in the first place?

In recent years, a \$171-million sewage treatment plant has been built in St. John's, in my riding of St. John's South—Mount Pearl. However, waste water treatment plants like the Riverhead treatment plant, again in my riding, are not able to filter out microbeads, because microbeads are too small, and they are buoyant.

There are hundreds of communities around Newfoundland and Labrador that do not have sewage treatment plants. Hundreds. Upgrading the \$171-million treatment plant in St. John's would cost tens of millions of dollars more. Where would that money come from?

There are no known ways to effectively remove microbeads, microplastics, after they make their way into the environment.

● (1230)

What do we want? What do New Democrats want with regard to microbeads? We want the government to take immediate action to designate microbead plastics toxic under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. That would allow the Government of Canada to regulate, phase out, and eliminate the use of microbeads used or produced in Canada. Already, as has been pointed out, two states in the United States have banned the use of microbeads in personal care products. Countries around the world are doing the same. Here at home, a private member's bill has been introduced in Ontario. However, we need federal regulation, one law for all provinces and territories.

What do New Democrats want? We want a clean environment. We want healthy fish. We want healthy people. New Democrats want a level playing field for all businesses that manufacture products containing microbeads.

What do I want as a member of Parliament for Newfoundland and Labrador, for St. John's South—Mount Pearl? Number one, I would like the fish to come back. I wish the fish had come back two years after the moratorium, as John Crosbie predicted. I would like that to happen, but it is not predicted for another 10 years. That is what I want.

An equally important wish is for the Conservatives, the Government of Canada, to become better stewards of the environment. More and more, the Conservative government is failing the environment.

● (1235)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, these microbeads, which absorb toxic substances, could have a negative impact on the health of consumers since they are found in fish and other marine animals, which are then eaten by people,

I would like the member for St. John's South—Mount Pearl to tell me how many people in his riding eat fish and marine animals that live in our environment and could therefore be affected by the chemicals transported by these plastic microbeads in the food chain.

[*English*]

Mr. Ryan Cleary: Mr. Speaker, that is a good question. What is the percentage of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who eat fish? I will answer simply this way: all of them. I know that the MP for St. John's East and his family eat fish.

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As I mentioned in my speech, Memorial University is looking at doing a study on the impact of microbeads on the environment and in terms of our recreational cod fishery, which happens twice a year in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Newfoundland and Labrador recreational cod fishery is more limited than it is in the maritimes. I do not necessarily agree, but the reason it is more limited is that we have more Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who fish cod and eat cod.

To sum up, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians love their fish.

Mr. Gerald Keddy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, to the Minister of National Revenue and for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the words from my colleague from the NDP on pollution and the environment and the responsibility we have as a chamber to deal effectively with that. However, I have one question, and it is not a simple one.

The member was saying that he looks forward to the cod coming back, as we all do in Atlantic Canada. I also expect that the hon. member knows the relationship cod has with shrimp. It is the main predator for shrimp and shellfish. Does the member realize that when cod comes back, the shrimp fishery will not be the fishery it is today?

The reason the shrimp fishery is failing now, besides a bit of overfishing, is that cod is on the way back.

Mr. Ryan Cleary: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question, although I had no idea that the hon. member was a scientist. I had no idea that he had studied the ecosystem of the North Atlantic and the relationship between cod and shrimp. It is good news. I am on the House of Commons committee on fisheries and oceans, and I must consult with the member more often on scientific questions.

In terms of the decline in the northern shrimp stock, we were under the assumption that northern shrimp was on the decline, but there has been news of late that the shrimp quota this year will not be cut. The reason it will not be cut is that the shrimp stock is in better shape than we thought. The problem is that apparently there is fresh and better science, but the current Conservative government will not release that science.

In terms of getting the information from scientists, they are muzzled by the current Conservative government. Dozens and dozens of scientists have signed papers to that effect calling on the government to lift the muzzling of scientists. We would love to speak to scientists more about the ecosystem and the relationship between different species of fish in the North Atlantic, but we cannot speak to scientists, because they cannot speak freely.

If the member has the ego, the audacity, to assume that he understands the relationship between cod, the ecosystem, and shrimp, he does not have a clue.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to support the NDP motion moved by my colleague from Halifax, who, I might add, is doing an excellent job as our environment critic. It is important to talk about

this issue in the House today because it affects us all, especially future generations. It is time to move motions for the environment, before it is too late. Today's motion is a step in that direction, and I will read it now:

That, in the opinion of the House, microbeads in consumer products entering the environment could have serious harmful effects, and therefore the government should take immediate measures to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed by the government under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

Basically, this motion calls on the federal government to take the necessary steps to classify microbeads as a toxic substance. This would allow the federal government to regulate, phase out or eliminate microbeads altogether from products used or manufactured in Canada. This simple measure would be easy to introduce. It would contribute further to preserving marine life as well as Canada's natural heritage.

Many people may be wondering what exactly microbeads are. They are tiny, round plastic particles used in the manufacture of a number of household and personal care products, including face and body washes and exfoliating scrubs.

Unfortunately, waste water treatment plants are not currently equipped with the filters needed to trap plastic microbeads. Part of the reason is that microbeads are too small, so they manage to pass through the filters and end up in the treated water from these treatment plants and in the environment.

In fact, high concentrations of microbeads have been discovered in marine environments across Canada, including in the Great Lakes, especially downstream from large cities, and in the sediments at the bottom of the St. Lawrence. Once these particles are released into our waters, they are ingested by aquatic species and therefore become an integral part of the food chain, including the human food chain. As my colleague who spoke before me mentioned, we eat a lot of fish in Canada.

Scientists and researchers around the world agree that plastic microbeads are harmful and a significant source of pollution. François Galgani, a researcher at the Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer, a French ocean research institute, said:

Sometimes microbeads are dispersed by the currents and travel thousands of kilometres from where they were discharged, thereby acting as a vector carrying microbes from one side of the planet to another, with the risk of disrupting the balance of natural environments by introducing pathogens to the local fauna and flora.

Internationally, a number of U.S. states, including Illinois, California, and New York, have already banned cosmetics containing microbeads from being marketed, or have anti-microbead legislation. What is more, the Dutch parliament is proposing to ban microplastics from beauty products throughout Europe.

Currently, at least 21 global companies that manufacture or produce beauty or personal care products are committed to reducing their plastic footprint by gradually eliminating microbeads from their products or choosing to no longer offer products containing microbeads.

In Canada, more and more groups, such as Environmental Defence Canada, are denouncing the disastrous environmental impact of these microbeads and are urging the federal government to ban these microbeads from consumer products.

The NDP takes the risks associated with microbeads very seriously. Canadian consumers and companies want to protect the environment from the harmful effects of microbeads. However, it is hard to do so without regulations that cover all the provinces and territories.

The NDP thinks the best way to eradicate the pollution caused by microbeads is to prevent it in the first place. Given that it would be expensive to upgrade waste water treatment plants and that there is no known way to effectively remove microplastics once they are in the environment, the NDP thinks the simplest and most effective solution to this problem is to prevent these particles from entering the environment.

• (1240)

Personally, I do not use many beauty products, but I have a very good exfoliant that contains sugar instead of microbeads. There are ingredients that can be used instead of microbeads. As an environmental precaution, many companies have opted not to use microbeads in their products. This solution is simple and cheap for manufacturers that currently use microbeads. There are alternatives available. As I said earlier, this would be much easier to enforce if there were regulations in place.

• (1245)

[English]

Canada must join with leading jurisdictions around the world and work toward eliminating microbeads from the products we use every day for the sake of public health and for the preservation of our environment. In that regard, New Democrats believe in protecting the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, and all of our lakes and rivers from unnecessary pollution. We will take the action necessary to prevent it.

[Translation]

Since the beginning of my mandate, I have been personally involved in a number of environmental protection groups that are working very hard to promote an environmentally friendly, healthy and balanced approach. Today I would like to salute the teachers who have dedicated time and energy to instill good civic duty values in their students. I even had the pleasure of participating in a number of Lac Saint-Louis shoreline cleanup and remediation campaigns in Lachine and Dorval. The lake is full of garbage. Last year I worked alongside volunteers and high school students from the region, including students from école Saint-Louis. I know how important it is for young people to grow up in a green world. We need to take steps in that direction today.

I would also like to highlight the important work done by GRAME, the Groupe de recherche appliquée en macroécologie. This organization is based in Lachine and is celebrating its 26th anniversary this week. Happy anniversary. It promotes sustainable development and environmental protection, with a focus on long-term global issues and climate change. At the same time it promotes

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renewable energy, sustainable transportation, energy efficiency and the use of economic incentives for environmental management.

I have a constructive professional relationship with GRAME, which over the years has demonstrated remarkable ingenuity in this area. I would like to thank its director, Jonathan Théorêt, and also all its employees and all the community volunteers, who are outstanding and are truly improving our environment and our community.

The NDP wants to work with such groups to develop an environmentally friendly and sustainable way to meet the pollution challenges all around us, now and also in the future. In terms of the environment, we must act now in order to generate long-term effects. The NDP believes that it is time to properly address this issue by stopping the pollution of the marine environment by microplastics.

Experts have clearly established that microbeads contain harmful substances and therefore represent a threat to the environment. This motion, moved today by my colleague, seeks to draw the government's attention to this problem that affects us all. These NDP proposals will help improve the quality of the environment and contribute to sustainable development in Canada.

[English]

To sum up, what we want is simple and quite reasonable, in my opinion.

We want a clean and healthy environment. We want to ensure the continuation of the recreational fishery and the safety of fish and other aquatic species. To achieve this, we want to eliminate the use of microbeads in products used or produced in Canada and we want to level the playing field for all businesses that manufacture products containing microbeads to ensure that those who switch to safer alternatives are not at a competitive disadvantage.

Broadly speaking, we want the federal government to assume its responsibilities. Canadians need and deserve a government that listens to their concerns, a government that puts their interests first and best understands their needs, but most importantly, a government that is sincere about seeking to bring about real change. That is exactly what the NDP is bringing to the table. An NDP government will deliver on its promises.

Mr. Corneliu Chisu (Pickering—Scarborough East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the presentation of my colleague and I would like a point of clarification. The member mentioned that California and New York banned microbeads. Is she sure about that?

• (1250)

[Translation]

Ms. Isabelle Morin: Mr. Speaker, we get notes for our speeches.

The notes said that Illinois banned the manufacturing and sale of personal care products containing plastic microbeads in June 2014. California, Minnesota, New York and Ohio are looking into similar regulations. I apologize if my speech was not clear.

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Four major states—California, Minnesota, New York and Ohio—are currently looking into similar regulations. They are states that care about the environment and want to go ahead and eliminate microbeads.

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. It is true that these issues are very important.

The member mentioned the organization GRAME in her speech. In my riding we have the Centre d'information en environnement de Longueuil, Ciel et Terre, which looks out for our waterways. What my colleague talked about today was very practical. We regularly use products that end up in the sediments in our waterways and in the food of our marine wildlife. I also heard that the beads in question heat up differently in sunlight. That would even change how eggs grow and are laid, which affects the development of our wildlife.

This seems promising. Everyone seems to want to come to an agreement on this important issue. Is it realistic to think that Canada could potentially play a key role in setting international standards?

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

As I already said, some states already have legislation. In Europe, there is pressure for the eurozone to introduce legislation in this regard. My colleague is quite right in wondering whether Canada could be an environmental leader for once, because Canada did have a rather good environmental record in the past. However, since the Conservatives took office in 2006, scientists have been muzzled and cannot give us accurate information, because when the government does not like what it is hearing, it refuses to let them speak. The government did away with the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. It eliminated funding for the Canadian Environmental Network. I could go on.

As my colleague from Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher said, people seem to want to agree on this because it is such an important and alarming issue. Microbeads that are ingested by fish enter our food chain. I think it is important to ask the government to add these microbeads to the list of toxic substances. I would be proud if Canada were to become the first country to do this and could influence other countries. I would be proud if we could have a positive impact as a government.

As I mentioned, there are alternatives. Whether it be sugar, salt, ground almonds or oatmeal, there are many environmentally friendly alternatives that could be used in these products. It would cost less than changing our water treatment system. This is simply a matter of dealing with the problem at the source because an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. What we are proposing today is reasonable and it is a good long-term vision for our environment.

[*English*]

Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to speak for the government today, a government that takes very seriously the protection of Canadians and our environment. Let me begin by saying I will be splitting my time with the member for Elmwood—Transcona.

I would like to begin by clarifying exactly what microbeads are. They are a subset of microplastics. They fall under the category of primary microplastics and are minuscule round plastic beads less than one millimetre in size. They are widely used, as we have heard this morning, in personal care products such as skin care products and cosmetics. There are also secondary microplastics, which are tiny plastic fragments up to five millimetres in size that result from the breakdown of larger plastic debris.

Rather than focusing solely on the subset issue of microbeads, I would like to speak today to the broader challenge of microplastics. This is an emerging issue on which Canada, in concert with our provincial, territorial, international, and industry colleagues, is starting to make important progress.

When it comes to microplastics, as with most environmental concerns, the bottom line is that we all share responsibility for the environment. Not only does the environment know no borders, but responsibility for the environment is also not neatly contained within one jurisdiction.

This government provides strong leadership in working collaboratively with its partners and its stakeholders, both at home and abroad, to protect our environment, to protect Canadians, and to protect the economy. This includes working to ensure Canadians are protected from the serious harmful effects of toxic substances.

The impacts of microplastics, including microbeads, on ecosystems are still being investigated. Some research has shown that microplastics can adsorb and desorb a variety of pollutants and may have the potential to bio-accumulate and cause adverse effects in aquatic organisms. Debris in the marine environment falls under the shared jurisdiction of not only Environment Canada but also Transport Canada and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Land-based sources of marine debris, including microplastics, fall under the jurisdictions of municipal, provincial, and federal governments.

As can be seen, the issue crosses many jurisdictional boundaries, so if we want to achieve real results, it is absolutely essential that we all work together. Environment Canada is doing just that. The department is involved in initiatives with Canadian provincial governments, with American state governments, and with the broader research communities. The department has also held discussions with Canadian industry associations.

While we are collaborating within our own borders, this government also understands that if we are to prevent plastics from entering the marine environment, we need to have international engagement on this issue. I would like to take this opportunity to turn to some of the international actions and processes under way and in place that are dealing with this challenge.

Internationally, the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans are defined by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, also called the Law of the Sea Convention or the Law of the Sea Treaty. However, most of the individual treaties and agreements relevant to protecting the marine environment from sea-based pollution are administered through the International Maritime Organization conventions.

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Canada is a party to the major International Maritime Organization treaties on the prevention of marine pollution. This includes the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, which controls pollution from ships, and the London Convention and Protocol, which controls marine pollution from dumping of waste at sea.

It is important to highlight that discharge or disposal of marine litter, which includes marine plastics, at sea is generally prohibited by both of these treaties and by the Canadian laws that implement them domestically. While a party to these treaties, the federal government is aware that there is an opportunity for further action to protect our environment, and that is why we are participating in international discussions and studies on the prevention of marine plastic pollution.

• (1255)

Canada also welcomes the initiative of certain multinational companies to phase out microbeads from personal care products, to benefit our shared environment. For example, the Canadian Plastics Industry Association is encouraging companies to take action to prevent plastic pellet losses into the environment.

Canada is also pleased to participate in several international discussions where further action on marine plastics, and marine litter more generally, is being discussed. The United Nations Environment Assembly, for example, adopted a resolution for the oceans and law of the sea, which includes marine litter and microplastics, in June 2014. Marine debris has been proposed as a theme for the 16th meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea taking place later this year.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is also planning a joint meeting on chemicals this June, which will focus on a session on marine litter and the role of sustainable chemistry. In addition to this, Canada is participating, of course, in the G7 discussions on marine litter. There are significant international studies forthcoming as well, which we will be monitoring, and we will be assessing these results.

One such example is the United Nations global study on marine plastic debris and microplastics, which should be complete by 2016. In addition, the joint group of experts on the scientific aspects of marine environment protection recently conducted a study of the sources, the fate, and the effects of microplastics in the environment, which will be published later this year.

All of these international groups recognize the need to avoid duplication of efforts and are exploring different aspects of the issue, and the Government of Canada is working within this framework.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that this government understands that coordinated action between governments is crucial to advancing on environmental initiatives such as microplastics and the subsector, microbeads. This government is, therefore, in constant contact with its partners, other levels of government across the country and beyond our borders, and we are also working to stay on top of the latest research.

There is still more work and more study to be done, but this government is committed to following this issue closely and to taking any future steps that are determined to be warranted.

• (1300)

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge the hon. member and his government to stop their position of studying and move to one of action. I have noticed that major corporate players like Johnson & Johnson, LUSH Cosmetics, and Colgate-Palmolive have already recognized the devastating impacts of microbeads on our waterways, on our marine life, and on the health of humans, potentially, and they have already taken steps to ban the production of microbeads and the use of them in their products.

We already know that high concentrations of plastic pollutants on beaches change the physical properties of sand, increasing its temperature and harming species that rely on those conditions. Microplastics absorb water pollutants, such as DDT, PAHs, and PCBs. When those are ingested by wildlife, the toxins bioaccumulate and become more concentrated as they move up our food chain.

Knowing that the corporate sector and the scientific community are united in the negative impacts of microbeads, will my hon. colleague agree that now is not the time for more study, but now is the time for the Government of Canada to take action and ban these harmful substances immediately?

Hon. Peter Kent: Mr. Speaker, again the NDP is rushing to take action while other major environmental organizations and the scientific community in general are still advising that continued study is necessary.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency and NOAA, the national oceanographic body in the United States, are looking at this. We recognize the issue and we are working toward a solution, but it goes beyond microbeads and the banning of microbeads and gets into microplastics.

I have a letter from the Canadian Cosmetic, Toiletry and Fragrance Association. Some of its members have already banned and others are working to ban, and it concludes that the 14 companies it represents comprise the vast majority. With the phasing out of all of these products, there will be no microbeads in Canada, except through counterfeit products smuggled into the country.

Therefore, there is a need to address this problem, but I think the NDP's desire to rush to an immediate solution is not a worthy suggestion.

• (1305)

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member for Thornhill might be able to tell the House what Canada is doing internationally to address microbeads and microplastics in the environment and, specifically, in our waterways.

Hon. Peter Kent: Mr. Speaker, as I suggested during my remarks, this is something on which action does need to be taken domestically. The federal government and Environment Canada are the appropriate lead, but we do need to work in concert with our closest neighbour, the United States, with whom we share the Great Lakes, the greatest body of fresh water in the world. We also need to work with other countries around the world.

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We are participating in the United Nations working group on marine litter and microplastics, and Canada is ranked in the mid-range of 192 coastal countries that contribute to marine litter. Comparatively speaking, Canada is not a primary contributor to marine litter, but we could do much better. We are also actively participating in the OECD working group to look at sustainable chemistry in terms of reducing the impacts of plastics in the marine environment.

Mr. Lawrence Toet (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak today on this issue. Indeed, last Sunday, March 22, was World Water Day. The international theme this year was water and sustainable development.

Water is a vital issue to Canadians, essential to their health and their environment. Water is equally essential for the success of many key economic sectors in Canada, from tourism and recreation to farming, energy, and manufacturing.

Environment Canada coordinates environmental policies and programs and works for a clean, safe, and sustainable environment. It works to ensure we understand water quality and quantity issues that affect Canadians' access to clean water, and it implements regulations to protect our water.

Environment Canada takes the federal lead on water matters, including scientific monitoring and research, programs, regulations, and partnerships. Partnerships are very important, because water is a shared jurisdictional responsibility among federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments and individual citizens. Water crosses boundaries from province to province and between Canada and the United States.

Our government is committed to partnerships with many implicated stakeholders to protect our water resources. Governments in Canada are moving to an integrated ecosystem that is designed to ensure that decision making is co-operative and reflects the interests of many stakeholders. It is also designed to balance a range of goals, including sustainable water and aquatic resource measurement, protection from health threats linked to water quality, protection of aquatic ecosystems and species, and reduction of the health, economic, and safety impacts of floods and droughts.

Our government coordinates and makes many targeted investments in ecosystems like the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, Lake Simcoe and southeastern Georgian Bay, and the Lake Winnipeg basin.

Environment Canada leads the federal Great Lakes program, including implementation of the Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, 2012, the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health, 2014, the Great Lakes nutrient initiative, and the Great Lakes action plan, among other specific initiatives.

Through the Lake Simcoe and southeastern Georgian Bay cleanup fund, our government is investing \$29 million from 2012 to 2017 to support community-based projects that demonstrate on-the-ground actions to reduce phosphorus discharges from urban and rural sources. This would help to protect and create aquatic habitat and enhance research and monitoring for decision making.

The St. Lawrence action plan, 2011 to 2026, is the latest agreement between Canada and Quebec, intended to conserve and enhance the St. Lawrence River. It builds on four previous agreements implemented since 1988.

Our government and the government of Quebec collaborate on about 50 specific projects, which all aim to achieve three main goals: biodiversity conservation, improved water quality, and sustainable resource use.

Since 2007, through the Lake Winnipeg basin initiative, our government has allocated a total of \$36 million toward Environment Canada-led efforts to support the cleanup and long-term sustainability of Lake Winnipeg and its basin. An allocation of \$18 million was made toward this in 2012.

Through this initiative, Environment Canada collaborates with other governments and stakeholders on scientific research and monitoring, nutrient management strategies, and financial support for stakeholder-driven, solution-oriented projects aimed at reducing nutrient loads and improving the ecological health of the Lake Winnipeg basin.

The next round of project funding under the Lake Winnipeg basin stewardship fund is being considered right now and will be announced this spring.

In the Atlantic region, through undertakings such as the Gulf of Maine initiative, funded under the national conservation plan, and the Atlantic ecosystem initiatives, significant results are achieved in improving water quality across near-shore and coastal watersheds.

At the heart of federal efforts to protect water quality for Canadians are some 700 scientific and technical professionals at Environment Canada who do field work or conduct leading-edge research about the health of aquatic ecosystems.

• (1310)

Environment Canada's freshwater quality monitoring and surveillance division focuses on regular monitoring, surveillance and reporting on freshwater quality and aquatic ecosystem status and trends. Its activities help to do the following. They help to assess threats to freshwater quality in the aquatic ecosystem areas I have already described. They meet federal commitments related to transboundary watersheds, rivers and lakes crossing international, interprovincial and territorial borders. They support the development, implementation and assessment of federal regulations, including the chemicals management plan, the clean air regulatory agenda, the federal sustainable development strategy and the Canadian environmental sustainability indicators.

Environment Canada has a network of laboratories that deliver world-class accredited science that supports the department's priority water programs. Environment Canada has eight operational units at seven laboratory facilities located in North Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Ottawa, Burlington, Montreal and Moncton.

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Through all these efforts, our government is actively protecting the environment and Canadians from harmful pollutants. We understand that our success depends on effective collaboration within Canada among all levels of government, with our local stakeholder partners who have local expertise, with aboriginal governments with traditional knowledge, and between Canada and the United States.

The impacts of microplastics, including microbeads, are being investigated. Our government is closely following new developments on microplastics as they become available. Academic literature is currently identifying that the sources of microplastics are found in some personal care products. These personal care products, like facial scrubs, do contain microbeads.

We are aware of legislative developments in jurisdictions like Ontario and Illinois, planning to ban microbeads in personal care products. We understand that the personal care products industry is also currently exploring opportunities to reduce the use of microbeads.

Canada is actively participating in international discussions on the prevention of marine plastic pollution, notably through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the United Nations.

[Translation]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am still not convinced that the government's approach to this issue is proactive enough. I know that there is going to be a study on this issue, and I would like to ask my Conservative colleague this: if we talk about the study that the government has suggested, when will Canadians and parliamentarians get the results? My question is not so much about the results but about the timeline.

Obviously I believe we need to take action. If we have a short, one-year timeline, that is reasonable. However, having to wait five years for the results would be unacceptable. When can we expect to receive the results of the study on microbeads?

• (1315)

[English]

Mr. Lawrence Toet: Mr. Speaker, even in the opposition motion brought forward today, the New Democrats own language says, "That, in the opinion of the House, microbeads in consumer products entering the environment could have serious harmful effects". I would assume they very purposely used the word "could" because they members also realize that there needs to be a study on the real impacts. There is potential, but there are no studies that I am aware of that actually say these are, for sure, the things that occur. There have been some comments throughout the day today about whether there is an impact on humans through the consumption of fish.

Again, it is a lot of unproven and unknown statements. We have to do the proper study. I know the chemicals management plan brought forward by our government will prioritize microbeads in that process.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saenich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member and the Conservatives participating in the debate today for saying that they will take action on

microbeads. We want to see this listing within the Canadian Environmental Protection Act as soon as possible.

I am certainly very encouraged by the positive tone of today's debate. Could we extend this to looking at other plastics which are currently contaminating the ocean? Is the member aware of any other steps that have been taken to ensure we reduce what are now huge areas in the ocean that are essentially awash in plastic?

Mr. Lawrence Toet: Mr. Speaker, in my comments I mentioned the fact that Canada was in international discussions on the prevention of marine plastic pollutants, notably through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the United Nations. It is something that has Canada's attention. We are aware of these challenges and we are definitely one of the international partners working forward on this.

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on some erroneous comments made earlier by the NDP. In fact, Canada is a world leader with our chemicals management plan. It is certainly something that has made us a world leader in assessing our legacy chemicals. Our work with the chemicals management plan has resulted in the assessment of 2,700 chemicals since 2006, when we came to power. It certainly demonstrates Canada's active role in chemicals assessment and it would certainly indicate that this is a stronger record than any previous government.

Could the member comment on the very extensive work that has been done by our government, certainly far more than any previous government? I would like his comment on that strong record and any thoughts he has on it.

Mr. Lawrence Toet: Mr. Speaker, the member is quite correct. Since 2006, we have been leaders in this field in Canada, among many other things. There is this constant talk about scientists not being allowed to speak. It is such a myth being perpetuated by the members across the floor. It is very obvious. We have over 700 scientists working in Environment Canada on these very issues. They continue to bring forward their work and report on it. They are also internationally recognized leaders in this research and development.

Yes, we are very proud of our record since 2006, working together on these initiatives, and we will continue to do so.

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

Last summer, residents of Toledo, Ohio had to find drinking water from other sources as their traditional one, Lake Erie, had become unsuitable for human consumption. The culprit was blue green algae, which is thought to be the product of too much fertilizer making its way into the lake, but it highlights how things can take a quick change for the worse and how we should do all we can to protect our precious freshwater resources.

Business of Supply

That Toledo was even able to take its water from Lake Erie is remarkable when one considers the history of that area. For those of us who remember, Lake Erie has already been pulled back from the brink once. In fact, the Cuyahoga River that flows into the lake at Cleveland was so thoroughly polluted that it caught fire a number of times. The fire on that river in 1969 became a symbol for how polluted North American waterways had become, especially in the industrial heartland around the Great Lakes.

What is worth noting is that the fire and the images of the similarly polluted Lake Erie became flashpoints that led to clean water legislation and a reversal in fortune for the lake. Unfortunately it is threatened again by too much algae, which is preventable. However, it, along with the other Great Lakes, is also threatened by another preventable pollutant. This is why we are having this debate today.

We are considering a motion that aims to protect our freshwater resources from an entirely man-made problem by adding microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed by the government under the Environmental Protection Act. It is a matter of stating priorities and putting our common good ahead of the convenience these microbeads afford manufacturers of consumer goods.

Although this is the first time I am aware of that we are discussing microbeads in Parliament, if we adopt this motion, we will join other jurisdictions that have already legislated to ban microbeads or are currently seized with this issue. In addition to that, many companies are voluntarily moving away from microbeads in anticipation of some form of ban as good environmental practice or even for public relations purposes. For whatever the reason, the idea of moving past the pollutant is not being fought tooth and nail in every corner of the industries that use it in their products, which is amazing.

I am sure many people are unaware of the existence of microbeads or just how pervasive their use is in products like cosmetics and toothpaste. They are made of polyethylene which is a form of plastic. The beads create a sense of smoothness in the texture of a product or conversely create a grit that is used in products like exfoliants or toothpaste. In most cases, they are being used to replace more natural options such as ground almonds, oatmeal or sea salt. Although the technology to create these has been around for more than four decades, it is in recent years that the use the microbeads has really taken off.

Microbeads also slip effortlessly through our water treatment facilities and find their way into our waters. While it may be possible to develop filtration technology to target this pollutant, the option is both theoretical and costly, while placing the responsibility on society and excusing those producers that benefit from the convenience of microplastics for their products. It is an obvious choice between the options and I would hope others in the House would see it in the same way.

It is important to remove these plastics from our waters because they make their way into life forms as they float around. The plastic alone is unhealthy, but the problem does not end there. Once ingested, microbeads can cause asphyxiation or blockage of organs. In addition to that, microbeads can be a pollution magnifier. Because they are made of plastic, they attract chemical pollutants, which can in turn unknowingly be ingested by a variety of marine life. This

adds to the buildup of pollutants in the food chain which many people are exposed to, especially those who eat fish from polluted waters.

The bad news is that microbeads can already be found in high concentrations in the Great Lakes. The problem is most noticeable downstream from major cities and in the sediments of the St. Lawrence River.

● (1320)

The good news is that there is already momentum behind the notion of moving past microbeads for cosmetic uses, and although we are later than some to the party, we are beginning the process of catching up today.

Internationally, the Netherlands is the leader on this front, and it will have cosmetics that are microbead-free by the end of next year. It is forcing industry's hand, which is the role the government should take in these instances.

In North America, Illinois has been the first to ban the manufacture or sale of personal care products containing plastic microbeads. Other state legislatures—California, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, and New Jersey—are considering legislation of their own.

In addition to that, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, which is a binational coalition of more than 100 mayors, is calling for action on microbeads by 2015.

For its part, the cosmetics industry is not fighting back. Cosmetic leaders such as The Body Shop, Johnson & Johnson, Lush Cosmetics, and Colgate have seen that a ban is coming, have recognized the public relations benefit that comes from voluntarily moving away from microbeads, and have all stated their intention to do just that.

In fact, at least 21 companies around the world have made some level of commitment to phase out microbeads in their products, which is unbelievable. They are seeing what the future holds.

New Democrats are asking the government today to avoid the mishmash approach we are seeing in the United States and to take advantage of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act to move Canada ahead as a whole on this front. By taking immediate action and listing microbeads as toxic under the EPA, we could then move to regulate, phase out, and eventually eliminate the use of microbeads in products used or produced in Canada.

Like all Canadians, we want a clean and healthy environment and the benefits that flow from that. This is especially important for our recreational fishing industry and for the safety of fish and other aquatic species most affected by the plastic.

As a member with a constituency that touches two of the Great Lakes, Lake Superior and Lake Huron, I feel it is important to take part in this debate today.

Business of Supply

The Great Lakes are among Canada's finest treasures and, along with the St. Lawrence River, amount to the original highway used by our ancestors to explore the continent. It would be a shame and a travesty to dismiss this problem and allow these magnificent waters to become more polluted when the solution is so entirely simple.

We must protect the gains that were made as we came to realize the negative effects that industrialization, especially chemicals, were placing on these lakes, which contain a full 21% of the surface fresh water in the world. To do anything less would be short-sighted and cynical.

While it is true that there are beneficial uses for polyethylene microbeads in areas such as biomedical and health research, surely we can find a solution that will make room for those uses without allowing our freshwater resources to be overrun with this pollutant.

Many of us have children and grandchildren, of which I have two, and believe it is incumbent on us to take the long view in this debate for their benefit. We are trusted as stewards. We must remember that we inherited this bounty and are charged with handing it off in similar or even better shape. That is why the more we understand, the more we are compelled to act.

In terms of industry, we can see that there is a willingness to work with government on this issue, which is not always so easily found. Since there are already options that were used in the past, a replacement for microbeads is not a mystery that must be unravelled as much as a solution that can be revisited. It makes so much sense to move past these items of convenience. It will be only through short-sightedness or self-interest that no movement is made on this front as quickly as possible.

Many members are outdoor sports enthusiasts, even on that side of the House. If nothing else, I will appeal to those members about the fish and game they put on their plates. Who among us would want to eat food that has been contaminated by plastics that attract and hold on to additional chemicals in the water? I know I would not.

The answer is simple enough. We can bring Canada to the forefront on this issue by listing microbeads under the Environmental Protection Act and moving on to the next challenge.

• (1325)

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is most interesting, especially considering that we had fish for lunch today.

This government is actively engaged in the protection of the health of Canadians, including with respect to Canada's food sources.

• (1330)

[*Translation*]

It was therefore with great interest that I listened to remarks made by the member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing. I did not believe that her academic training made her more of an expert than me on this subject, but I will give her the benefit of the doubt.

[*English*]

Can the member tell the House if she has studies that demonstrate the presence of microbeads in the fish fillets eaten by Canadians, such as those that we had for lunch today?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carol Hughes: Mr. Speaker, I do not claim to be an expert, but I can say that states and communities have already started banning the use of microbeads. As I was eating the fish today, I wondered if it was contaminated. That is something we have to ask ourselves.

The Conservative member needs to realize that his government is not doing enough to protect people and that it is harming the environment. The Conservatives got rid of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and cut off funding for the Canadian Environmental Network. They have muzzled, fired and intimidated government scientists—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. The member for Ottawa—Orléans on a point of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Royal Galipeau: Mr. Speaker, I asked the member if she has studies that she can give us in order to help us agree with her.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I appreciate the intervention by the hon. member for Ottawa—Orléans. He would likely know, given the time that he has been in the House, that this is not really a point of order.

Questions are posed to hon. members by other hon. members if they wish to pose them. Of course, it is entirely up to the hon. member how she may wish to respond to a question, keeping in mind that it must be pertinent to the subject that is before the House, which I believe it is.

The hon. member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Carol Hughes: Mr. Speaker, I agree with you. The member has been in the House for a long time, and he knows how it works. I already told him that several cities have already started banning the use of this product. This shows that they based their decisions on studies, and I am sure we will know more after looking at this in committee.

As I said, the Conservatives are no friends of the environment.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the New Democrats have chosen to debate an interesting topic today.

I would like to reflect on the importance of public education. A government can implement certain measures in order to help our environment. I talked at great length with respect to a couple of personal ones at the provincial level, and perhaps I will have the opportunity later to expand on that. However, one of the overriding themes we should recognize is that the consumer has a critical role to play here. More than ever, Canadians are very much in tune with our environment and want to take positive steps toward having a better environment.

Business of Supply

My question to the member is related to education and how important it is for government and for individual members to use issues such as this as a way to better educate or inform constituents and Canadians as a whole about how they can contribute to a better environment by not using specific products, as an example, and by explaining what microbeads are. Most Canadians have no idea what a microbead is. Therefore, there is an important role for education in this whole process, as well as government regulation.

Mrs. Carol Hughes: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that the member mentioned the education aspect. That is exactly what we are doing here today: sensitizing people as to how microbeads affect our food chain. The fact that 100 mayors who are part of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, a binational coalition, are calling for action on microbeads by 2015, and that there are states that have started looking at this issue as well, with some having actually banned microbeads, speaks loudly to the intent that we need to not only continue to educate but also to act.

• (1335)

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to support the NDP opposition day motion to designate microbead plastics as toxic under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

As people will know from following the debate, microbeads were originally found in cleansers, and about 10 years ago they moved into a wide variety of personal care products.

What is the problem with them? The government's side does not seem to be convinced that there is any science or evidence that there is a problem here. However, microplastics absorb pollutants in the water, such as DDT, PAH, and PCBs. When those toxins are absorbed by the microplastics, they tend to bioaccumulate in the food chain. That means that they become more concentrated as they work their way up the food chain.

Many colleagues here have talked about the concentrations of these microbead plastics in the Great Lakes. I want to talk about the situation on the west coast, since I represent a southern Vancouver Island riding.

Last year Dr. Peter Ross, who now works at the Vancouver Aquarium, released his research on concentration of microbead plastics on the Pacific coast. He took 34 water samples from the Salish Sea around Vancouver and around Victoria, as well as offshore and at the north end of Vancouver Island. His findings were really quite shocking.

Peter Ross is a much-cited research scientist. He was formerly employed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada as the director of its Pacific Ocean pollution unit. What happened in 2012 was that the Conservative government decided to completely eliminate the capacity of the Canadian federal government to check for pollution on the west coast. Not only was Peter Ross laid off, but all of the other eight members of the west coast ocean pollution unit were laid off as well, meaning that we now have no ability as a federal government to check for the impacts of these microbead plastics that the government members are standing and asking for evidence about. The government eliminated the ability to collect that evidence in 2012, and I think it was deliberate.

Since then the Vancouver Aquarium, which is a private foundation, has hired Peter Ross and is funding its own ocean pollution studies because, as an aquarium that engages in public education, it thinks that this is essential work that somebody has to pick up now that the federal government has dropped the ball.

What did Peter Ross find? It is actually quite shocking.

In the sample that had the highest concentration of these microbead plastics, he found 9,180 particles per cubic metre of water. The lowest he found, over 100 kilometres offshore of Vancouver Island, was 8, so even far offshore, there were still microbead plastics in the ocean. In the Strait of Georgia, the Salish Sea, he found an average of 3,210 particles per cubic metre.

Why am I concerned about that? Let me talk in very simple terms about how it works around Vancouver Island.

Plankton ingest the particles. The plankton are eaten by herring. The herring are eaten by salmon. The salmon are eaten by the orcas. People will know that I have been advocating for two years to have an action plan to protect the southern resident killer whales off of Vancouver Island, so this is part of the problem. Ocean pollution and microbead plastics are part of the problem in trying to ensure the survival of the orcas.

Am I being an alarmist? The Department of Fisheries and Oceans says that there is a 50% chance of extinction of the southern resident killer whales by the end of this century. There is a 50% chance, and that is Fisheries and Oceans' own figure.

Therefore, what are we doing? The government designated the southern resident killer whales as "endangered" in 2003. That was 12 years ago. Then it took both the Liberals and Conservatives until March of 2014 to produce a draft action plan. It was not an action plan, but a draft action plan. Last March, over a year ago, they asked stakeholders who are concerned about the fate of the southern resident killer whales and this problem of pollution, which is one of the large parts of the problem, to make comments. We have heard nothing from the government since then.

It is a year later, and the last statement I got in a letter from the minister said that in the spring of 2015 the government would be talking to those who submitted comments. I know that it does not feel like spring here in Ottawa, but I am from Vancouver Island and we are well into spring there, so I convened my own meeting of the stakeholders last Friday night. I brought them together and asked them what they told the federal government needed to be done and what all of us can do at the local level to try to get started on an action plan. Members will be hearing more about that later.

• (1340)

It was very successful in that we had whale researchers, whale scientists, pollution experts, the Northwest Wildlife Preservation Society, education experts, and the South Vancouver Island Anglers Coalition. We had the Dogwood Initiative. We had the Raincoast Conservation Foundation. Members get the idea of who was in the room.

Business of Supply

Everyone recognizes that we have a crisis with the southern resident killer whales. Everyone, even the federal government, recognizes the crisis. The problem is that we do not get any action. With the Department of the Environment facing cuts of up to 30% in this next budget round, it is very difficult to see how it is going to take the kinds of actions necessary to ensure the survival of the southern resident killer whales.

There has been some good news, and I want to address that, because sometimes people get overly optimistic. We have had three new calves born to southern resident killer whales. One of those, though, did not survive, and the mother, a breeding female, also died. Why did they die? The initial tests on the whales indicated that they starved to death. Why did they starve to death? There is a problem with the food supply in chinook salmon. There is also a problem with microbead plastics in that when they are ingested by marine animals, they think they are full, when they are getting no nutrition. We have a serious and direct connection between microbead plastics and the problems we are facing with southern resident killer whales. Therefore, we focus on the good news of calves being born.

Since 1998, 39 orca calves have been born and survived. That sounds pretty good, except that since 1998, 61 orcas have gone missing or have died. We are now down to a total of 79 southern resident killer whales. As I said, Fisheries and Oceans officials are themselves admitting that there is a 50% chance of the extinction of these iconic beings on the south coast of the island. What can we do about that?

In October 2013, I put a motion before the House to implement a recovery strategy for the southern resident killer whales. The motion said that we need continuing support for research and monitoring programs. That is what is in the federal government's draft plan. I am not arguing with that part. We need to monitor things like the pollution microbead plastics are causing. However, that is all that is in the government's draft plan.

The second part of my plan, which I worked out with stakeholders, was to implement programs to decrease the pollution in the Salish Sea. One of the ways is to eliminate the microbead plastics. This motion applies very directly to the strategy we need to save the southern resident killer whales. In addition to that, we called for a ban on cosmetic pesticide use in home gardens. I was very proud, when I sat on the city council in Esquimalt, before I came here, that we did this in our municipality. We eliminated the cosmetic use of all of those, and what happened was very interesting. The retailers are stopping the stocking of those toxic chemicals people were using on their yards.

One of my favourite things that happened while we were doing this campaign was that my neighbour came over and asked about all the grass that was growing between the bricks. We lived in a townhouse. He said that he thought we would go together and buy some pesticides, and then he started talking slowly and said, "I think I am talking to the wrong person", because I had introduced the motion to get rid of the cosmetic use of pesticides. I said to him that he should be talking to his pregnant wife. I asked if he really wanted to put pesticides down on his driveway that his kid would be crawling on. We had a very good conversation about what people can do themselves.

While we are waiting for the current government to take some action to ban microbead plastics, consumers can have a look at the products they are buying, and they can start favouring those companies that have already phased out the use of microbead plastics.

In my strategy, we also called for an expansion of the chemical registry list to include all of those kinds of pollutants that are harmful to the southern resident killer whales.

As the Speaker knows, I could go on for a long time here, because I think this is very urgent, and this opposition day motion feeds into what I have been trying to get action on from the government.

The last two parts of my strategy dealt with noise levels. Whales are easily disturbed by noise when they are trying to feed, because they use sonar to track their food sources.

The last part deals with measures to improve the chinook stocks, because for some reason, the orcas around southern Vancouver Island are very fussy eaters, and they prefer chinook, and so do most of the people. What we need to do is not fight over the last fish with the whales; we need to make sure that we take action to increase those fish stocks and take action, as with this motion, to make sure that those fish stocks do not include the toxins that bioaccumulate from microbead plastics.

I am very proud to stand in support of this motion today. I see it as a part of what we must do to protect the environmental heritage for all of those to come in Canada, and in particular, to protect against the extinction of southern resident killer whales.

● (1345)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the debate today is an important one, but we have to start focusing on the science. I would like to discuss with my colleague the fact that all the evidence to date does not show a link between the decline of the whale population and microbeads. Is he standing up in the House today suggesting that there is a link between microbeads and the decline in whale populations?

Mr. Randall Garrison: Mr. Speaker, the short answer to that is absolutely. Peter Ross, one of the world-renowned experts, has made that link.

What happens is that the toxins attach themselves to the microbead plastics. They are ingested by plankton. They are eaten by the herring and the salmon, and that makes the southern resident killer whales the most polluted species in the world. What we are calling for are measures to help reduce those pollution levels in the ocean so that these magnificent mammals can survive.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member was very passionate on the issue of killer whales, or orcas, as many Canadians are. We often get the opportunity to watch nature shows. They are beautiful, awesome mammals.

Business of Supply

Does the member believe that the greatest threat to the killer whale or orca today is microbeads, or are there other areas he believes the government could be acting more aggressively on? He made reference to noise. Some have suggested tanker traffic. Are there other issues he believes the government could be doing more on to deal with the issue of our killer whales?

Mr. Randall Garrison: Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear. I am saying that microbead plastics are one of the pollutants that are a threat to southern resident killer whales. They are not the only one. They may not even be the major one. The problem is that the government has eliminated the science unit that could have helped answer those questions. Now we are dependent on private foundations, like the Vancouver Aquarium, to step up and do the work that really is the responsibility of the federal government.

If he looks at the motion I introduced in the House, it has four major parts, and they include reducing the noise and perhaps reducing or redirecting tanker traffic around critical areas for killer whales. They include improving fish stocks, including the chinook. However, there is a holistic point I think members on the other side often miss here, which is that there is one natural system operating, and if we keep putting pollutants in at the low level, it will eventually reach our own species.

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is some attempt on the other side to discredit our motion by questioning the amount of scientific research. One can go into any library and look at a major database. I just pulled up three in *Environmental Pollution*. “The present and future of microplastic pollution in the marine environment” is from February 2014. There is “Contributing to marine pollution by washing your face: micoplastics in facial cleansers”. There are a large number of academic studies online. The problem is, by eliminating the scientists who work for DFO, the government is just relying on its regular rhetoric to try to throw up smoke.

I wonder if my colleague agrees that the absence of science in policy-making on the other side is probably one of the biggest problems we have here in Parliament?

Mr. Randall Garrison: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question and for pointing out the very obvious thing, which is that the science exists. The science is very clear that microbead plastics are part of the problem here. They are not the whole problem, but they are part of the problem.

As I mentioned as I was speaking, we actually issued 10 tips for people at home to stop using products that contribute to these problems, but we cannot do it ourselves. We can make a start at home, but we cannot do it ourselves. Without the government fulfilling its responsibilities to monitor pollution, we have a hard time knowing exactly what is going on and where our most urgent crises are in terms of ocean pollution.

● (1350)

Mr. David Wilks (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak in favour of this motion.

The motion before us gives me the opportunity to highlight that the government has made great investments in protecting the health and safety of Canadians. Since 2006, we have made major investments in the chemicals management plan, an approach that

has made Canada a global leader in the assessment and management of the environmental and health effects of chemicals.

Most recently, in 2011, the government announced renewed funding of \$506 million for the chemicals management plan. I think I should reiterate that, because the opposition keeps saying that we are not investing anything in environmental issues. Again, that is \$506 million for the chemicals management plan. This investment supports the ongoing review of the 4,300 industrial chemicals identified as priorities for assessment.

Before I go any further, I would like to mention that I will be splitting my time with the member for Mississauga South.

We expect to complete this review, that is to say, we expect to have considered the potential health risks or environmental effects of all 4,300 substances by 2020. That is consistent with Canada's commitments in global chemicals management. This plan has been recognized by non-governmental organizations, industrial associations, and international partners as reasonable, balanced, and above all, successful.

Under the chemicals management plan, we are addressing such high-profile substances as BPA and phthalates. Furthermore, in 2007, the government announced the food and consumer safety action plan, which has likewise made Canada a recognized leader in the identification and management of human health risks from products like the food, cosmetics, and consumer products we all use every day.

Our focus is on ensuring that industry takes seriously its responsibilities to actively prevent dangers to human health and safety, on providing for targeted oversight of the marketplace to help us identify emerging health risks early, and on equipping the government to respond quickly when risks are identified.

Under these programs, we have continued to build Canada's cosmetic regulatory system into one of the most stringent and effective systems anywhere in the world. The chemicals management plan has led to the addition of 26 substances to the cosmetic ingredient hot list, which is a list of substances that are prohibited or regulated in cosmetics. The chemicals management plan has also resulted in two existing hot list items being amended to be even more protective of the health of Canadians.

I should add that the hot list is a science-based document that is reviewed and updated as new scientific data becomes available. The hot list serves to keep the cosmetics industry aware of new substances Health Canada considers inappropriate for cosmetic use or that require hazardous labelling.

While Environment Canada is the department charged with understanding and managing the effects chemicals may have on the environment in Canada, Health Canada is the department that evaluates human health impacts. To figure out whether a chemical can have negative effects on the user's health when it is used in a cosmetic, the department carefully considers both the science concerning the potential health effects of the chemical and the ways in which a person may be exposed. For most cosmetics, the main source of exposure is usually through the skin.

Health Canada scientists are constantly reviewing the emerging science and international regulatory actions. At this point, the department does not believe that there is evidence indicating that the kind of plastics used to make microbeads are harmful to human health as they are currently used in cosmetics.

Health Canada will continue to monitor this emerging issue, and certainly if a risk to human health is identified, the department will take action to address it.

•(1355)

Everyone who sells cosmetics in Canada is required to notify Health Canada of each cosmetic sold in the country within 10 days of the first sale. This notification must include details concerning the ingredients. The department must use that information to help to verify that cosmetics sold in Canada meet all of the legislative and regulatory requirements set out in the hot list and the cosmetic regulations.

On top of that, the cosmetic regulations also require manufacturers or importers to disclose all ingredients on the label. People looking to avoid plastic microbeads could check the labels of products that have beads or grit, such as exfoliating scrubs or face and body washes, and then avoid those that contain polyethylene or polypropylene, or any of their ingredients.

While these substances are not always used in microbead form, they are the substances most often used to make microbeads. These substances also have other known uses in cosmetics, including as binding and bulking agents, stabilizers, film formers and skin conditioning agents. If they are in the product, they have to be on the label.

Furthermore, many cosmetic companies have already voluntarily eliminated the use of microbeads in their products or they have already announced that they will be phasing them out of their product lines. With that, I would like to add that I was searching this morning and recognized that Crest, one of the major toothpaste producers, will be eliminating microbeads from its products in 2016. That is one way to recognize that companies themselves are eliminating an ingredient without regulatory requirement.

The requirements that apply to cosmetics provide a high level of safety for Canadian consumers and allows consumers to make informed decisions about the products that they purchase.

Our government, as members can see from my speech, has done a lot to ensure that we put the safety of Canadians first and foremost.

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapuskasing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague mentioned that Crest is eliminating microbeads in its product. It is not about Crest regulating

itself. It is important for the government to ensure that it is protecting all Canadians, not just one company to another.

Does he not think that we should be a leader in this and ensure that microbeads are actually banned from products?

Mr. David Wilks: Mr. Speaker, to answer that question, in my speech I stated that Canada is a global leader in ensuring the health and safety of not only products used by humans but also other products with microbeads. Canada is a world leader and we will continue to show the world that we will ensure the safety of Canadians' well-being,

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): There will be four minutes remaining for questions and comments with the hon. member for Kootenay—Columbia when the House next resumes debate on the question.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

WEEK OF ACTION AGAINST RACISM

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, this week is Quebec's semaine d'action contre le racisme, a week of action to fight racism, and, irony of ironies, next Saturday the Pegida organization, a group that fuels Islamophobia through its Muslim conspiracy theories, is holding a rally in Montreal's Little Maghreb.

In Germany, Angela Merkel has warned her citizens and urged them not to take part in Pegida's rallies, saying that the members of that organization have hearts filled with "prejudice, coldness and hatred".

Yesterday I asked the Prime Minister to join the German Chancellor in condemning the group. Nothing, radio silence. Even though CSIS regards the group as a real security risk, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness and his Prime Minister have not said a word.

Today I rise to once again to ask them to show some courage and take concrete action against this unscrupulous Islamophobia, even though this government's current strategy seems to centre on exploiting people's fear of Muslims.

* * *

•(1400)

[*English*]

CANADIAN FLAG

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, one of my constituents, Mildred McKim of Old Barns, sent me a very old, faded copy of the March 31, 1916 *Calgary News-Telegram*.

The *Telegram* tells the story of her great grand-uncle Mr. T.P. Lowther who, three decades earlier, lived on a farm near Fenwick, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia where he had a grove of spectacular maple trees.

Statements by Members

In 1886, Mr. Lowther was told that Canada was considering the maple leaf as our national symbol, so he picked and pressed a dozen leaves to send to the Government of Canada. Using these leaves as specimens, the government decided that the maple leaf would indeed become the symbol of our nation.

The *Calgary News-Telegram* story, 99 years ago this month, focused on the fact that the maple leaf was reproduced in bronze and was now being worn on the collar of soldiers fighting in Flanders.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our flag, thanks to Mrs. McKim we now know the role that a dozen maple leaves from Cumberland County, Nova Scotia played in the choosing of our national symbol.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this government brags about defending the economy and creating jobs. Unfortunately, all it has to show for its claims is photo ops. The reality on the ground is quite different, including in my riding, La Pointe-de-l'Île.

It is not just the manufacturing sector that is closing its doors. The entire job market is becoming unstable. The jobs that are available are precarious, part-time, low-paying positions. Add to that the growing household debt of families struggling to make ends meet. The alarm has been sounded. Even CIBC has informed us that the employment quality index is at a record low.

An NDP government would work hard to help middle-class families pull through.

* * *

[English]

WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today is World TB Day. On this day in 1882 the bacteria causing TB was discovered by Dr. Robert Koch.

We can be proud of the contributions that Canada has made to combat this horrible disease. The latest information we have says that every year, nine million people are infected with TB, and three million do not even get diagnosed by the health systems.

In Nunavut, the rates of TB are comparable to any sub-Saharan country. As of today, we do not have an effective vaccine against TB.

In many places TB has become a forgotten disease, resulting in new strains being developed. Canada has been a leader in its support to the global fund and TB REACH for their ongoing research to find new solutions.

I thank organizations such as Results Canada and Stop TB that have done great work to highlight this issue. Tonight there will be a reception in the speaker's lounge and I invite my colleagues to join me there.

CBC/RADIO-CANADA

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on March 12 in Toronto, I co-hosted a town hall on arts and culture and the future of the CBC with the honourable members for Toronto Centre and Saint-Laurent—Cartierville

For residents and businesses in my riding of Trinity—Spadina, the CBC is not just a critical and cherished national voice for current affairs and culture, it is also a major employer.

Hundreds of residents came to the AGO for the community forum to defend public broadcasting, but we also heard this: funding cuts to the CBC are undermining the cultural sector of the economy. Layoffs are now triggering job cuts by small suppliers to the CBC. They are also beginning to hurt families, restaurants, hotels and shops in the neighbourhood.

The digital media industry is growing and is now worth close to \$2.5 billion annually in this community. However, the impact of recent changes to the Broadcasting Act by the CRTC and the Conservative government's tampering of Canadian content regulations are now bringing independent film and television work in Toronto to a grinding halt.

The government needs to take action. It must reinvest and reinforce the independence of the CBC and reverse the CRTC decisions that are starting to do serious harm to the digital media, film and television industries in Toronto, and it must do it immediately.

* * *

● (1405)

MATERNAL, NEWBORN AND CHILD HEALTH

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, I had the privilege of visiting Malawi and Zambia. While in Malawi, I had the honour of visiting a project that is being funded by our maternal, newborn and child health initiative.

To visit Mulanje Hospital and then to travel to a rural area to see the on-the-ground action being taken by village leaders and health care workers in Malawi was truly inspiring. The dramatic reduction in mortality of pregnant mothers and newborn children is good news for Malawi.

In Zambia, to listen to the heart-wrenching story of a victim of early and forced marriage would have been totally depressing were it not for the great work of the YWCA in Lusaka, our partners in delivering hope to girls and women in Zambia.

I am proud of these positive initiatives which are the result of the vision and action of our Prime Minister.

*Statements by Members***WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY**

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today we mark World Tuberculosis Day. Tuberculosis still affects over nine million people worldwide. While many in Canada view this as an illness of the past or of somewhere else, the fact is that it continues to affect many in our own country.

First nations and Inuit communities struggle with high rates of TB. This is very much the case in my own constituency in northern Manitoba. In fact, TB rates for indigenous communities are 10 times higher than those in non-indigenous communities and the rates are not decreasing.

In Manitoba, indigenous people make up 65% of all cases, despite being only 14% of the population. In the far north, indigenous people make up almost 100% of all the cases there.

This is not by accident. Determining factors behind the spread of TB are all too familiar: overcrowded housing, mould-infested infrastructure like schools, extreme food insecurity and most fundamentally, poverty. All of these factors are a result of the ongoing colonial approach of the current and prior governments, an approach that has involved systemic underfunding all along the way.

As we mark this day, we call on the federal government to be a global leader in the fight against TB abroad as well as at home.

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HAVEN ON THE QUEENSWAY

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this past Thursday, the Prime Minister was in Toronto to honour this year's recipients of the Prime Minister's Volunteer Awards. Haven on the Queensway, a phenomenal organization from my riding of Etobicoke—Lakeshore, was very deservedly given the Social Innovator Award for Ontario.

Haven on the Queensway is a charitable organization meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the people in Toronto and surrounding communities. Haven offers numerous programs including Clothing Closet, which offers a selection of apparel provided free to those less fortunate in our community; First Care, which offers assistance to pregnant women and parents of newborns; and a food bank. It also offers many other services that focus on recovery and well-being, along with programs that take place outside of its own building such as inmate rehabilitation and mobile Hope With Wheels units that deliver food, water, sleeping bags and words of hope to the homeless in Etobicoke and across Toronto.

Heartfelt congratulations to Bev Hynek, Susan Carbone, Pastor Billy and Roger Berg, along with the countless volunteers who make Haven possible.

* * *

ISLAMIC STATE

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the genocidal activity of ISIL has gone too far for far too long. The desperate situation in Iraq and Syria is daily highlighted by ISIL's targeting of religious minorities. These communities have been integral to the cultural, intellectual and moral heritage of the Middle East for centuries.

Yazidis are being forced to leave their lands and compromise their faith, which is so closely tied to these sacred spaces. ISIL is desecrating mosques, churches have been destroyed, priceless Iraqi and Assyrian artifacts have been looted, and atrocities are common. Children are kidnapped and tortured, women and girls raped, and men brutally murdered, simply because of who they are.

For Canada, this is not just a military mission. We are committed to developing and protecting religious freedoms, especially for those minorities who formed the cultural fabric of this area.

Today, we welcome to Ottawa leaders from many of the affected religious communities. We want them to know that we stand with them in this difficult time of persecution.

* * *

[*Translation*]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE PONTIAC

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the riding of Pontiac has two chambers of commerce—the Maniwaki and Vallée-de-la-Gatineau chamber of commerce and the Pontiac chamber of commerce—and many business groups that do an excellent job. The region's development depends on entrepreneurship, the growth of small and medium-sized businesses and the creation of an environment conducive to the development of its resources.

The Pontiac has a strong entrepreneurial culture, and I would like to congratulate all entrepreneurs in the region. However, Ottawa must do more to help SMEs grow and prosper.

We must encourage development that benefits everyone. We must restore the hiring credit for small business, reduce SMEs' taxes and help business owners access financing that will help their companies grow. We also have to do something about employment insurance. It must be available to seasonal workers.

We can also limit hidden fees on credit card transactions, create a tax credit for hiring and training young people, make it easier to transfer family businesses from parents to children and reduce the paper burden.

We must help our SMEs. The government must do something.

Statements by Members

●(1410)

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Brad Trost (Saskatoon—Humboldt, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government has a strong record of keeping communities safe from dangerous and addictive drugs. Last night we passed the respect for communities act, which will guarantee residents, law enforcement, and community leaders a say when drug injection houses want to open. Unfortunately, the Liberals voted against communities having the support and a say, and the Liberal leader has called for more injection houses to open across Canada.

Drug injection houses allow the use of dangerous and addictive drugs that tear families apart, promote criminal behaviour, and destroy lives. The Liberal leader's pledge to blindly open drug injection houses in communities across Canada is disturbing and it is wrong.

Our Conservative government will continue to support treatment and recovery programs that work to get addicts off drugs, while ensuring that our streets and communities are safe for Canadians and their families.

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NUNAVIK YOUTH HOCKEY

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Nunavik youth hockey development program began in 2006 with the goal of helping young people in the 14 Inuit communities of Nunavik to achieve their full potential through hockey.

The program promotes education, physical activity, and healthy living among youth. It was developed in co-operation with Joé Juneau, a former NHL player.

Nunavik is tremendously proud of this initiative. The young participants also gain a sense of pride and become youth ambassadors.

Each year, the teams from this program, the Nordiks, represent Nunavik at the provincial, national, and international tournaments. Last year, the Nordiks' midget girls won the gold medal at the Kanata Girls Hockey Tournament. The 2014-15 hockey team hopes to repeat this achievement this weekend.

As their MP, I would like to wish this young and talented team of proud Nunavik girls the best of luck. May the program continue to be a success.

* * *

STATUS OF WOMEN

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday this House debated and voted on Bill S-7, the zero tolerance for barbaric cultural practices act.

While our Conservative government is taking a strong stand against harmful barbaric practices, the opposition fails to stand up and take action. The leader of the Liberal Party refuses to even call these acts barbaric. After a thorough debate at second reading, the

opposition did not even want to be seen on the record as voting against such an important piece of legislation.

I am proud of this government for taking steps to strengthen our laws to help to ensure that no young girl or woman in Canada becomes a victim of these barbaric practices. I hope the opposition will stop playing politics and vote on the record in support of Bill S-7.

* * *

ATLANTIC AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Wayne Dickieson for his induction into the Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame.

A resident of North Rustico, P.E.I., Wayne graduated from Macdonald College in 1964 and worked with the P.E.I. department of agriculture in several capacities but, key, as a dairy specialist until his retirement in 2001.

Beyond professional work, he served as registrar-treasurer of the P.E.I. Institute of Agrologists, on the board of Eastern Breeders and EastGen, as secretary-treasurer of the P.E.I. branch of Holstein Canada, and more.

Wayne dedicated himself to the care and showmanship of livestock for well over 40 years, standing as an official judge with Holstein Canada, where he has presided over shows in five provinces, the U.K., Isle of Man, and Colombia, as well as extensive work with Semex Canada in Iran.

He and his wife Flora and son David operate Birkentree Holsteins, which received a Master Breeder award from Holstein Canada in 2006.

We thank Wayne for his life's work in the agricultural community and beyond. Congratulations.

* * *

TELEVISION CHANNELS

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government understands that Canadian families expect choice and fair treatment when it comes to their spending on everyday items and services.

On this side of the House, we believe and have said all along that Canadians should not have to pay for the channels they do not want in order to watch the channels they do want.

In our Speech from the Throne, we promised to provide consumers with more choice in channels, and that is exactly what we have delivered: the ability to unbundle TV cable packages.

Unbundling will let Canadians control not only what they want to watch but also how much they want to spend.

This is just another initiative by our Conservative government that puts consumers first and will help Canadian families make the best decisions on how to spend their hard-earned dollars.

Oral Questions

•(1415)

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, New Democrats have been raising concerns for over a year about sectarian violence in Syria and Iraq and the best way for Canada to help.

Sadly, Canadians have been misled from the start by the Prime Minister. He promised that our troops were being sent to “advise and assist”, not to accompany Iraqi forces. Now, six months later, Canada is conducting air strikes and our forces are exchanging fire on the front lines. Tragically, a member of the Canadian Forces has been killed.

The Prime Minister cannot claim that he wants to prevent atrocities when his planned expansion into Syria will aid and abet Bashar al-Assad. As Paul Heinbecker said, any direct or indirect alliance with Assad would be the “ultimate betrayal of the Syrian innocents”. Meanwhile, Liberals claim to oppose this mission, yet refuse to commit to ending Canada's combat involvement in this war.

In October, Canadians will have a clear choice. Only a vote for the NDP is a vote to end the war and a vote for an effective Canadian role to stop the spread of violent extremism.

* * *

TAXATION

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it should come as no surprise that our Conservative government is the only one that stands up for middle-class Canadian families. Through our low-tax plan for families, our government is helping 100% of families with children to receive the benefits they need so that they can put their hard-earned money toward their own priorities.

We have doubled the children's fitness tax credit, enhanced the universal child care benefit, and now implemented the family tax cut. All parents, including single parents, will benefit from our family tax cut. That is more than 4 million families and more than 7 million parents.

Meanwhile, the Liberals' and the NDP's idea for Canadians is high taxes and high debt. They will take away our benefits and implement a job-killing carbon tax that will raise the price of everything.

The facts are crystal clear. Only our Conservative government can be trusted to keep money in the pockets of Canadian families.

ORAL QUESTIONS*[English]***NATIONAL DEFENCE**

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in October, the Prime Minister said in this House that Canadian Forces would participate in bombing “where—and only where—Canada has the clear support of the government of the country...”.

Why has the Prime Minister completely reversed his position? What is it based on?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are two things.

First of all, increasingly ISIL has sought safe haven refuge in Syria, which we obviously want to prevent. On top of that, our allies have been conducting operations against ISIL in Syria—some of our allies—over the past several months, with some success.

We think those operations are important. We think the mission is important. For the very fact that this mission is so important to the security of this country, we intend to fully contribute.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, ISIL actually started in Syria.

[Translation]

In September, when I explicitly asked the Prime Minister whether our soldiers would be engaging in combat and whether they would be involved in the targeting of air strikes, his answer to Canadians was a resounding no.

Why does the Prime Minister think that Canadians can now trust him, when he betrayed their trust months ago?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the government has done exactly what it said it would do.

That is why the vast majority of Canadians support the mission. The so-called Islamic State represents a threat not only to the region but also to the entire world, including Canada. The actions and words of this organization make it clear that the government must take action, and this government plans to take action. No one understands why the opposition would do nothing to protect Canadians.

•(1420)

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, how many soldiers, in total, will participate in the new mission?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there will be as many air force and special forces members as there are now.

[English]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, what is the Prime Minister's exit strategy?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me once again be very clear about what we are dealing with here.

This group, the so-called Islamic State, represents a direct threat not just to the region. It represents a threat to the world. By word and by deed, it represents a threat to this country. We have made important deployments. Obviously those deployments could easily be changed if that were necessary.

Our goal here is to deal with the threat to this country. We will deal with it as long as it is there. We will not stop dealing with it before that.

Oral Questions

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have ground troops targeting for air strikes. We have aircraft strafing and bombing. We have lost a Canadian soldier behind enemy lines. Our forces are being shot at.

Why does the Prime Minister still deny that our soldiers are in combat?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course, we have air forces that are in combat. We have not had a soldier killed behind enemy lines or, for that matter, killed by enemy forces. That is a reality.

These are the things we are doing to protect this country and to assist the Iraqis in doing a better job of safeguarding their own country.

I do not know what the policy is on the other side. I hear all kinds of reasons why we should provide humanitarian aid, which we are doing. I hear no compelling argument on the other side as to why we should completely ignore the very real threat to this country, which Canadians know exists.

This government understands it, and we are working with the entire international community, which understands it, to deal with it.

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while today's motion asks for an extension of 12 months, the government has said our engagement in Syria and Iraq is for the longer term.

What is the government's planning horizon for our combat role?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, the motion today asks to approve the government's decision to extend the mission for up to 12 months. Obviously, as we go forward, we will continue to evaluate the nature of the threat to this country and the nature of the actions that ourselves and our allies think are necessary.

What we are putting before the House today we believe is the minimum necessary to contribute in a robust way to a threat that is very real for this country and at the same time to try and reinforce the ability of Iraqi forces to carry their own—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Papineau.

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's new motion does not specifically exclude the deployment of Canadian special forces into Syria. Will our special forces be allowed to operate in Syria?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in the motion the government has no intention of having our special forces operate in Syria. They will continue operating in northern Iraq, assisting peshmerga forces there. However, as I made clear earlier, we will extend our air strike campaign against ISIL to include Syrian as well as Iraqi territory.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, can the Prime Minister explain just how Canada will communicate with the Assad regime in order to ensure that Canada's fighter jets will not be targeted by Syria's air defence system?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our allies have been doing this for months now and have been dealing with these difficulties. The reality is that the Assad

regime is not willing, nor does it have the capacity, to combat the Islamic State in Syria.

To prevent the Islamic State from seeking refuge in Syria, we believe it is necessary to work with our allies to mitigate this threat.

● (1425)

[*English*]

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on October 3, the Prime Minister told the House:

We will strike ISIL where—and only where—Canada has the clear support of the government of the country in question.

At present, this is only true in Iraq. If it were to become the case in Syria, then we will participate in air strikes against ISIL in that country also.

Today he said that his government would not be seeking the express consent of the Syrian government for air strikes. Could the Minister of National Defence tell us on what legal basis Canada will be dropping bombs in Syria?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we made it clear that we are not seeking the consent of the Assad regime. However, we have indicated very clearly that ISIL cannot have a safe haven in Syria. Therefore, we will conduct our missions on the same basis as our colleagues, the Americans and our allies, on the basis that ISIL is a threat to our colleagues, our allies and to Canada itself.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the question was, on what legal basis?

One cannot hide behind someone else's actions. This is about Canada. What is the Prime Minister of Canada basing himself on? What is the legal authority for bombing in that country?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as our allies have indicated, they are taking necessary and proportionate military action in Syria on the basis that the Government of Syria is unwilling or unable to prevent ISIL from staging operations and conducting attacks there, including ultimately attacks that include this country as a target. That is the legal basis on which we are proceeding.

The practical basis is that we are determined to do whatever we can to degrade ISIL and to eliminate the threat it poses to this country, and Canadians support us doing that.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we were supposed to advise and assist Iraqi troops for a month. The mission was then expanded to include air strikes for six months with soldiers at the front, on the front line.

Now the Conservatives are talking about an 18-month mission in Iraq and Syria, which would make Canada an ally to Assad. This is really not the role Canada should be playing in solving this crisis.

Oral Questions

Why not do more to support Turkey, our ally, and help the 1.5 million refugees get across the border?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have already done that. In fact, I was in Turkey two years ago to announce our support for Syrian refugees. In Turkey, we were one of the first countries to do so. We are making significant investments to help displaced people and refugees from the crisis in Syria.

We are carrying out this military mission against the so-called Islamic State because it poses a threat to Canada, Canadians and the entire world. We have a duty to act with our allies to confront this threat to global security.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP): Mr. Speaker, another issue on which Canadians are divided is Conservative Bill C-51.

The Prime Minister surely did not foresee that the dissent would spread even into his own ranks, with the Conservative member for Wellington—Halton Hills daring to admit that more parliamentary oversight of intelligence and security activities is needed.

Will other Conservative members wake up and insist that the Prime Minister finally listen to the criticism of his flawed anti-terrorism bill?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my hon. colleague that the oversight model used by our Canadian Security Intelligence Service is the envy of the world because it is so rigorous and provides unlimited access to all the data.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Steven Blaney: Mr. Speaker, I hear the members on the benches mocking an organization that is responsible for keeping Canadians safe. It would be nice to have an opposition party that takes security issues seriously and does not side with people who run around topless in Parliament.

[*English*]

Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we had so many witnesses from so many different backgrounds and so many different political perspectives come before the public safety committee and all of them had the same message: Bill C-51 has serious problems.

Yesterday, former Conservative senator Hugh Segal told us that parliamentary oversight for Canada's security agencies was critical. Now even a Conservative MP, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills, is speaking out publicly saying the same thing, that new powers for our security services demand increased parliamentary oversight.

Why will the minister not listen to Canadians, including his fellow Conservatives, and add safeguards to this dangerous bill?

•(1430)

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let me read a quote about the

review body we have in Canada, of which we can be very proud. It is an “example of the Canadian legal system striking a better balance between the protection of sensitive information and the procedural rights of individuals”. Who said that? It was the Supreme Court of Canada.

When will the NDP join all of those who want to protect Canadians with a bill that would protect the rights and freedoms of Canadians against the international jihadi terrorist threat?

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the question is this. When will the Conservatives listen to their own caucus that is speaking out in opposition to Bill C-51?

The need for better scrutiny is evident, especially when we learn that first nations activists like Pam Palmater and Cindy Blackstock are already being surveilled by the government. Palmater, Grand Chief Phillip and others have been outspoken in their concerns that Bill C-51 will only make the surveillance easier and risks lumping in first nations activists as terrorist threats.

Will the minister do the right thing, listen to these concerns and stop this bad bill?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I hope the member will take the time to read the bill. The member will see that the anti-terrorism act clearly states that activities undermining Canada's security does not include lawful advocacy protests, dissent and artistic expression.

I had the opportunity to go to committee. Why is it that every time we talk about security, opposition members fear for their freedom? There is no liberty without security. That is why we are tabling this important bill. I hope the opposition will listen to the voice of the sister of fallen Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Romeo Saganash (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, NDP): Mr. Speaker, aboriginal communities deserve better than rhetoric from this government. They have legitimate concerns. All too often, I have seen law enforcement agencies deem our protests to be illegal, and that was before we had to worry about being lumped in with terrorists.

Will the minister finally recognize that Bill C-51 is unconstitutional and threatens the rights of aboriginal peoples?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell my colleague that I was proud to serve at Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and help aboriginal communities. I would like to reassure him and ask him to refer to page 3 of the bill, which clearly indicates that activities that undermine the security of Canada do not include:

lawful advocacy, protest, dissent and artistic expression.

Obviously, when we are talking about security, we always reject the argument that our freedoms are threatened. There are several provisions in Bill C-51 regarding review processes and judicial oversight.

Oral Questions

I encourage my colleague to read the bill and support these measures, which will not only protect Canadians but also strengthen our oversight and accountability mechanisms.

* * *

PRIVACY PROTECTION

Ms. Charmaine Borg (Terrebonne—Blainville, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Bill C-51 will also make it easy for information to be shared between 17 government agencies, when the Conservatives cannot even protect the personal information of Canadians from being attacked. Indeed, in 2014, the security of nearly 44,000 Canadians' personal information was compromised by government agencies. That is 35,000 more people than the previous year and an all-time high.

What is the Conservatives' plan to correct the situation and better protect Canadians' personal information?

Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, CPC): Mr. Speaker, once again, Bill C-51 includes provisions not only to comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but also to protect Canadians' privacy. That is why every department involved in exchanging information will have to establish protocols in consultation with the Privacy Commissioner. These mechanisms will protect Canadians and enhance privacy protection.

That being said, I am not surprised. The NDP has systematically and ideologically opposed all our measures ever since we introduced bills to counter terrorism. We will move forward with this.

* * *

●(1435)

[English]

CANADA REVENUE AGENCY

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the government just has not learned any lessons from the staggering number of data breaches. Who was the worst offender in 2014? Step forward, Canada Revenue Agency.

Last year, CRA had more breaches in its department alone than all the other departments combined in 2013. There were 4,000 cases where CRA employees stuffed financial information into envelopes and mailed them to complete strangers. There were 144 cases where information was lost, compromised or stolen.

When Canadians give their personal information to the government, they expect that minister will treat it with respect. Is she planning on getting a handle on these embarrassing privacy breaches that continue to happen under her watch?

Hon. Kerry-Lynne D. Findlay (Minister of National Revenue, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government understands well that Canadians expect their personal information to be protected when dealing with all government departments and agencies.

The CRA has taken concrete measures to strengthen privacy management, as recommended by the PC, by implementing a CRA directorate responsible for CRA policy and assessment procedures, a proactive training program to ensure CRA employees are fully

informed of their duties to protect the privacy of Canadians and by revising security and privacy related processes.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Chrystia Freeland (Toronto Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, a new Conference Board report has exposed our country's shrinking trade presence in Asia. Between 1993 and 2013, Canada's share of exports to Asia dropped by half, falling from the 15th largest exporter in the region to the 23rd. There is a direct link between a strong export sector and good jobs, but we are losing ground in the largest market in the world.

When will the government finally table a budget with a plan to reverse Canada's trade decline and bring better paying jobs to Canadians?

Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, clearly the member has not been following events. We recently brought into force a trade agreement with South Korea, our first in Asia.

What she also forgets is that we have embarked upon the most comprehensive, most ambitious trade agenda Canada has ever seen. Under the Liberal watch, over 13 long, dark years, how many trade agreements did the Liberals get done? Three agreements. We have concluded trade agreements with how many countries? Thirty-eight different countries, and there are many more to come.

We will put our record up against theirs any day.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, young Canadians are struggling to find summer jobs to pay for school, and the Conservatives are actually making it tougher for students.

This year, the Canada summer jobs program will hire fewer than 35,000 students. The Conservatives have cut the number of jobs in the program by almost half. They have also cut the number of jobs in the government's student work experience and co-op programs by almost a third.

When will the Conservatives help struggling youth and reverse these cuts to summer jobs?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member could not be more wrong.

First, on the global scale, we have 1.2 million net new jobs, 85% of them full-time and two-thirds of them in high wage industries.

As it relates to youth, we have helped students by removing the Liberal tax on scholarships and also by bringing in a tax credit to help with the cost of textbooks. We continue to have a summer jobs program that gives employment opportunities to our young people.

Oral Questions

What students are telling us is that when they graduate they want low taxes so they can use their money to pay off their debts and start their families. That is what we are giving them.

Hon. Scott Brison (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for young Canadians to pay taxes, they actually need to have a job. There are 166,000 fewer jobs for young Canadians than before the downturn.

Students need help finding work, not cuts to students jobs programs or more money wasted on the government's self-serving ads. A single ad during the hockey play-offs will cost \$100,000. That \$100,000 could create 32 summer jobs. When will the Conservatives stop wasting money on ads and start helping struggling students find summer work?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, young people in this country understand what the Liberal leader fails to understand, which is that budgets do not balance themselves. Young people understand that they need jobs in high-demand industries. That is precisely why we brought in 500,000 Canada apprenticeship grants, which are helping hundreds of thousands of young people get certified in Red Seal trades for which there are plenty of employers crying out for young people to hire.

We are creating great blue-collar jobs. I know the Liberal elitists over there cannot stand it, but we are going to keep doing it.

* * *

● (1440)

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thousands of temporary foreign workers came to Canada, worked hard, and followed the rules, based on a commitment that they could apply for citizenship. However, now that they have submitted an application for permanent residency, the Conservative government is preparing to kick them out of the country on the basis of an arbitrary deadline.

Will the minister do the right thing and grant an extension to all foreign workers who have submitted an application for permanent residency?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we brought forward this temporary foreign worker reform in order to make sure that Canadians continued to have priority on our job market.

Employers and temporary foreign workers have known about the four-year time limit since 2011. As well, we have been multiplying the pathways for temporary foreign workers to become permanent residents and become permanent parts of our workforce. It has been extraordinarily successful.

The real question is, what is the position of the NDP? Today New Democrats are asking us to keep the door open to large numbers of temporary foreign workers, including low-skilled ones. A couple of weeks ago they were telling us we did not do this reform soon enough. Which is it?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are just asking them to keep their promises.

On April 1, thousands of temporary foreign workers will have to go back home. The Conservative government promised them that they could apply for Canadian citizenship, but the Conservatives arbitrarily went back on their promise. Even workers who have already submitted their application for permanent residence will have to leave the country.

Will the minister right this wrong and allow temporary foreign workers who have already submitted an application to stay in Canada?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our reform is working quite well.

Workers and employers have been aware of the four-year limit since 2011. We have increased the number of avenues to permanent residence for temporary workers and many have used these avenues.

The real question is this: where does the NDP stand and why is not making Canadian workers a priority? The NDP wants this uncertain path toward an uncertain status in Canada to remain open. Canadians will never accept that.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Guy Caron (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives' job creation record is depressing.

For the past 15 months, the job creation rate has not risen above 1%. The Conservatives simply do not have a plan. In contrast, the NDP has a clear plan to boost job creation for small and medium-sized businesses.

Why does the minister not follow our plan instead of sticking to his ineffective policy that is not creating jobs for Canadian families?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the only idea the NDP and the Liberals have come up with on the jobs front is raising taxes for job creators.

We on this side of the House are working to reduce taxes, boost training for in-demand jobs and sign free trade agreements that create demand for our Canadian products.

That is how we created 1.2 million new jobs, 85% of which are full time and two-thirds of which are in well-paid industries.

We will stick to our plan, which is working very well.

*Oral Questions**[English]*

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it seems the Conservatives have broken a new record for job growth, but it is not a record that any government would actually want to have. Job growth has been less than 1% for the last 15 months in a row. That is the worst job growth record outside of a recession in the last 40 years. In fact, job growth has not even kept pace with population. To add to this, Canadians looking for jobs are finding that jobs are of a lower and lower quality.

We know it is hard to get the Minister of Finance into the House to answer questions from time to time, but is he going to actually show up to work and give Canadians a plan, give Canadians a budget that will finally make good-quality job growth a concentration for the government?

● (1445)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP and Liberals' only plan for jobs is to raise taxes on people who create them and on people who work.

Our plan is working. There are ways of measuring it. The first is job growth. We have 1.2 million net new jobs since the recession. There is another way, which is to measure job quality, meaning after-tax, after-inflation wages, and they too are up by 10%.

After-tax income means more money in the pockets of families so that they can raise their kids, spending money and creating jobs for retailers in their community. That is the reason we have 1.2 million net new jobs, and it is the reason we will keep going with a plan that works.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians across the country will remember the tragedy one year ago in Moncton, where a cowardly gunman killed three RCMP members and left families, a community, and a nation in mourning.

Canadian businesses are leading the development of new surveillance and targeting technologies that are essential to Canada's defence, security, and search and rescue. Can the Minister of Industry please update the House on our government's latest investment to keep Canadians safe?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, L-3 Wescam is a company that is based in Burlington, has a footprint in Don Mills, and employs over 800 Canadians with good, well-paying jobs. Better than that, it is building world-class technology that is protecting Canadians.

The first responsibility of the government, before anything else is done, is to make sure that Canadians are safe. This company is building world-class technology that is protecting Canadians at sea, on land, and in the air.

The Moncton example is a perfect one. When Justin Bourque killed those three members of the RCMP and was hiding in the woods, it was this technology that allowed the police forces to find him, safely capture him, arrest him, and put him on trial, and now he has been convicted.

This company is building the next generation of this kind of technology that will keep us safe all across the country. We are proud as a government to support this company, create these jobs, and keep Canadians safe.

* * *

*[Translation]***CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION**

Ms. Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe (Pierrefonds—Dollard, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the most recent statistics show that the percentage of candidates who obtained their citizenship dropped from 79% to 26% between 2000 and 2008. Even worse, the Conservatives' latest citizenship reforms will make obtaining citizenship even more difficult. A former director general at Citizenship and Immigration Canada sounded the alarm this week and identified the repercussions for immigrants and Canadian society.

Welcoming new citizens from all over the world has always been one of our fundamental values. Why are the Conservatives making it more difficult to obtain Canadian citizenship?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are very proud that we acted last year to protect the value of Canadian citizenship, without the support of the NDP, of course.

That has not prevented Canada from having a naturalization rate of 85%, the highest in the world. Last year, the number of new Canadian citizens even exceeded the number of new immigrants. We are proud to be protecting the value of our citizenship, and we are also proud of our new citizens, who meet the criteria for this citizenship and who want to reflect Canadian values.

[English]

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as usual, the minister never lets facts get in his way.

The fact is that Conservatives have repeatedly and systematically made it more difficult for immigrants to become citizens. Instead of nurturing immigrant communities, Conservatives cut services. Instead of better recognizing foreign credentials, they turn a blind eye. Instead of fostering a sense of pride in Canadian citizenship, they are charging hard-pressed newcomers more and more money to apply.

Why are Conservatives making it so difficult for immigrant families to join the Canadian family?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there goes Franz Kafka again. Not a single fact was in that question.

We are proud to have protected the value of Canadian citizenship with legislation last year. We are proud to be the government that has maintained the highest levels of immigration in Canadian history. We are equally proud of those many newcomers to this country who go to the trouble of gaining knowledge about it and have improved their language skills, and, yes, the number of new citizens last year, in 2014, was 261,000, which was 2,000 more than we had in new immigrants.

* * *

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister is failing immigrant families in Canada, and he should be ashamed of himself.

Now, on to other Conservative failures. The Public Interest Advocacy Centre reports what Canadians already know: we pay some of the highest wireless rates in the world, more even than the United States. We pay almost double what French and U.K. consumers pay for home telecom packages.

Why are the Conservatives ignoring consumers? Why are they failing to make life more affordable for Canadians?

● (1450)

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is of course ridiculous. The Wall report that was tabled just last year reported that wireless rates in Canada are down 22% all across this country because of our government's policy.

Our spectrum transfer policy is driving more competition in the wireless sector. The AWS spectrum auction that we announced two weeks ago has resulted now in more than a quarter of all spectrum being in the hands of competitors to the incumbent big three wireless providers.

We can add to that our connecting Canadians program, which is building the final mile for those 6% or 280,000 Canadian households that do not have access to high-speed connectivity. We are making sure that access to the digital world will be available to all Canadians in all regions, whether wireless or wired, well into the future.

[Translation]

Ms. Annick Papillon (Québec, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister is saying one thing, but Canadian consumers know full well that their bills continue to increase.

Canadian consumers pay some of the highest wireless rates in the world. Recent data show that Canadians pay almost double what French and U.K. consumers pay. Rising costs affect not only the middle class, but also those who would like to have these services.

Why is the minister refusing to take action to ensure that Canadians have access to affordable services?

Hon. James Moore (Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is not at all the case. We are taking action and we earmarked funds in the 2014 budget. Today, we are continuing to invest in order to protect, promote and improve services available to Canadians in every region of the country.

This what the Federation of Canadian Municipalities had to say:

Oral Questions

Rural businesses, communities and residents need sufficient bandwidth to participate in today's global economy and today's announcement is good news for Canadians in those regions.

We are taking action, investing and protecting consumers' interests in our increasingly wired world.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Robyn Young, the Canadian Armed Forces reservist who has a misdiagnosed brain tumour, is still waiting for her quality of care review. In the meantime she has no income, she is about to lose her housing, and she is still not receiving the benefits she is entitled to.

Captain Young and her family are at their wits' end. Last month this minister promised to do everything possible to help her. Why has he done nothing? Did he forget his promise, or does he just not care?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of National Defence and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are various false premises in the member's question.

In fact, I have instructed the Canadian Armed Forces to ensure that Ms. Young receives all necessary support, given her medical condition, that she be given favourable consideration with respect to restoration of her reserve status, and that she receive other support as necessary.

I am pleased to say that the Canadian Armed Forces are working with Ms. Young in that regard. It would be inappropriate to comment further on details, given the medical nature of this matter.

* * *

[Translation]

VETERANS

Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Veterans Affairs thinks that \$139 a week is enough compensation for family members who care for veterans. This amount does not take into account the sacrifices made by the families of veterans who are wounded in the line of duty.

Will the minister agree to fair compensation for the efforts made by these families instead of this amount that is not in line with the value of their sacrifices?

[English]

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the family caregiver relief benefit we announced. Sadly, that question shows that the member has not even looked into what this benefit is all about.

For our most seriously injured, it is Veterans Affairs' role to keep that injured man or woman in their home with support, including full-time care paid for by Veterans Affairs Canada. What this relief benefit shows is that we recognize the role of family and loved ones in the care and recuperation of that veteran.

Oral Questions

This is an additional tax-free benefit to allow them an additional level of support or relief throughout the year because we do not want to see caregiver fatigue set in. We respect the role of families. I wish that member would do the research.

* * *

• (1455)

[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, researchers at McGill University have found significant amounts of microbeads in the St. Lawrence River. These microbeads are found in various beauty products and are so small that once they get into the water, they are eaten by aquatic wildlife.

A number of American states have already banned microbeads, and other countries are prepared to follow suit. How does the government plan to fix this serious problem?

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are relying on the science. Environment Canada is initiating a scientific review to assess the effects of microbeads on the environment. It is this expert advice which will inform potential future actions on microbeads. The chemicals management plan brought forth by our government will prioritize microbeads for assessment, which will benefit all Canadians.

Our government supports including the issue of microbeads on the agenda of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment meeting this summer.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, plastic microbeads from cosmetics have been polluting our lakes and rivers, and harming wildlife for decades. Their use has exploded in recent years, with no federal government response. Even the national Canadian cosmetics industry association is calling for federal action. I am glad to hear the Conservatives plan to support our motion and finally act to control these harmful substances.

Given the growing consensus among scientists, municipalities and industry, will the Minister of the Environment or the Minister of Health commit to fast-tracking regulations to control these microbeads?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as I said, it is very important that we rely on the science and this is why Environment Canada is initiating a scientific review to assess the effects of these microbeads on our environment.

We put forth the chemicals management plan that was brought in by our government. We will prioritize microbeads for assessment, which will benefit Canadians and our international friends in the United States.

Our government supports including this issue of microbeads on the agenda of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment meeting this summer.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Wai Young (Vancouver South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today over 400 Canadian firms operate in China, and Canada is immensely enriched by nearly 1.5 million strong Chinese Canadian communities, one of the largest overseas Chinese communities in the world. Canadian exports to China have more than quadrupled since 2003, with two-way trade totalling \$78 billion in 2014 alone.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance update the House on what Canada is doing to make it easier for Canadian firms to trade with and do business in China?

Mr. Andrew Saxton (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Finance launched North America's first renminbi trading hub. This is further evidence of how Canada is deepening both its coastal and commercial ties with China, while helping Canadian businesses grow. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has applauded this announcement, calling it a big deal that will make a real difference on the ground.

Using the renminbi hub will be more efficient for Canadian firms doing business with China. It will now be easier for Canadian firms to make payments and investments in renminbi, thereby lowering the costs, creating jobs, growth and long-term prosperity for Canadians.

* * *

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Hon. Mark Eyking (Sydney—Victoria, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have been meeting with grain farmers across Canada. Their growth and continued success depends on being a competitive supplier on the international markets.

The government claims it wants to give more farmers security and increased access to processing facilities, and guaranteed payment when they sell their product, but the bill the Conservatives tabled last December has not turned a wheel since and farmers are not being consulted.

Why is the Minister of Agriculture stalling on Bill C-48?

Hon. Gerry Ritz (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there is no such thing. Of course, consultations continue, with the Grain Commission leading most of those. Consultations continue on varietal registrations, on putting together the different grade samples and so on, so they are more user friendly for farmers to take advantage of. Western Canadian farmers and grain farmers in Ontario have all been telling me what a great job we have been doing as a government, and they are continuing to succeed.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Hoang Mai (Brossard—La Prairie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives should have learned from the tragedy in Lac-Mégantic, but the statistics are alarming

In 2014 alone, there were 73% more CN train derailments. The preliminary report from the Transportation Safety Board on the accidents near Gogama states that the tank cars that have supposedly been improved since the Lac-Mégantic tragedy are not strong enough. However, the government announced that these unsafe tank cars would be used on our rails for another 10 years.

When will the minister revise her plans and protect the public?

• (1500)

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we want to thank the Transportation Safety Board for its preliminary work on the most recent derailment in Gogama.

With respect to the DOT-111 cars, Transportation Canada has taken great strides. It has announced that they will be phased out. More important, it put an update on the website last week that showed it would be moving ahead on a new standard with the United States, which is a stronger car, and we applaud those efforts as well.

On the particular derailment, it is important to note for the House that Transport Canada has issued a notice to CN with respect to operations in the area and we await its feedback. Most important, we have already, as the government, asked for the parliamentary committee to have CN appear today to answer questions on its operations in this part of the country.

* * *

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Devinder Shory (Calgary Northeast, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government has always considered the safety and security of Canadians a priority and it is a responsibility we take very seriously. This extends to those who keep our communities moving, our transit workers.

There are roughly 2,000 reported assaults on public transit employees every year in Canada. Many of these attacks occur while the vehicle is in motion, putting public safety at grave risk. This is unacceptable.

Could the minister tell the House how our government has taken a stand against such unacceptable behaviour?

Hon. Tim Uppal (Minister of State (Multiculturalism), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his hard work in this place.

Thanks to a private member's bill that passed with the backing of our Conservative government, public transit operators, including taxi cab drivers, now have added legal protection from assaults. With the passing of Bill S-221, a court will have to consider it an aggravating circumstance for the purpose of sentencing if the victim of an assault is a public transit operator engaged in the performance of his or her duties. This means that finally those who commit threats or assaults

on our transit operators will face a penalty that matches the seriousness of the crime.

Canadians can trust our government to hold criminals to account and to stand up for hard-working Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

PENSIONS

Mr. André Bellavance (Richmond—Arthabaska, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, a new study has confirmed that the government is heading in the wrong direction by thinking that it can solve the sustainability problem of the old age security program by raising the retirement age to 67. The Université de Montréal study shows that that decision will only increase inequalities between seniors, forcing greater dependence on private savings, which will have a negative effect on the quality of life of poorer seniors.

Is the Minister of Finance prepared to correct the situation by focusing more on tax incentives and work time management to keep people working longer, as the FADOQ network has been calling for, rather than making poor people even poorer?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Democratic Reform, CPC): Mr. Speaker, of course, we want to help pensioners and anyone who chooses to work longer.

First of all, we lowered taxes for all seniors. By being able to keep more of their money, seniors have more freedom and choices regarding their finances. Second, we created the tax-free savings account, which allows seniors, and in fact all Canadians, to save money and get better returns without paying income tax to the federal government. This gives seniors independence and allows them to invest for the future.

* * *

[English]

SEALING INDUSTRY

Mr. Scott Andrews (Avalon, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, a woman from Newfoundland and Labrador recently had her sealskin purse confiscated by U.S. Customs and Border Protection because seals are on the endangered species list in the United States. She is now forced to pay a \$250 fine for trying to take her purse across the border.

Seal products are becoming more and more popular. It has been documented and scientifically proven that the northwest harp seal population is healthy and abundant and is not an endangered species.

Could the minister tell the House the last time the government has had discussions with American officials with regards to having seals removed from the endangered species list in the United States? Will the minister ask the United States to remove this ban immediately?

Business of Supply

Hon. Gail Shea (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government remains rock solid in its support for the Canadian seal industry. We know that sealing provides much needed jobs and economic opportunities for Canadians in coastal communities and right across the north. That is why we challenged the EU's unfair ban on Canadian seal products and why we are working with the EU to come into compliance with the results of our appeal.

We will continue to stand up for rural communities and for sealers.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1505)

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF MICROBEADS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to speak to the issue of microbeads and, in particular, I would like to focus on their effects in the Great Lakes.

As members know, my beautiful riding of Mississauga South borders on Lake Ontario. I want to talk about a very important issue, in fact, there is almost nothing more vital to our country than fresh, clean and healthy water. The Great Lakes account for 20% of the world's fresh surface water supply, so they are among the most important water resources in the world.

Mississauga is home to one of the best salmon and trout fisheries in North America. Enthusiasts travel to south Mississauga from afar in search of memorable fishing experiences. Charters are booked by the hundreds each year to fish for rainbow trout, brown trout, lake trout, chinook salmon and coho salmon.

Atlantic salmon returned recently to the Credit River, which also runs through the beautiful riding of Mississauga South and into Lake Ontario. Atlantic salmon returned recently to spawn for the first time in over 100 years, thanks to the efforts of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, as well as the provincial ministry of natural resources, plus over 40 sponsors and partners for their commitment to “bring back the salmon”, the colloquial name for the Lake Ontario Atlantic salmon restoration program, which is an important part of the natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Ontario Basin.

Frankly, people are often shocked to learn that some of the best salmon fishing in North America takes place in Lake Ontario. In fact, Atlantic salmon are an important part of the natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Ontario basin. Their ancestors migrated from salt water in the post-glacial period and adapted to fresh water inland. They require cool fast waters and clean habitat. That is exactly what we are talking about today. Their survival is solid evidence that a healthy aquatic system is needed.

Before I talk specifically about the Great Lakes, I want to talk about the Credit Valley Conservation authority which works very hard in the Peel region. In fact, it produced a report last year on this issue of microbeads and microplastics. I know it was mentioned earlier today in this debate that microplastics were small pieces of

plastic ranging from 0.355 millimetres to 5 millimetres in diameter. They do not biodegrade, which is the problem. They are typically found in consumer care products such as facial scrubs, body washes and toothpaste.

However, it is important to note that few waste water facilities have the capability to filter these products, which is why we find them in our water systems. Consumers use about 2.4 milligrams of microplastics per person per day, which translates to an estimated 28.9 tonnes of plastic that could potentially enter the Great Lakes every year, given that there are 33 million residents of the Great Lakes Basin.

Research has been done by Dr. Sherri A. Mason of the State University of New York. She first brought this issue vis-à-vis the Great Lakes to our attention in the year 2012, noting that there was a range of 600 to 1.1 million plastic particles per square kilometre in Lake Ontario. Fish, those salmon I talked about, waterfowl and other wildlife can ingest plastic. This affects the health of fish and can even result in their death.

● (1510)

Microplastics can themselves absorb and transport other pollutants such as carcinogens and flame retardants, which can then be ingested by nearby wildlife or even humans.

I guess we could say the studies are in a new phase, and other jurisdictions have taken some action. We have heard that as well earlier in the debate. To continue with Dr. Mason's studies, I will say that she began by studying lakes Huron, Erie, and Superior, finding the greatest concentration of these microplastics in Lake Erie. She continued her research and expanded the study into Lake Ontario, expecting to find microplastics in greater concentrations because Lake Erie flows into Lake Ontario. The preliminary results suggested that Lake Ontario did have the highest concentration of microplastics, with up to 1.1 million plastic particles per square kilometre. To date, only one other plastics study has been conducted in the Great Lakes, and to my knowledge, no similar studies have been conducted in the tributaries to the Great Lakes.

Therefore, the environmental impacts are great. Fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife can ingest plastics, which can cause internal blockage, dehydration, and even death. Ecosystem and habitat destruction is possible due to microplastic accumulation on beach shores. Of course we have beaches in south Mississauga, so the concentrations can be found there. Microplastics can themselves absorb and transport other pollutants, which wildlife and humans could possibly ingest, and they then bioaccumulate in the food chain.

Business of Supply

I will also mention that some companies have promised to voluntarily phase out these plastic beads. Others have yet to make that commitment and want to see more research. We have heard that Illinois is the only state that has banned them; possibly New Jersey may have followed suit as well.

I can assure members that Canada and our environment minister are devoted to this issue, understand the importance of it, and will continue to collaborate with other jurisdictions, such as U.S. states, on this issue.

With my remaining time, I would like to talk about the water quality of the Great Lakes in particular, because our government has not only worked with the United States but has really accomplished a lot in this area.

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, in particular, played an important role guiding actions between the two countries. It focuses on maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the Great Lakes on both sides of the border. I know that the Great Lakes Fishery Commission also does a great job on this as well.

This binational Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, first established in 1972, was amended in 2012 to include strengthened measures to anticipate, prevent, and comprehensively address issues impacting water quality and the aquatic ecosystem health of the lakes. Over the past 40 years, levels of priority toxic substances in the Great Lakes have declined by as much as 98%. We are talking about PCBs, mercury, alkyl-lead, as well as dioxins, furans, and HCBs.

I know I need to wrap up. I am trying to prioritize, but it is difficult. I will try to mention what I wanted to say in an answer to one of the questions.

I am thankful for the opportunity to speak in support of this important bill, which would protect our environment and water systems. I look forward to questions.

● (1515)

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the presentation on this important issue by my colleague across the way.

During questions and answers earlier today, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment talked about this being dealt with through some sort of federal-provincial meeting that might take place this summer. I am not sure why that is necessary.

I would ask this for the member. Why do the Conservatives not simply use the priority substances list provisions of the CEPA 1999 to deal with this issue?

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Mr. Speaker, I would like to reiterate what the parliamentary secretary said earlier about this meeting. We certainly have every confidence that the environment ministers meeting will delve into this important issue and will deal with it in a way that they think is best. I know the issue is taken seriously by the current Minister of the Environment, as well as this government's previous minister of the environment, who also spoke to the motion today.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a question in regard to the whole issue of microbeads and the fact that industry as a whole also has a responsibility here. A good corporation takes our environment into consideration.

Canadians as a whole are far more sensitive today than they ever have been in regard to what they can do to improve the conditions of our environment. Equally, I want to emphasize how important it is that corporations as a whole should have a better understanding and be more sensitive to consumer needs but also take into consideration the environment.

Maybe the member could provide some comment in terms of what she feels or what is the government's perspective in terms of corporate responsibility in dealing with environmental issues, and this is a good example of that.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Mr. Speaker, I would agree, as I believe this government would, that corporate responsibility in matters related to the environment is indeed very important. In fact, I am always delighted to hear about partnerships and collaborations between organizations like, for example, the Credit Valley Conservation, the Region of Peel, and corporate sponsors. There are many, as well as even the province's ministry of natural resources. OPG has worked with a number of companies in the Mississauga area, for example, because we all understand the importance of keeping our environment clean and healthy for future generations.

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of serving with the member for Mississauga South on the environment committee, and I had the honour of visiting her constituency a couple of times.

A project that was funded in her constituency, the Rattray Marsh project, was funded under our recreational fisheries conservation partnerships program. Our study of the Great Lakes water quality, spearheaded by the member for Mississauga South, showed that the value of wetlands was enormous in terms of improving water quality and conserving biodiversity.

I would like the member to talk about the Rattray Marsh project in her constituency, which is contributing so greatly to improving fish-spawning habitat and water quality in her area.

● (1520)

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for that question and for coming to south Mississauga to visit the Rattray Marsh and to see the work that is being done. In particular, I would like to thank the member for his promotion and support of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' recreational fisheries conservation partnerships fund, which has helped, I believe twice now, to fund the wetland rehabilitation efforts in the Rattray Marsh.

This is an area at the very heart of my riding, a treasure located on Lake Ontario, where constituents and other people come from far and wide to enjoy our beautiful surroundings and nature, and where families gather and people ride their bikes and take walks. In fact, I even had the honour and pleasure of hosting our Minister of State for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, who also came to see some of the wonderful work that is being done there.

Business of Supply

In addition to that fund, the national wetland conservation fund also funded some wetland rehabilitation, because it is very important to have that clean water right in our own neighbourhoods and even in urban areas.

Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honour to rise and speak to this motion that is so important to the people whom I represent. On an island in the Pacific, we are increasingly inundated with microplastics. Microbeads are a problem that could be regulated if the government had any interest in showing the leadership available to it under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

I will talk about the legislative provisions that are available in a moment. I would first like to address why this is such an important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia. I am grateful to be able to do so.

I want to speak first from the perspective of the Pacific Ocean. About a month ago on *CBC News*, there was a story that caused a lot of consternation in my part of the world. It said that new research showed tiny pieces of plastic could pose a major threat to the waters off the B.C. coast.

An article last year in a learned journal, *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, was written by a number of scientists, including Dr. Peter Ross. Dr. Ross is one of those people who no longer work for the federal government. He is one of the long list of scientists who no longer work there since this government came to power. Nevertheless, he managed to get an important position with the Vancouver Aquarium. He has collaborated with colleagues at the University of Victoria, like Jean-Pierre Desforges and Moira Galbraith, who works as well for the Institute of Ocean Sciences in DFO, and Neil Dangerfield. The article documents for the first time the problem of microplastics in the Pacific marine environment. It is very disturbing.

They found that microplastic contamination exists not just off the built environment but also up in Queen Charlotte Sound, in an area with little or no industry and very little population. That shows this problem is spreading. I will come back to their analysis in a moment.

Very simply, Dr. Ross has said:

[We've] seen these impact with photos of animals with their stomachs filled with plastics that are visible to the human eye. What we have not seen are pictures of the microscopic creatures at the bottom of the food chain and what plastics might be found in their bellies.

He says that microplastics are being ingested by a critical aquatic food source, namely plankton, and killing them. He goes on to say:

It fills up the stomach and they feel like they've got a belly full of food, but they have no nutrition associated with that. It's simply a bit of plastic.

This is obviously of great concern to the scientists in our part of the world and to people who worry about the future of our aquatic environment. We have always known there were harmful effects from large plastic debris, but what they have looked at are the effects on the biota of such things as ingestion, as pointed out by Dr. Ross, leaching of toxic additives, and desorption of persistent bioaccumulative and toxic substances. Small plastic fragments are available to

organisms at the base of the food web, as they may be the same size range as natural food items.

The impact, in short, is completely unknown. It has spread up to Queen Charlotte Sound, based on, for example, wave actions that might have caused that, and there is only speculation as to what the ultimate impact may be. That is why scientists are blowing the whistle and saying the government has to act. We hear today that ministers may talk about it at a federal-provincial conference.

When people ask me what an NDP government would do, if ever it had the power to change the environmental legislation in the face of what this government has done, I answer very simply. We would simply restore the excellent legislation that this government has repealed, and unlike what the Liberals did, we would enforce that legislation. A good example is the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, which is what this motion wishes to trigger, if the House were to agree to deal with the microbead problem.

The Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999, makes pollution prevention the cornerstone of national efforts to reduce toxic substances in the environment. It is an amazing piece of legislation. It is very lengthy at 356 sections long, with 12 parts and 6 schedules, and it has a very ambitious agenda, including addressing toxic substances, such as the one at issue with microbeads.

• (1525)

Under section 64 of that act is the ability to deal with toxic substances. Toxic substances are defined by risk as follows:

...a substance is toxic if it is entering or may enter the environment in a quantity or concentration or under conditions that (a) have or may have an immediate or long-term harmful effect on the environment or its biological diversity; (b) constitute or may constitute a danger to the environment...

It is all there. All one has to do is work with the scientific committee and put it on the scheduled list of toxic substances, and we can deal with it. We can deal with it in an aggressive fashion. We think that is what is required. It is really quite simple. If it is a toxic substance, the government can regulate it, phase it out, or eliminate it.

It is so ironic that we have the industry wishing to take action, acknowledging that there is a problem and crying out for some federal leadership, and what we hear from the other side is that maybe we should have a conference to talk about it with the provinces. Why? They have already scheduled dozens of substances. Industry itself acknowledges that it is a problem. Scientists are saying that we have to deal with it, and the federal government sits around and talks about maybe having a chitchat with the provinces.

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That is not leadership, and it is not using the tools that are available to the government under this legislation, which is excellent, would that there were people enforcing it, but that is another subject; would that they had not got rid of so many scientists, but that is another problem. Some of them still work. They could not get jobs in government. They were turfed out of the DFO but nevertheless found jobs elsewhere to continue their research, because they care about our natural environment, in sharp, contradistinction to the government of the day.

Putting it on the priority substances list, as has been done many times before, would allow these toxic substances, such as microbeads, to be regulated. It is not rocket science. The fact that it has been done so far in other contexts suggests that it can be done here as well.

Why is the government not acting? I have no idea. The Body Shop says that it should. Unilever says that it should. Johnson & Johnson started to phase out polyethylene microbeads, because they are not necessary. We used to use natural products to do what these microbeads do, but now they have been replaced with these other products, which are wreaking havoc, apparently, in the environment. There is Colgate-Palmolive. All of these industries understand the problem and are taking action.

South of the border, as was indicated earlier, Illinois has banned the production, manufacture, or sale of personal care products containing these plastic microbeads.

We are lucky in Canada. Unlike the United States, which seems to be doing this on a state-by-state basis, we have a statute. We have a great statute. We have a 21st-century statute called the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999. It is alive and well, but forgotten, it seems, by the Conservative government.

Action is very simple. We have so many complicated issues involving the natural environment. Would that they all had such simple solutions as this.

The Minister of the Environment apparently wrote, in response to a number of mayors in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, that the government has concerns about microbeads. In a letter dated January 3, apparently she wrote that as part of the scientific review process, it would consider “proposing the issue of microplastics as a possible priority issue to be addressed”. Hooray. The Conservatives recognize that it can be done. That is a good step.

However, she then went on and said, rather strangely, that “this is a plastic waste management/disposal issue” and should be referred to the province. No, it should not. One wonders where the Conservatives get their legal advice. It is right there in the statute. She seems to get it, but then seems to suggest, as the government is today, that we should just give it to a little conference to talk about.

We have the tools. We have a need. We should just get on with the job and deal with the pressing problem of microbeads in our environment.

• (1530)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member put a great deal of emphasis on maybe not consulting or working with the provinces.

I have a specific example for him. A number of years ago, Jon Gerrard was the leader of the Liberal Party in Manitoba. I had a press conference about phosphates in dishwasher soap. We honestly felt that this was something the province could ban. We pushed the government on it. What ended up happening was that there was a great deal of discussion, from what I understand, in the provinces and Ottawa, which led, just a few years ago, to the banning of phosphates in residential dishwasher soap.

I wonder if the member might want to comment on the fact that the provinces have a role. In his comments he made reference to the one American state that has already banned microbeads. If the federal government chooses not to act, there are certain things the provinces themselves can do if they are prepared to take the initiative. Quite often, if a provincial jurisdiction takes the initiative, it fills the gap until we get stronger national leadership.

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, phosphates are one example of products that can be dealt with by both the federal and provincial governments, to some degree.

Of course, most environmental water contaminants go across borders. My friend would be aware of that in the context of the Manitoba-Ontario border and the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border. That is why the government decided at the federal level, after much federal-provincial deliberation, to pass the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

Very sensitive as it is to federal-provincial issues, it talks very much throughout the statute about the need for consultation with the provinces and recognition of the limited national concern power of the federal government to do the job.

The problem I have with provincial action in this context, although I am pleased that the B.C. NDP has a petition on this issue asking for action, is that in a coastal environment, which is so much a federally regulated area, it is very difficult to see how a province could play a meaningful role. Cross-provincial is a problem. Coastal is a problem. Therefore, I think we need to address this nationally.

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I paid attention quite carefully to my hon. colleague's great speech on this issue. I know that in his riding, this is a major concern.

In our own self-interest as a species, in our own kind of egotism, we tend to forget that we share this planet and this universe with a lot more creatures than we sometimes keep in mind. Some of those are endangered. It is my understanding that the orca whale is endangered.

What impact do these plastics have on this endangered species? Once a species is gone, it is gone. Irreparable damage is done to creation.

I wonder whether my hon. colleague would have something to say about how these plastics put a certain species at risk.

Business of Supply

● (1535)

Mr. Murray Rankin: Mr. Speaker, that is why I opened my speech with a reference to plankton.

Plankton may seem a long way from orcas, but of course, it is not. If the little creatures that are plankton are finding themselves ingesting microbeads and are unable to survive, and invertebrates that perhaps eat them are also ingesting slightly larger microplastics, and they cannot survive, it does not take a scientist to understand that the species at the top of the ladder will have difficulty with survival. That is what causes concern.

There has been talk of the decreasing population of seagulls on the west coast. People do not know why that is the case. Of course, there is speculation that microbeads may be the problem there as well. The whole web of life is being affected at such a micro level. However, I think it is all interconnected. Canadians understand now that the environment is all interconnected in the web of life. That is why the government should stand up and take the action available to it under its legislation.

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand today to speak about this important issue. I want to thank my colleague, the member for Victoria, for sharing his time with me. I also want to say how proud I am of my colleague, the member for Halifax, who sponsored this motion, which reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of the House, microbeads in consumer products entering the environment could have serious harmful effects, and therefore the government should take immediate measures to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed by the government under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

That is a fairly clear-cut request and is something the government could move on. The evidence is clear on the damage of these products. The industry itself is recognizing the fact that these are harmful additions to our oceans, lakes, and the environment and is doing something about. Far be it for the government, I would suggest, not to recognize that it is time for it to take, in this case, frankly, not major action but a significant action in terms of doing something about the environment.

I must say, though, that I am not overly optimistic. We have heard the government say that representatives are going to attend an international conference to talk about it and see what happens. For the past nearly four years, I have seen the government gut the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and the habitat protection provisions of the Fisheries Act. I have seen it cut hundreds of millions of dollars from agencies like the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the science section of the Department of the Environment, money that funds the science that would determine the links and the impact on the environment and marine habitat and the consequences of that for all of us.

I have seen this, and it continues to cause me concern. The latest are the regulatory changes the government made to the Fisheries Act to allow salmon farmers to use toxic substances in the conduct of their sea farming. We know that there is already a company on the east coast that has faced serious charges. It was forced to pay significant fines for having done just that. Now the government has weakened its ability to protect that marine habitat and the environment so that the operators of open net-pen salmon farms

can continue to conduct their business with almost no regard for the traditional fishery and fish habitat.

I must say that while I am standing to speak in support of this motion and am encouraging the government to follow through and do something about this, in light of the overwhelming evidence, I am nonetheless somewhat pessimistic about it.

When it comes to our lakes, rivers, and oceans, there are a lot of things that need to be done to change or reduce effects on those environments, whether it be lowering water levels, rising temperatures, or acidification. We may be, in fact, only able to mitigate the effects. In the case of microbeads and the impact they have on the environment, we can simply stop their production. We can stop them at their source and not have to deal with the introduction of these substances into our environment.

● (1540)

Let us be clear. We know that plastic is a serious concern and a contaminant in the world's oceans. Especially problematic are small manufactured pieces of plastic called microbeads, which are used in consumer products such as facial cleansers, shower gels and toothpastes. These microbeads persist in the environment and cause harm to fish and other wildlife.

There have been outrageous concentrations of microbeads found in the waters of the Great Lakes, particularly downstream from major cities in the sediment of the St. Lawrence River. As has been said by others, microplastics and microbeads can be consumed by a variety of marine life, including fish harvested for human consumption. They can cause asphyxiation or a blockage in organs in marine animals. Chemical pollutants tend to accumulate and persist on microplastics, which could be transferred to animals ingesting the plastic. What we need to do is simply stop them at the source.

I had the opportunity to attend a conference in Victoria a few weeks ago on ocean acidification. Our oceans are becoming more acidic as a result of the increased CO₂ in the air. The oceans are just simply not able to handle it. We need to act. We need to recognize that climate change and CO₂ emissions are a problem and do something to control that. However, we also need to recognize that is having a real impact on our oceans and our marine environment. Again, I refer to the fact that there was skepticism being expressed at this conference among scientists and researchers about the failure of the federal government to recognize that these are problems and that it needs to step up the funding for science and research and begin to take steps in order to mitigate the impacts.

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As I indicated earlier, the New Democrats want to take immediate action to designate microbead plastics as toxic under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, which would then allow the federal government to regulate, phase out or eliminate the use of microbeads in products used or produced in Canada. We want a clean and healthy environment. It is something that we have stood and talked about in this House for many years, but certainly for the last four years as we have witnessed the onslaught, the attack, on our environment and our marine environment by the current Conservative government.

We want to ensure the ongoing recreational fishery and the safety of fish and other aquatic species. I fail to understand the contradictions that exist within the government caucus opposite. On the one hand it works to promote the recreational fishery and tries to ensure that the private sector non-profit groups that are out there working on cleaning up the habitat to promote the recreational fishery are supported yet dealing with an environmental issue like this, it is hesitant. It fails to follow through. It is those kinds of contradictions that perplex many of us here, and certainly many Canadians in Dartmouth—Cole Harbour and beyond.

It is time we acted. It is time the government moved forward. We know what the problems and the impacts are. We know what the solution is. We need to join with the 21 companies around the world producing or carrying cosmetic and personal care products that have made some level of commitment to phase out microbeads in those products or stop carrying products containing them.

It seems that the government will only take leadership from the private sector. Here is an example. It is time the government got on board and started doing something about a serious problem affecting our environment.

• (1545)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the motion that has been brought forward by the NDP today.

We have heard a lot about the oceans, but it is important that we recognize that there are many waterways throughout our great nation where there is a great deal of concern. I speak of Red River, which goes through the heart of Winnipeg, the Assiniboine, which hooks into the Red River and of course Lake Winnipeg. We do need to be more sensitive to what is actually going into our waterways.

I would ask the member just to give his thoughts on the previous question I had put forward. It is important where the national government can demonstrate leadership on an issue such as this that we act where we can. That is one of the reasons why we brought in the law back in 1999, to allow the federal government to take action where it can to do what Canadians want, and that is to do as much as possible to protect our environment and our waterways. He might want to provide comment on that.

Mr. Robert Chisholm: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. The question was to the point that government must do what it can do, and I would suggest that is absolutely the case. The member is right. We are not just talking about the ocean. We are talking about lakes and rivers, waterways, marshes. We are talking about a marine habitat. We are talking about our environment.

This is an opportunity for the government responsible for the Environmental Protection Act of 1999 to do something, to designate this as a toxic substance, to list it and provide the opportunity for the private sector then to look to that as its guide and begin to take action to correct this problem. It is time to act. It is time for the federal government to act.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my colleague is right. It is urgent that we take action.

Nevertheless, that is not at all what we are seeing from the Conservatives. On January 3, Minister Aglukkaq answered a letter from the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. I would remind the hon. member that using the name of a minister or another member is not permitted.

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, you are absolutely right and I sincerely apologize.

In a letter dated January 3, the Minister of the Environment said that she would consider, and I quote, “proposing the issue of microplastics as a possible priority issue to be addressed”.

That could not be less clear. Does my colleague agree that urgent action is needed? The NDP has shown initiative. Once again, we are being proactive and constructive. We want to build a better Canada. That is what we are going to do in the coming months and after the election.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks about the urgent need for action and the way the Conservatives are dragging their feet on this issue.

• (1550)

[*English*]

Mr. Robert Chisholm: Mr. Speaker, my colleague is absolutely right. We have seen so many examples of the federal government withdrawing from areas that it should take responsibility for, whether it be in terms of the availability of pharmaceuticals, whether it be in terms of the environment, whether it be with respect to provisions in the Fisheries Act.

The current Conservative federal government has shown repeatedly that if it can dump something off to the provinces, it will do that. If the Conservatives can, they will duck responsibility for a particular issue. Anything that has to do with health care, for example, even though the federal government is responsible for the Canada Health Act and it funds health care in this country, the Conservatives will not take any responsibility for. They leave it up to the provinces.

This is another case where the government has the authority and responsibility under legislation and the Conservatives have an opportunity to move. We are encouraging them, through this motion, for once to show some action and leadership and do something to protect our environment for generations.

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member of Parliament for Kitchener—Conestoga.

Business of Supply

I am very pleased to speak in favour of the motion before us and about this very important issue. Our government is committed to protecting the environment and agrees that the issue of microplastics, including microbeads, warrants action.

I would like to deal with some of the comments from the NDP opposite. I always find it quite amusing when NDP members talk about the environment. Their concern for the environment is a phony concern. All that the NDP members care about is process, process, process. What they really want to do is stop all natural resource development.

For example, take the oil sands, which NDP members are avowed enemies of. It is interesting that 575,000 Canadian families make their income from the oil sands. The NDP must be very pleased now with the drop in oil prices and the difficulties that the oil sands are having now. That must make that side very happy.

In terms of our changes to the Fisheries Act, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, it is no wonder that the NDP is upset about it. This reduces duplication but at the same time improves environmental protection.

One of the things NDP members never talk about is Canada's environmental indicators. They shy away all the time from talking about what is actually happening in the environment, quantifying and measuring environmental change.

The track record of this government since we came to office in 2006 environmentally has been exemplary. Almost every single environmental indicator in this country, from air quality to water quality and biodiversity, has improved under our watch.

The member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour sneers at the recreational fishery and the anglers of this country, all four million of them, hundreds of groups across the country who engage in aquatic and water quality conservation work. I was very pleased that our government created the recreational fisheries conservation partnerships program. It is partnering with almost 400 groups across the country to improve water quality and fish habitat in this country. It is a program that the other side strongly opposed. The results of this program are there for everybody to see. So far, almost two million square metres of habitat have been improved and 2,000 kilometres of aquatic shoreline have been conserved.

The member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour talked about the state of the fishery and the oceans. Interestingly, under our watch, in 2010 and 2014, the largest sockeye salmon runs up the Fraser River in history occurred. That was under this government's watch.

Also, recently, our government announced the national conservation plan with \$50 million for wetland conservation, \$50 million for upland habitat conservation and \$100 million for the natural areas conservation program. What the other side does not appreciate is how ecosystems are all linked, and this kind of wetland and habitat and natural area conservation programming has very important water quality improvement implications. Again, when I think of my own province, the \$18 million being spent on Lake Winnipeg is doing great things in terms of improving the water quality.

Is the job done? Of course not, but because our government focuses on real and measurable environmental results as opposed to

process, process, process that only enriches the environmental lawyers, we are seeing measurable improvements in our environment.

Regarding the issue at hand, I think we have to make a distinction between microplastics and microbeads, because both are relevant to today's discussion.

Microplastics are tiny pieces of plastic and they can be deliberately manufactured to be very small like microbeads typically used in personal care products. However, microplastics can also result from the breakdown over time of larger pieces of plastics. Various types of microplastics can be of concern to the environment and may require a different solution depending on their source. Environment Canada is one of the many players looking at the broader issue of microplastics.

A release of debris in the marine environment, which can include plastics and microplastics, falls under the responsibility of the federal government. Land-based sources of marine debris, including microplastics, fall under the shared jurisdictions of municipal, provincial, territorial and federal governments. This is why our government works with other levels of government.

● (1555)

Industries that manufacture products and packaging that use or create microplastics are also engaged in addressing this issue. It is critical that we prevent plastic from getting into the environment in the first place.

In 2014, federal, provincial, and territorial ministers of the environment, through the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, CCME, adopted a vision for waste management to improve Canada's record on reducing and recycling waste. One of the key areas of shared action is to implement extended producer responsibility programs, or EPRs, to support the diversion of products from landfills. EPR allocates some of the waste management responsibility to the producer, manufacturer, or first importer of the product.

The CCME 2009 Canada-wide action plan for EPR has resulted in most provincial governments having regulated EPR programs for a wide range of products, including plastic packaging. There are residential packaging and printed paper recycling programs and beverage container diversion programs that operate in almost every province and territory across Canada, and efforts are under way to address plastic bags as well.

From a global perspective, Canada is not considered to be a significant contributor to marine plastic waste. However, it is important that all members of the international community take steps to prevent plastics from entering the marine environment. To this end, in Canada, disposal at sea without a permit from a ship, aircraft, or platform of any substance, including plastics, is generally prohibited under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

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Canada also participates in a number of international initiatives geared toward better protection of the marine environment. The personal care industry is also taking steps that will assist in dealing with this issue, and some multinational companies have publicly announced their intention to phase out the use of microbeads in personal care products. I encourage Canadian companies to continue to explore opportunities to reduce or eliminate the use of microbeads.

In the plastics industry sector, a voluntary initiative called Operation Clean Sweep is geared to prevent plastic pellet losses to the environment. In Canada, 95 plastics companies have already signed on to this international initiative, which is promoted in Canada by the Canadian Plastics Industry Association. Again, I encourage all Canadian plastic sector companies to join the program.

Although efforts are already under way that will help address the issue of microplastics, this government certainly agrees that more can be done, and Environment Canada will continue to monitor scientific developments, including those of several Canadian universities and other research organizations.

For example, work is under way with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a U.S. federal agency that is focused on the condition of the oceans and the atmosphere. In May 2014, the agency released a Great Lakes land-based marine debris action plan in which both plastics and microplastics are targeted, and the University of Waterloo and the University of Western Ontario are both working with American universities on this particular issue. This scientific information will assist the department in better understanding the issue and determining whether more actions are required.

Canada will continue to participate in various international fora that are examining the issue of microplastics, including the International Maritime Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme. The goal of all of these multinational efforts is to better understand concerns regarding microplastics so that governments can put forward the appropriate measures where required.

Our government's chemicals management plan will prioritize microbeads for assessment. The chemicals management plan represents a major undertaking by this or any government. Few other countries can boast of such a major systematic effort to evaluate and address chemicals within their borders. It is a legacy that our government is proud to stand on, and one that will benefit Canadians for generations to come.

I appreciate this opportunity to respond to concerns and to outline some of the actions that have already been put in place to address issues surrounding microplastics. Naturally, there is more work to be done, and we are committed to continuing to follow this issue closely and to take action.

• (1600)

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague. He is a good friend of mine, a very astute biologist, and has a great track record when it comes to all things of the environment, but the question I have for him today is more about the choice of the NDP to have this topic brought before the House.

The Parliament of Canada runs at an operating cost of about \$500 million a year. The House of Commons sits about 137 days a year, which is about \$3.7 million a day when we factor in the cost of running the House on that basis. On the issue before the House today, there is virtually unanimous consent among all MPs. I would doubt that even a single MP is going to vote against this motion. This is an issue that could have easily been handled by writing letters to the minister, bringing it up at committee, even just making an odd complaint in the public media.

I do not have one letter in my constituency office on this subject. I do not understand what all the fuss is about in an election year, with an election six months away. When we have all kinds of issues facing our country, such as international jihadist terrorism threats, other economic issues, and so on, the issue that the NDP brings up is microplastics.

It is clear that my colleague understands this issue. Does he have any confidence in the NDP's ability to judge what is important in this country?

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Mr. Speaker, I have no confidence in the NDP to do anything.

My colleague from Wetaskiwin, a biologist himself and a former park warden, is a man whose entire career has been in environmental conservation. He is a real environmentalist, as opposed to the other kind.

When I listened to the speeches across the way, I heard very little that dealt with this particular issue, and my colleague is exactly right: we all agree with the motion. The motion makes sense, and in my own speech I said I agree with it, but the speeches of New Democrats were all over the map. They are just trying to use this issue as a political football, and they really simply do not care.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we are not asking them to agree. We are asking them to do something other than wait for the reactions of American universities, international organizations, the European Union, Japan, China and basically everyone. We are always the last to respond when there is a threat, except when it comes to threats that the government has invented and is trying to impose on people.

As to whether it is a waste of time to discuss this subject, it is important to remember that it is a government's job to solve problems. Right now, we are facing an extremely serious environmental problem and we want to do something other than just talk about it. We want the Conservatives to do something to resolve the problem, as other countries have done. We do not have to wait and see what the United States is going to do about DOT-111 cars or wait to hear the opinions of everyone on the planet. We are here to govern. That is why it is called a government. The Conservatives will have to wake up one day.

• (1605)

[*English*]

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question because it gives me a chance to make the point yet again that under our watch, almost all of Canada's environmental indicators have actually improved.

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If the other side actually did the math on the environment, which they never do because it is all emotional political rhetoric, they would see that our environment is undergoing constant and measurable improvement under this government.

The national conservation plan is spending hundreds of millions of dollars, and already some of it has been spent with clear and measurable results. It demonstrates to Canadians that this government not only cares about the environment but is actually doing something about it and generating measurable results.

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to this very important issue. Previous speakers on this side of the House have already indicated that we will be supporting the motion.

The Great Lakes together form the largest area of fresh surface water on the planet. They are a direct source of drinking water for millions of Canadians and home to thousands of species. I am very grateful in my area to the Grand River Conservation Authority for the key initiatives that it has put forward. They have been instrumental in improving the quality of our Great Lakes water.

The Great Lakes support fishing, shipping, and tourism, industries that inject billions of dollars annually into the Canadian economy. Singly and combined, they represent a fundamental ecosystem that sustains a rich diversity of plants and animals. The health of the Great Lakes is absolutely vital to the well-being of Canadians and of our American neighbours to the south.

However, the Great Lakes ecosystem, which provides us with so much in so many ways, faces a number of stresses. Population growth, agricultural intensification, the introduction of aquatic invasive species, changing climatic conditions, urban and agricultural runoff, municipal waste water effluents, and industrial discharges all threaten the Great Lakes and require sustained and focused attention.

I am honoured to serve currently at the chair of the Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development. Just recently we completed a study on Great Lakes water quality, and it was interesting to note the number of areas that have improved. Yes, we have more work to do, but there is certainly great work being done.

The good news is that the Great Lakes are getting the attention needed from this government. Provincial and municipal governments, community groups, researchers, and concerned citizens are all combining to improve the state of our Great Lakes as well.

The Government of Canada has a comprehensive approach to promote clean water for all Canadians. We recognize the importance of taking action, resolving existing environmental issues, and anticipating and preventing future problems. The government understands that our success depends on effective collaboration within Canada and between Canada and the United States.

Indeed, the Government of Canada has been working with the United States government to address critical environmental health issues through the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement for more than 40 years. Our collaborative work through this agreement focuses on developing the necessary programs, technologies, and

other measures to better understand the Great Lakes ecosystem and to restore and protect water quality and ecosystem health.

In 2012 Canada and the United States amended the agreement to include the identification of science priorities and the development and implementation of research monitoring programs. Environment Canada is playing a key role in protecting and restoring the Great Lakes, and these new priorities reflect the valuable work of the department.

At this time I would like to share with members of the House some of the research, monitoring, and other activities administered by Environment Canada that are contributing toward work on the Great Lakes. These include national science programs supporting the chemicals management plan, freshwater quality monitoring, Canadian environmental sustainability indicators, climate change adaptation, clean air regulatory agenda, and genomics.

The department is conducting world-class research to address the complex environmental problems that affect the Great Lakes and their watersheds as well as the St. Lawrence River and coastal water into which the Great Lakes flow. The government's research delivers new knowledge and technological innovation that continue to advance remediation and the delisting of both Canadian and American areas of concern.

Federal scientists also conduct research to better understand the role of human and environmental factors that are contributing to changes in water quality and water quantity in the Great Lakes. For example, leading-edge research is under way on factors affecting toxic and harmful algae blooms and near-shore algae growth. This new research is providing new techniques to provide insight into when and where toxic algae are likely to occur in the Great Lakes.

Under the Government of Canada's Great Lakes nutrient initiative, Environment Canada is monitoring the contribution of phosphorus to Lake Erie from Canadian sources. This is a means of understanding and managing the nutrients connected with algae growth. This science and related work will support establishing binational phosphorus reduction targets and the development of phosphorus reduction strategies and action plans.

● (1610)

Perhaps most important, Environment Canada scientists are conducting scientific inquiries and modelling to create new knowledge tools and approaches for tackling the multiple and interacting stressors affecting the Great Lakes and their aquatic life.

Business of Supply

In addition, the department also engages in unique research and monitoring activities under the freshwater quality monitoring initiative in the Great Lakes Basin, the Great Lakes action plan and the Great Lakes nutrient initiative tailored specifically for the Great Lakes Basin. The freshwater quality and monitoring initiative focuses on evaluating water quality trends and identifying emerging issues.

With its partners across government and non-government organizations, Environment Canada focuses and coordinates monitoring activities based on science priorities identified for each Great Lake. While the monitoring of the Great Lakes began in the 1960s, since 1974, Environment Canada has conducted surveillance using standardized scientific approaches. Monitoring occurs so that the water quality in each lake is monitored regularly.

In addition to the work in Lake Erie, Environment Canada is conducting scientific research in Lake Simcoe and southeastern Georgian Bay under the Lake Simcoe/South-eastern Georgian Bay clean-up fund.

Two current research projects are directed at improving water quality in South-eastern Georgian Bay. This includes investigating the factors, controlling algae levels and oxygen conditions in the bay, and determining the sources of phosphorous entering the ground-water and being discharged by the Nottawasaga River into the bay.

The Government of Canada is committed to funding scientific research and surveillance that benefits Canadians. We are investing in Canada's future competitiveness and growth, while moving ahead toward the larger goal of protecting and restoring the Great Lakes. It is taking the necessary actions to resolve challenges that already exist and focusing on anticipating and preventing new environmental problems.

As I have illustrated in detail, I am proud of our government living up to its commitment to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech.

I have the honour to sit on the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, which he chairs. Although we may not agree on everything, we still manage to get along a little.

We did do a study on the Great Lakes, but the study was unfortunately limited to certain aspects. For example, we were not able to talk about climate change or water levels and temperatures, which also have a huge impact on the Great Lakes.

We also started talking about the effect of microbeads as part of the study on the Great Lakes, and I am pleased that we are discussing this topic today, since it is serious and important.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, which represents some 30 cities, sent a letter to the Minister of the Environment, whom I will not name as I mistakenly did earlier. On January 3, the minister replied and said that the government would consider "proposing the issue of microplastics as a possible priority issue to be addressed".

That makes no sense. If the government takes this seriously, it needs to take action immediately. It should not wait for the opposition to do it.

We are proactive and constructive on this side, and we proposed this initiative. Now, it is up to the Conservatives to take action and support our motion.

[*English*]

Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, I enjoy working with my colleague on the environment committee. He is right that we do not always agree on every issue, but I know we both have the same interest, which is to improve the environment of our country. It is good to work together with him.

One of the things that has been mentioned many times throughout the day today is the fact that our government has instituted the chemicals management plan. Rather than simply repeat this fact over and over, I have chosen to focus on some of the collaborative ways our government is working with other levels of government and with industry.

In fact, we heard today that 95 different companies have agreed voluntarily to eliminate the use of these microplastics in their products. Two of the companies that I have quite a bit of interest in and previous co-operation with in my days of dentistry are Crest and Colgate. I know Colgate has already eliminated this product from its products. Crest hopes to produce a microbead-free product by March of 2016.

While the opposition may not understand the fact that it is important to work in collaboration and co-operation with industry and other levels of government to get things done, we on this side want to work collaboratively and find the synergy that comes from working together.

● (1615)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on the member's answer to a question I put to other members of his caucus. It is related to industry responsibility in dealing with products that have an impact on the environment.

No matter where we look in the country, Canadians are far more sensitive to the environment than they ever have been. There is a growing appetite for government to demonstrate a leadership role, where it can, in protecting the environment.

The question I have for the member is related to the answer he just gave, which is the important role that industry and the private sector have when it comes to responsibility. That bar continues to be raised, and justifiably so. However, government also has to ensure that not only do we give credit to where there is good corporate or industry behaviour, but also recognize that we need to work with some companies and look at ways in which they could be nudged, shoved or encouraged to look at the consequences of some of the products.

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Mr. Harold Albrecht: Mr. Speaker, earlier I referenced two of the companies with which I have had close contact. In my area of Kitchener, we have the Grand River Conservation Authority. This group works collaboratively with industry partners and with farmers who farm along the Grand River watershed, which feeds into the Great Lakes. The initiative they are taking is incredible in terms of the improvement of our water in our streams and rivers and eventually in our lake.

We have to work collaboratively. Yes, industry has a role to play, but the experience I have had to this point in my nine years here it is that they are eager to work with us if we show the leadership they expect of our government.

I cannot be more proud of the environmental record of this government since we took office in 2006.

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Beaches—East York.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague from Halifax for her work on the environment and for this motion calling for microbeads to be added to the list of toxic substances by the federal government under the Environmental Protection Act.

This is a very important motion. As an MP from the Toronto area, my riding borders Lake Ontario. I take this very seriously, as do constituents in our area and people who live around the Great Lakes. However, this also affects people who live around the world.

We know about plastic contaminant in our world's oceans, but we are talking about the very small manufactured pieces of plastic called microbeads, which are particularly problematic. They are used in many consumer products, such as facial cleansers, shower gels and toothpaste.

These microbeads persist in the environment and are very susceptible to soaking up toxins in the water around them. They cause harm to fish and other wildlife. They are found in very high concentrations in the Great Lakes waters, particularly downstream from major cities.

Toronto is a major city in Canada, and my riding is on the border of the Humber River, which is one of the major watersheds in our area. Toxins come down that river and into Lake Ontario. In fact, a U.S. study found the highest concentration of microbeads among the Great Lakes in the Lake Ontario area. This is of great concern to everyone in the city of Toronto.

Microbeads are consumed by a variety of marine life, fish harvested for human consumption, and it can also cause asphyxiation and blockages of organs in marine animals. Chemical pollutants tend to accumulate and persist in microplastics, which could then transfer these chemicals to the animals ingesting the plastic.

Microbeads have been patented for use since 1972, but it was not until the 1990s when manufacturers began to replace them with more natural alternatives, such as ground almonds, oatmeal and sea salt. Therefore, since alternatives do exist, plastic microbeads are not an essential ingredient in cosmetics or personal care products.

Water treatment facilities are unable to filter these microbeads because they are very small and buoyant. Upgrading treatment plants

would be prohibitively costly and there are no known ways to effectively remove these microplastics after they make their way into the environment. Therefore, the simplest solution, and the one that the New Democrats support, is reducing the problem at its source and preventing it by getting rid of these microbeads.

The New Democrats want the government to take immediate action and designate microbeads as toxic under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. This would then allow the federal government to regulate, phase out or eliminate the use of microbeads used or produced in Canada.

I am sure all of us in the House want a clean and healthy environment. We want to ensure the ongoing recreational fishery in Canada and the safety of fish and other aquatic species.

The motion before us would also make a level playing field for businesses that want to do the right thing but feel they are at a competitive disadvantage if their competitors do not take the same action. The government can clearly take the competition out of this situation by regulating microbeads and identifying them as a toxin. We want the government to assume its federal responsibility as a steward of our environment and take action to eliminate these toxins. I know this might be difficult for the Conservatives, because their record on the environment has not been a good one.

• (1620)

They have shut down the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy; they withdrew funding for the Canadian Environmental Network; they have muzzled, fired, or intimidated government scientists; they have cut nearly \$3 billion and up to 5,000 jobs from science-based departments, including scientific research positions and programs for monitoring air, water, and wildlife; they have gutted environmental assessments and legislation, and greased the wheels for big resource development, with little environmental oversight or scrutiny.

In my own area, the Humber River was removed from protection from the Navigation Protection Act. This is something that, working with my colleague from York South—Weston, we are trying to redress and get that protection reinstated because the Humber River is essential to so much of the watershed in the region north of Toronto and in the Toronto area. It is something we take very seriously.

The environment minister, so far, has responded by saying that this is a waste management issue that should be dealt with by the province. We hope that the federal government will look seriously at this and take a different stance. We need to get microbeads put on the toxic list for protection under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, and to define a substance as toxic:

a substance is toxic if it is entering or may enter the environment in a quantity or concentration or under conditions that

(a) have or may have an immediate or longterm harmful effect on the environment or its biological diversity;

(b) constitute or may constitute a danger to the environment on which life depends; or

(c) constitute or may constitute a danger in Canada to human life or health.

New Democrats believe that these microbeads certainly qualify.

Under CEPA, both the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health are responsible for developing a list of substances that must be assessed in a timely manner to determine if they are toxic or capable of becoming toxic. This list is known as the Priority Substances List. It is a requirement that substances on this list be assessed within five years of their addition to the list. Environment Canada and Health Canada have a legal obligation to determine if these PSL substances are toxic, as defined in section 64 of the act. Toxic is defined in terms of risks that substances pose to the environment or to human health.

I should say that some businesses have been trying to do their part. While Environmental Defence has been calling on the federal government to ban microbeads in consumer products, at least 21 companies around the world that produce or carry cosmetics and personal care products have made some level of commitment to phase out microbeads in their products and not carry products containing them. This is significant.

Internationally, the Dutch parliament is promoting a European ban on microplastics in cosmetics and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, a binational coalition of more than 100 mayors, is calling on companies to phase out the use of microbeads by 2015.

Companies are already doing this or have done this. The Body Shop said:

As part of our commitment to help save the planet, we'll be phasing out microbeads from all of our products by 2015.

Johnson & Johnson said:

We've already begun the phase out of polyethylene microbeads in our personal care products. We have stopped developing new products containing plastic microbeads.

Colgate-Palmolive is working on this as well. A number of businesses are doing this.

In summary, Canadians have a right to expect that basic health protection is the utmost priority of their federal government, preventing microbeads from getting into our major water sources, when that is so easily preventable. Remember that the Great Lakes are the biggest freshwater body in the world and these essential sources of our fresh water need to be kept free and clear of toxins. This seems like a basic responsibility of the federal government, and I would expect every colleague in the House to do his or her part and support this motion. Let us get rid of these toxins, clean up our Great Lakes, and protect the people of Canada.

• (1625)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member's comments. It is worth noting that it appears all members of the House are supportive of today's motion.

It is important to recognize that in the United States already one state has declared microbeads out of bounds. It will no longer have microbeads. Even in Canada, the Province of Ontario is actually looking at this, from what I understand. A private member's bill has the government looking at banning microbeads.

There is a sense of a need for us to demonstrate some leadership at the national level. We do not necessarily have to recreate the wheel.

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One of the ways we could do that is to possibly work with other stakeholders, in particular our provinces. I cite the Province of Ontario as an example. We could see if there is something we could do that would have a more rapid response in dealing with this issue. Would the member not agree with that?

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, actually, a couple of states have already banned the use of microbeads, and a third one has a proposal in the works.

Of course the role of the federal government is to work with all provinces and territories, as well as first nations, but we have a clear role to play at the federal level. It is within the purview of the federal government to define toxins. Under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, we have the responsibility to do that.

In this case, it seems pretty clear this is a toxin, and it could easily be avoided, prevented at the source through substitution. That makes the most sense. I believe and hope there is support from all parties in the House for the notion that the federal government should take action and identify microbeads as a toxin.

• (1630)

[*Translation*]

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

A Conservative member surprised me earlier, if the Conservatives can still surprise anyone. He criticized us for lacking judgment, because we decided to talk about this extremely important issue. This is just further proof positive of how little importance the Conservatives attach to the environment, since the issue we are discussing today pertains to the environment and something that is harmful to our environment.

Does my colleague see this as an important issue and does she think that protecting the environment should be a priority for the Canadian government?

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

I hope the Conservatives will support this motion. So far, they have sent a clear message that they are fighting a war on the environment. They did away with the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and eliminated funding to the Canadian Environmental Network. They have slashed nearly \$3 billion and cut about 5,000 jobs from science-based departments. They have stripped environmental protections. I could go on and on. That is worse than doing nothing. I hope they will change their tune today and really start looking at the environment as a priority. The environment needs to be a priority, not only for us, but also for the government and all Canadians.

[*English*]

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, the environment; the hon. member for Ahuntsic, public security; and the hon. member for Montcalm, pensions.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Beaches—East York.

Business of Supply

Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise here today to speak to the motion that my NDP colleague, the member for Halifax, has put forward calling on the government to take immediate action to designate microbead plastics as toxic under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

Such a designation would allow the federal government to regulate, phase out, or eliminate the use of microbeads in products used or produced in Canada. Certainly, federal government action needs to be taken on this issue.

The timing of this motion is particularly appropriate as we are just two days past World Water Day, a day set aside to recognize that clean water is essential to life. This ought to be obvious to all of us, and we ought to see this simple truth reflected in the way we govern—that is, through the conservation and protection of our water resources.

However, it is clearly not obvious to the Conservative government. It is clearly not reflected in the way it governs. The Conservative government has in fact dismantled Canada's environmental protection laws, allowing polluters to threaten our fresh water supply, with no regard for the cost this will impose on us and those who follow us.

Let me say proudly, at the outset of my comments on this particular motion, that the NDP believes that Canada needs a national water policy to secure the principle of water as a human right and as a public trust. We need comprehensive strategies to protect our water resources, mechanisms to monitor and assess the implementation of these plans, and accountability mechanisms to ensure that water is indeed protected.

This issue of protecting our water resources, and this motion before us specifically, is an issue of particular relevance to my riding of Beaches—East York. My riding sits on the shore of Lake Ontario, which is of course one of our Great Lakes. There are many threats to our Great Lakes, many things we must do to help preserve them. They represent, after all, 95% of North America's surface fresh water and 20% of the world's surface fresh water.

Let me take a moment to thank my NDP colleague, the member for Windsor West, who serves as our party's Great Lakes critic, for all his advocacy for the health of our Great Lakes and, by extension, for all of us who live in the Great Lakes basin.

The Great Lakes have a unique biodiversity and are home to more than 3,500 species of animals and plants. They have for centuries, and continue today, to sit at the heart of the North American economy, providing livelihoods and sustenance to millions.

It is the case that concentrations of microplastics in the Great Lakes, particularly downstream from major cities and in the sediments of the St. Lawrence River, rival the highest concentrations of microplastics collected from anywhere around the world.

There is reason for this, of course. More than 40 million people live on or near the shores of these lakes, and microbeads are small, manufactured plastic beads that are used in consumer products such as facial cleansers, shower gels, and toothpaste. These are products we use every day, oblivious to the environmental consequences of

these beads they contain and the environmental damage that these beads cause when they make their way into our water systems, rivers, lakes, and oceans.

Microplastics are consumed by a variety of marine life, including fish harvested for human consumption. They can cause asphyxiation or blockage of organs in marine animals. Chemical pollutants tend to accumulate and persist on microplastics. Microplastics absorb water pollutants and toxins, including PCBs. When ingested by wildlife, the toxins bioaccumulate and become more concentrated as they move up our food chain.

The motion before us proposes to put microbeads on the toxic list under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. This would then allow the federal government to regulate, phase out, or eliminate the use of microbeads in products used or produced in Canada. Section 64 of the act defines a substance as toxic if it is entering or may enter the environment in a quantity or concentration or under conditions that:

- (i) have or may have an immediate or long-term harmful effect on the environment or its biological diversity, (ii) constitute or may constitute a danger to the environment on which human life depends, or (iii) constitute or may constitute a danger in Canada to human life or health.

• (1635)

Clearly, microbeads meet this test.

Under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, both the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health are responsible for developing a list of substances that must be assessed in a timely manner to determine if they are toxic or are capable of becoming toxic. This list is known as the priority substances list. The act requires that substances on this list be assessed within five years of their addition to the list. Environment Canada and Health Canada have a legal obligation to then determine if these substances are toxic as defined in section 64 of the act. Toxic is defined in terms of the risks these substances pose to the environment or to human health, as described earlier.

Around the world, this kind of action has already been taken or is under way. At least 21 companies and major corporations around the world that produce or carry cosmetics and personal care products containing microbeads have made some level of commitment to eliminate or phase out microbeads in their products. Colgate-Palmolive, Johnson & Johnson, Lush cosmetics, and The Body Shop are all part of the initiative to get microbeads out of their products and out of our water systems.

Governments are responding as well. The Dutch parliament is promoting a European ban on microplastics in cosmetics. Just next door, in the United States, Illinois banned the production, manufacture, or sale of personal care products containing plastic microbeads as recently as June 2014. State legislatures in California, Minnesota, New York, and Ohio are considering following suit. The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, a binational coalition of over 100 mayors, is calling on companies to phase out the use of microbeads by this year, 2015. The mayor of Thunder Bay and the chair of that initiative said:

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The Cities Initiative calls on regulators and companies to do the right thing and get microplastics out of personal care products and out of the Great Lakes.

We hope for all-party support for this motion. I would acknowledge some positive noises from my colleagues across the way in their response to this motion. There is, of course, nothing in the history and conduct of the Conservative government to date to suggest that its prospects are good. This is a government at war with the environment, as evidenced by its degradation and/or elimination of legislation intended to protect and conserve our environment, most obviously, in this circumstance and context, the Navigable Waters Protection Act.

It is evidenced by an unrelenting assault on science-based government departments, which includes cuts of over \$3 billion and 5,000 jobs from science-based departments, including scientific research positions and programs for monitoring air, water, and wildlife. It is evidenced by the government's unrelenting attack on Canadians and Canadian organizations that are active advocates for our environment through such initiatives as its Canada Revenue Agency audits on environmental NGOs and the inclusion of matters related to the environment and environmental infrastructure under Bill C-51, the anti-terrorism act.

Finally, it is evidenced by the government's insistence that the economy and the environment stand in opposition to one another, as if the health, sustainability, conservation, and protection of our environment have nothing to do with the quality of our human life on this earth and on our standard of living. On this very topic, there is the historical reluctance to deal with this issue, and indeed, there is the denial of the issue by the Minister of the Environment, who, in response to a letter from the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, suggested that this is a waste management and disposal issue that should be referred to the provinces.

However, we live in hope. Canadians live in hope of swift action on this issue so that the issue of microbeads can be dealt with for the benefit of our environment and all life that shares in that environment and depends on it for its survival.

• (1640)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to be a little more specific with this question than I was with the previous one. We have at least one province I am aware of, the province of Ontario, that actually has private member's legislation dealing with the possibility of banning microbeads.

Would the member agree that the federal government could demonstrate some leadership on this by working with the provinces to see if we could move more quickly than what is being suggested in the opposition motion we are debating today?

Mr. Matthew Kellway: Mr. Speaker, certainly I would not have an issue with the federal government dealing directly with the provinces to bring about swifter action on this issue than might be available under the proposal here on the Canadian Environmental Protection Act but not to the exclusion of what we are proposing to do today, which is to have microbeads listed as toxins in the list under that act.

Clearly, as set out in that piece of legislation, the federal government has jurisdiction over this issue. It is an issue that crosses subnational jurisdictions and international boundaries. It is most

appropriate for the federal government to take action on this issue and to respond under the processes set out under the existing legislation and to respond as swiftly as it can to deal with this issue.

• (1645)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague on his important speech on reducing this source of pollution by banning the use of microbeads. As my colleague said, 21 companies around the world have already banned the use of microbeads.

Why is it important that the federal government legislate to create a framework to ban companies from using microbeads?

[*English*]

Mr. Matthew Kellway: Mr. Speaker, all plaudits to the 21 companies we have referenced in our speeches today, which have voluntarily taken action on this issue, recognizing the environmental degradation that flows from having microbeads, quite unnecessarily, as part of their personal care products, toothpastes, et cetera.

I think the motion today will encourage others, hopefully, to follow in our footsteps. However, most certainly it will even the playing field for companies that produce products that use microbeads presently so that in the future, no one in Canada will either carry or engage in the manufacture of products that include microbeads.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean Rousseau (Compton—Stanstead, NDP): Mr. Speaker, simply put, this motion calls for courage on the part of the government. We want to save our ecosystems for future generations. We know that the Conservatives would much rather help out their friends in the petrochemical industry, because a discussion about plastic is really a discussion about the petroleum industry.

However, we are just asking them to make a bit of an effort because there are other options. It is possible to show political courage and take the initiative to eliminate things that are bad for the environment.

Can my colleague tell us why it is so important to pass this motion not just for oceans, but for all ecosystems? All it takes to change things is leadership and courage.

[*English*]

Mr. Matthew Kellway: Mr. Speaker, my colleague may be quite correct that it takes political leadership and courage for the Conservative government to approve this motion. It is very easy to overreach in one's environmental proposals with a government like this that is at war with the environment. However, this should be a very easy thing to do. In fact, it is what one might call low-hanging fruit. Microbeads are entirely unnecessary in the products in which they are used, and there is ample evidence of the environmental degradation that flows from the use of these microplastics.

One would hope that because there is eminent sense to this, because these are unnecessary in the products in which they are used, that this should be a simple, practical thing we can accomplish in the House today.

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Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise today to address this particular motion. As we have heard, there is a great deal of support for the motion put forward. I would anticipate, as others have anticipated, that the motion will receive unanimous support from all members of the House. That is what I am expecting, having listened to what people have had to say about it.

Canadians want us to be more progressive in our approach to the environment. Listening to a number of the speeches, from all sides of the House, I had some thoughts with regard to what could have been, if I can put it that way.

One member of the New Democratic Party spent a great deal of time talking about killer whales, or orcas, and how important they are to his community. What issue would the member want to talk about if we could choose an issue? If I were to canvass my constituents, the response I would likely get would be water management. I have heard members across the way and beside me talk about the importance of a national strategy on water.

I have had the opportunity to talk to a number of local candidates for the next election. There is a lot of talk at the door, whether it is in urban or rural Manitoba, about the need for a national water strategy.

In virtually every discussion we have had here today, the importance of water and the creatures within the water have been talked about at great length. That is not to take anything away from the importance of microbeads. Just recently, a member of the Ontario legislature, Marie-France Lalonde, the MPP for Ottawa—Orléans, actually brought forward a private member's bill proposing to ban this particular product.

The issue of plastic microbeads would seem to have taken on quite a bit of momentum. We have heard that there is at least one American state that has banned them. We hear that other jurisdictions have gone a long way in looking at how they could be banned.

In Canada there is at least one province that wants to move forward, and I hope it is successful. I will go into some of the things that have occurred in my home province in regard to environmental issues related to water and water management.

I was given an article. It was amazing in terms of the recognition given to the MPP for Ottawa—Orléans for her idea. It is from different types of stakeholders who applaud the action, recognizing that this is a direction we should be moving toward.

●(1650)

I started off, even before I was made aware of this, talking about the importance of working with others in trying to make a difference on the issue. I did that because of my personal experience.

In the Manitoba legislature six to eight years ago, phosphates in dishwasher soap were an issue. I can remember going to the store with the then leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party, Jon Gerrard, and we had a package of phosphate-free dishwasher soap in our hands. Members might call it a photo op. We were calling on the province to take action to ban phosphates in dishwasher soap. Unfortunately, we were not able to get that private member's idea accepted by the government at the time, but only a few years ago, when other provinces and the federal government worked together, it ultimately

led to the banning of phosphates in dishwasher soap at the residential level. Therefore, working together to achieve something that Canadians want does make a difference.

I brought up that particular example because legislation was proposed by a Liberal member of the Ontario legislature, and the ball is in Premier Wynne's court in terms of how they are going to respond to this particular piece of legislation. I think it behooves all of us to lend our support to this initiative. In fact, I would suggest that there is a role for the federal government in raising this issue with its provincial counterparts. If that were to happen, I would argue, we would be more effective at dealing with the issue at hand and be able to provide the people of our country with what they want, which is a better, healthier environment. It would be virtually at no cost, because it would be driven through industry. I look at it as a wonderful opportunity.

The motion before us talks about the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. If we reflect back on the creation of that act back in 1999, we will find that there was a great sense of co-operation between the then prime minister, Jean Chrétien, and the federal minister responsible, along with the different provincial ministers, in coming up with legislation that would ultimately be used as tool to improve our environment. That did not come out of the blue, from nowhere. It was an idea that was talked about, I suspect, for a couple of years prior, and it involved a great deal of consultation that allowed the Chrétien government to work with the provinces, understanding that waterways do not recognize provincial or international boundaries, that our oceans are accessed by countries around the world, and that we needed to work with others in order to make a difference.

I like to think that at the end of the day the Chrétien government recognized the importance of working together in bringing forward legislation and at the same time recognized that the national government has a leadership role to play in dealing with environmental issues, such as the one we have here today.

●(1655)

However, it is not exclusive to the federal government; in fact, there is a role that can also be played by other levels of government.

Again I will refer to my home province of Manitoba. I made reference to the dishwasher soap, but I can recall another initiative that involved the banning of plastic bags. I do not know how many times I have seen these white plastic bags floating in rivers or all over our environment, caught in trees as the winds blow. These non-biodegradable bags stick around for years to come, and they are a threat to our environment. In Manitoba there are municipalities that have actually taken the initiative to ban the plastic bag.

That issue again I know, because I have talked about it at the provincial level. The then leader of the Liberal Party raised the issue, but for whatever reasons, whether it was Gary Doer or Greg Selinger, they never bought into it. They never brought in the legislation that was required to deal with some of those environmental issues.

Business of Supply

The point is that no one government in Canada can say that it has the sole responsibility. Each level of government has the choice to demonstrate leadership or not. There have been examples that have been disappointing at the provincial level, but one of the best examples I could give in regard to the federal government is the Experimental Lakes Area.

Members will recall how important the ELA is, not only to the province of Manitoba but to all of Canada, and I would suggest it goes beyond Canada's borders. Someone talked about \$3 million being what it takes for this House to operate for one day. That \$3 million would have kept the ELA going for years. It is still there, and I will explain why it is still there. It is not because of the current Conservative government.

We recognize what the ELA has done. It protects our waterways. It does the research that is so vitally important. We often talk about the importance of science. The ELA is one of the leading research bodies dealing with fresh water. Freshwater is a commodity that is in high demand, and it will continue to be in high demand well into the future. Some of the greatest threats to freshwater are pollution and industrial waste.

We have mining tailings in northern Manitoba that are so bad that I can again recall Jon Gerrard bringing into the Manitoba legislature a glass of what appeared to be red water. That is what mining tailings have done in, I believe, Kississing Lake. I might not be 100% accurate on that, but it is right in that region that water has turned red because of mining tailings. There are so many things that we could and should be doing. The challenge is for us to recognize that we each have a role to play.

If I go back to what I think is really important, at the end of the day I do not think anyone inside this chamber is going to be voting against this particular motion.

● (1700)

I hope the piece of legislation in the province of Ontario continues to move in the direction of banning plastic microbeads. I hope it does that.

Personally, I think it would be a mistake if I did not at the same time emphasize how important it is that we deal with water management as a whole and emphasize the importance of having a national strategy.

Every year in the province of Manitoba, water is a major issue. Every year it seems there are certain areas of the province that are in need of attention because we do not have the water management plan that we should have as a provincial entity, let alone as a national entity. The federal government needs to recognize that it has a stronger leadership role in dealing with water management. It is not just the Province of Manitoba. The federal government has a stronger leadership role in dealing with water management issues.

The water flowing into the Red River, which ultimately ends up in Lake Winnipeg, comes in good part from the United States. It crosses an international boundary line. To what degree has the Government of Canada been dealing with that issue? To what degree is the federal government prepared to work with the Province of Manitoba in dealing with some of the other issues related to flooding?

Last weekend I met with members of our first nations community. We still have first nations members from certain regions who have been displaced for over two years. The NDP government diverted water out of the Assiniboine, which ultimately flooded homes on some reserve lands, which forced the relocation of some first nations members into the city of Winnipeg. Even though the provincial government might have forgotten about them and the federal government tends to want to ignore the issue, the issue is still there. There is a need to deal with it. Whether it is the federal government or the provincial government, the community is feeling frustrated because we do not have that very important national water strategy.

The Government of Canada, in particular the minister responsible and the Prime Minister, should be making it a higher priority. If that were to occur, I suspect they would gain considerable support from the public as a whole. It is fair for Canadians to have an expectation on the issue of water management and water resource development.

Our farming communities have a huge interest in it, as well as residents in the city of Winnipeg and all of our municipalities. I do not want to limit it. In many of the speeches I heard today, people talked about the Great Lakes. Lake Winnipeg might not be attached to them, but it is a very important lake also. Citizens of Winnipeg and beyond are very much concerned about that lake.

The need to deal with microbeads is something that industry itself is trying to deal with, with a limited amount of success. I suspect it is only a question of time before we see some form of banning, or it will no longer be an issue. However, that does not mean we should be dragging our feet on it. There are initiatives the government could be taking that would ultimately achieve what Canadians expect of the government, which is strong leadership that could actually make a difference on environmental issues.

● (1705)

This would be almost a no-brainer if the government had the desire and the will. The government should, first and foremost, look at ways in which it could change federal legislation and also work with other stakeholders to see if this issue could be dealt with in a more timely fashion. I think Canadians expect us to do that.

● (1710)

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech on such an important issue. I also want to thank my NDP colleague from Halifax for bringing this debate to the House of Commons today. She does excellent work. The proof is that this week she already moved a motion calling for an emergency debate on the Arctic ice, which is melting quite quickly, more quickly than ever. Unfortunately, the emergency debate was denied.

Today, at least, we are having a debate on the environment. I know that sustainable development and the environment are very important issues in the House of Commons. Unfortunately, the Conservatives do not see it this way, but to the NDP, these are key aspects to economic development.

Business of Supply

We are talking here about plastic microbeads that end up in places like the Great Lakes or the St. Lawrence River near my riding, Drummond. We have a lot of questions about the risks this poses to our biodiversity and even to our own health.

I am a member of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, and we recently conducted a study on the Great Lakes. We wanted to broaden that study to talk about climate change, water temperature, which also has an impact on our biodiversity and the ecosystem, as well as plastic microbeads. Unfortunately, we were unable to do so. I am pleased that we are talking about this today because I think it is an extremely important issue.

Does my colleague agree with the NDP and also think that this is an extremely important issue and that we must act quickly, unlike the Conservatives, who are dragging their heels on this? We must act now. It is rather deplorable that the Conservatives did not act sooner. At least the NDP has a constructive approach, and that is why we moved this motion in order to do something constructive to deal with this issue.

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my comments, I do not believe anyone in the chamber will vote against the motion before us. We will see when it comes to a vote.

The member made reference to climate change, the melting of the ice caps, the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway. Other colleagues talked about the Pacific Ocean. There are also the Atlantic Ocean and Lake Winnipeg. As a province, Manitoba has 10,000-plus lakes and rivers. I believe Canada needs a national water strategy.

The Liberal Party supports the motion before us. It is a pretty straightforward motion. It would have been better maybe if it were in the form of a bill or something of that nature, but at the end of the day, we could do so much more, and we should not limit it. I am not trying to take away from the importance of the plastic microbeads.

I like to think of the bigger picture. In the bigger picture, we need to do a whole lot more in order to protect our environment and, in particular, our water. I do not believe we do enough or put enough emphasis on it. When I talk to many of my Liberal colleagues, they consistently say how important it is to have a water strategy. I know it is important to the leader of the Liberal Party and to Canadians. We should spend more time not only debating this in the House, but we should expect the government to take more action that would result in a better water strategy, everything from drinking water to fishing to those creatures that swim in our oceans and waterways.

[Translation]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my Liberal colleague for his speech in support of this motion to eliminate the use of microbeads in consumer products.

I deplore the fact that the use of microbeads has increased since the 1990s, while successive Conservative and Liberal governments have watched this problem get worse. Furthermore, in 2009 and 2010, the Liberals supported Conservative budgets that undermined our environmental laws.

Nevertheless, I am pleased to see that the Liberals have now changed their tune and support a number of measures so that we can work together to improve our environment.

Does my colleague agree that the time has come for the Conservatives to develop a legislative framework so that all companies that want to decrease the use of microbeads and eliminate them from the industry across Canada and around the world are able to do so, and does he agree that this is necessary to ensure fair competition among companies?

• (1715)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I take some exception to the member's comments in regard to why the Liberals did not act on this issue when they were in government.

The examples I cited, whether it is the plastic bags, or phosphate in dishwasher soap or the tailings from mining, were all NDP provincial government responsibilities and it failed miserably in dealing with them, one for which the federal government had to compensate. I know that because I was part of the caucus that actually pushed for the NDP to take some responsibility on the environment in relation to water, among other things.

When the member says the Liberals did not act, new products come on-stream all the time. There is no instant reaction. What we do know is that Jean Chrétien brought in legislation that, through co-operation and working with different provinces, allowed the federal government to play a stronger role. That was negotiated through stakeholders and provinces in recognition that water did not know boundaries, provincial or international.

Is there more that the Jean Chrétien or Paul Martin governments could have done? Sure, there is always more we could have done. At the end of the day, I am very comfortable with this issue and the way in which it has evolved.

If I wanted to make the issue of microbeads political, we just have to look at the province that has taken action on it today. It is not an NDP administration. I say that because of the manner in which the question was posed to me.

At the end of the day, the driving force on this should not necessarily be the political party; it should be the interest of protecting our environment and our waterways.

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the presentation by my hon. colleague, and I congratulate the NDP for bringing forward the motion on microbeads.

My colleague spoke about the broader need for a water strategy, and he alluded to the Experimental Lakes Area. We all know that sad story. Fortunately the Ontario government came to the rescue. We are talking about a priceless laboratory to help us with a water strategy. He did not have the chance to speak about it very much during his presentation, so I wonder if the member might touch on that.

Business of Supply

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I know the member is very concerned about waterways. The St. Lawrence River is one of those about which he is no doubt concerned.

The ELA did research for fresh water. There was an opportunity to keep it going, but the federal government cut the resources to it. The Experimental Lakes Area and that project for research on fresh water was going to die. The federal government cut the funds. We are not talking about multiple millions of dollars. There was a cost factor to it, but the benefits far outweighed the costs. Premier Kathleen Wynne, of all people, came to the province of Manitoba's rescue by providing the necessary funds to keep the ELA going, and all of Canada will benefit from that.

The Conservative government dropped the ball. It was prepared to write it off. That would have been a tragic mistake had we lost the ELA. As I said, that is where we get the research and science. It is good thing at least one province was prepared to recognize that we could not afford to lose it.

● (1720)

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before beginning my speech, I would like to say that I will be sharing my time with the excellent member for Beauharnois—Salaberry, who is doing impressive work in her riding. I am sure that she will be re-elected in the next election in 2015, as will many New Democrats. In fact, we will be the next government come October.

In December 2014, an article in *La Presse* stated that some 270,000 tonnes of plastic are floating around in our planet's oceans. There are even such things as floating islands. This shows how big the plastic problem is, and we need to tackle it. That is not even counting what has sunk to the bottom of our rivers, the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes. Recent studies have shown that the problem is getting worse and that we have to do something about it.

Once again, I thank and congratulate my colleague from Halifax, the environment critic, who is doing excellent work. This week, she asked for an emergency debate on the rapidly melting Arctic glaciers, which is a very serious phenomenon. They are melting at record rates. This is a huge concern in terms of global warming, which is hard to control. We have to do something about it; we cannot wait for the Conservatives to act. That is why New Democrats are leading the charge and coming up with constructive solutions and proposals. That is what we will continue to do once we form the government in October 2015.

Plastics are contaminating every ocean. The small pieces of manufactured plastic called microbeads are used in consumer goods such as face wash, shower gel and toothpaste. As a result, they are found in our waste water, and because our water treatment plants cannot filter them effectively, they then end up in the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.

These plastic microbeads attract other pollutants, such as PCBs, which are even more dangerous. Because aquatic species that live in our ecosystem swallow them, they enter the food chain. That is very worrisome. What is more, they do not just float. They are also found in sediment, as I mentioned earlier. This is a problem that is getting worse, and we need to do something about it as quickly as possible.

Microbeads were first patented for use in cleaning products in 1972, but it was not until the 1990s that they began to be used on a much broader scale. It did not take long to see that this was becoming a problem. Some companies even voluntarily stopped using microbeads, which shows that the industry took action even before the Conservatives. The Conservatives are once again lagging behind on this issue.

Right now, waste water treatment plants cannot filter out the microbeads. It would be much too costly to have plants that could stop these microbeads from entering our marine ecosystem. That is why I am pleased to support the motion by my colleague from Halifax, who does an excellent job. The motion says:

That, in the opinion of the House, microbeads in consumer products entering the environment could have serious harmful effects, and therefore the government should take immediate measures to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed by the government under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

● (1725)

We are very pleased to support this motion. We are also happy to see that the other parties will follow the leadership that the NDP is once again showing here today. This example serves to demonstrate, once again, how we plan to govern beginning in October 2015.

In other words, we will take constructive action, and our proposals will improve both the economy and our environment in the context of sustainable development projects. We in the NDP are the only ones who can pride ourselves on being champions of sustainable development.

At the end of 2014, another article explained that recent studies had shown that plastic was posing a threat to the St. Lawrence. A team of researchers from McGill University discovered a new source of pollution in the St. Lawrence: plastic microbeads. The researchers found a high concentration of them in the sediments of the St. Lawrence.

As I was saying, microbeads are a real problem, not only in the Great Lakes, but also in the St. Lawrence. It is therefore crucial that we take action, and the NDP has moved this motion in order to help solve the problem, which has become a real scourge.

Microbeads can be mistaken for food by organisms living on the bottom of the St. Lawrence River, which are then eaten by fish. Biologist Philippe Archambault, of the Institut des sciences de la mer de Rimouski, pointed that out in the Radio-Canada report “Le fleuve menacé par le plastique”, on the threat that plastic poses to the river.

As I mentioned, and as Philippe Archambault did as well, the problem is made worse by the fact that these microbeads attract other chemical pollutants such as PCBs. This further pollutes our entire marine ecosystem and becomes part of our whole food chain. This is a concern for human consumption. As we know, and we have already talked about this, the scientific community believes that we must take action. This study shows how urgently action is needed. Other studies were conducted in the past. Consequently, we are pleased to support this motion, which demonstrates the NDP's leadership.

Business of Supply

Companies such as Unilever, L'Oréal, Colgate-Palmolive and Johnson & Johnson are already leading the way. These manufacturers have begun tackling this problem either by stopping the manufacture of new products that contain microbeads or by altogether stopping the manufacture of such products.

This shows that action by the Canadian government is even more urgently needed. Companies that are acting of their own accord end up penalized in a way, compared to other companies that continue to harm the environment by using microbeads. When most of the industry wants to take action, all that is left is for the government to take action, and that is what is missing from the Conservatives. It is very disappointing.

In conclusion, I remind members how important it is to the New Democrats to consider future generations. We must not only think about today; we must also think about the future and what we will leave for our families.

I am thinking about my nephews, including Zacharie and Michaël, and my daughters, Ariane and Oriana. It is important to leave them a planet with a strong, sustainable economy, as well as a healthy, sustainable environment.

That is why it is important to take actions such as the one we are discussing today. I once again congratulate the member for Halifax for her excellent work and I thank the House for listening.

I hope that all members in the House will support this motion, as well as the other motions the NDP constructively presents in the House of Commons. I am very proud of them.

• (1730)

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Drummond, who does excellent work on the environment. From the beginning, he has been fighting for sustainable development and the environment.

I would like to know what he thinks about the comments made by the Minister of the Environment, who said she thought that microbeads could be a possible priority issue for the government. In light of everything the Conservatives have done to undermine the environment, such as abolishing the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and eliminating all environmental protections and environmental assessments, what does the member think about the Minister of the Environment's intent or pseudo-intent?

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Beauharnois—Salaberry. She put her finger on the problem and on the reality of the Conservatives' attitude.

I am a member of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, and even the Minister of the Environment said that we should perhaps study the melting of the Arctic ice.

As we said earlier, we requested an emergency debate to discuss this problem. We have to deal with climate change, but the Conservatives have done anything but. The Conservatives made Canada the only country to withdraw from the Kyoto protocol. It is unimaginable, but they did it.

This is indicative of the Conservatives' attitude toward the environment. They think that protecting the environment will hurt

the economy, but the opposite is true. Refusing to protect the environment will hurt the economy. Investing in renewable energy is good for a sustainable economy, and that is what will give Canada a bright future. That is what Canadians want. They deserve better. They deserve an NDP government that will work on developing a sustainable economy.

Mr. Jean Rousseau (Compton—Stanstead, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague from Drummond. He is one of the staunchest defenders of the environment of all my colleagues and all members of Parliament. He is thinking about future generations.

I have a question for him about the long-term effects of harmful plastics, such as microbeads, on the environment. Earlier he was talking about the food chain. Fish and micro-organisms eat these plastics and end up on our plate. The effects on the food chain in the medium and long terms are extremely harmful, and this also affects the health of those who fish in the Great Lakes and our waterways, especially in the summer.

Mr. François Choquette: Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased to work with my colleagues from Compton—Stanstead and Sherbrooke. I was with them yesterday in their respective ridings. I met with their constituents, who told me how much they appreciate the work that their MPs do.

We need to think about future generations. I am a father and I know that the member for Compton—Stanstead is too. We are not working for ourselves but for our constituents and our children. That is what is important. That is why we are thinking about sustainable development. We are thinking about what we are going to leave for future generations.

We have to protect the environment while developing the economy. It can be done. It is possible to find a balance between the economy and sustainable development. We can have a low-carbon economy that is focused on researching and developing renewable resources. That is what we must do. In this regard, I would like to once again thank the member for Compton—Stanstead for his excellent work. That is what an NDP government will do beginning in October 2015. That is what Canadians deserve and that is what they will get in 2015.

• (1735)

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Before we resume debate, I see the Chief Government Whip is rising on a point of order.

* * *

WAYS AND MEANS

MILITARY CONTRIBUTION AGAINST ISIL

Hon. John Duncan (Minister of State and Chief Government Whip, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I think if you seek it, you shall find unanimous consent for the following motion:

Business of Supply

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or usual practice of the House, the Order for consideration of Ways and Means motion No. 17 be deemed read, the motion to concur deemed moved, the question deemed put, and the recorded division deemed requested and deferred until Wednesday, March 25, 2015, at the expiry of the time provided for Government Orders.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Does the hon. Chief Government Whip have the unanimous consent of the House to propose this motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Agreed and so ordered.

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[*Translation*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF MICROBEADS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Beauharnois—Salaberry, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House today to once again speak about the environment.

I am very pleased to support the motion that was moved by my colleague from Halifax, the NDP environment critic. She puts her heart and soul into protecting our environment. Again yesterday, she wanted to propose an emergency debate on the excessive melting of Arctic ice. The ice in the Arctic is melting very rapidly because of climate change. Unfortunately, the Conservatives denied the request for this debate. The member continues to speak out against a number of measures that affect the environment, measures passed by the Conservatives that undermine our environment, whether it be the elimination of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy or the gutting of all or almost all of our environmental protections. There is 1% left. The Conservatives did away with environmental assessments so that a number of projects could move forward without public consultation or oversight.

The member is an outstanding environment critic, and my colleague from Drummond, who is the deputy critic, also does a wonderful job. He works hard to protect our environment for future generations and to show the world that sustainable development and the economy go hand in hand and that companies are prepared to get on board. All that is missing is some political leadership from the Conservatives.

Today we are debating the following motion:

That, in the opinion of the House, microbeads in consumer products entering the environment could have serious harmful effects, and therefore the government should take immediate measures to add microbeads to the list of toxic substances managed by the government under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.

Microbeads are toxic substances that are polluting our environment. They were patented to replace natural ingredients in beauty products, including face and body washes and toothpaste.

It is really troubling to think that these plastic substances are found in products that we put on our skin, in our toothpaste and in some other products. Multinational cosmetic companies should not play with our health, nor should they play with our environment. They should replace microbeads with the natural ingredients that were used prior to the 1990s.

Microbeads pose a real threat to the environment, and I will explain why during my speech, as many of my colleagues on all sides of the House have done. These microplastics are ingested by aquatic animals, including fish that are intended for human consumption. They therefore wind up in the food chain. They are toxic to our health, as well as to flora and fauna, but they allow companies to save a few pennies in the manufacturing of consumer products. That is completely unacceptable.

The worst part is that these tiny plastic fragments are not biodegradable. They accumulate and are transferred to animals that ingest them, and then we consume them.

Microbeads are the product of an industrial manufacturing philosophy that focuses only on profits, with no regard whatsoever for the environmental footprint. Cosmetic companies should take into account the impact that these ingredients have on the environment when they manufacture beauty products and other consumer products. Moreover, 21 countries around the world have already chosen to gradually eliminate microbeads from their products because they are aware of the negative effects those substances have. They need help from the government and legislation to ensure fair competition among all companies.

Many large corporations that care about the environment now employ life cycle analysis. What is life cycle analysis? It looks at the resources needed to manufacture a product and quantifies its potential impact on the environment. This standard is accepted by a vast network of companies and even has an ISO code. Companies that make cosmetics should use this analysis in manufacturing their products.

To encourage companies to adopt best practices, my colleague, the member for Halifax, suggested that this substance be included on the toxic substances list in the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Why do we need to do that? We want Canadian companies to compete on a level playing field, as I said earlier. All companies, not just some of them, should follow the rules for respecting the environment. By banning microbeads in consumer products, we will ensure that all companies respect human health and the environment.

Passing this motion will enable companies to follow the example set by companies like The Body Shop that have pledged to eliminate microbeads from all of their products by the end of the year.

Business of Supply

● (1740)

Also participating are Johnson & Johnson, Lush and Colgate-Palmolive. Microbeads are threatening the ecological health of the St. Lawrence. That is clear. Wastewater treatment plants cannot filter out microbeads because of their small size and buoyancy. This is affecting the river's plants and wildlife. Let us not forget that many sources of pollution are already affecting the health of the St. Lawrence. People in my riding, Beauharnois—Salaberry, are well aware of that.

Every year, the river becomes more acidic. Seaway navigation brings in dangerous invasive marine species, and fish fertility rates are being affected by pollution. Moreover, global warming is exacerbating the effects of pollution and acidification of the river, not to mention that water levels in the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes are falling year by year.

All these sources of pollution are affecting the flora and fauna of the St. Lawrence River and cost millions of dollars in water filtration and purification. We should not forget that the St. Lawrence River is a drinking water reservoir for an entire region of Canada. In Beauharnois, which is in my riding, an old cargo ship has been rusting since 2011 in Lac St-Louis, which feeds into the St. Lawrence. Our lax environmental legislation, which the government weakens with every budget, leave us powerless to do anything about these sources of pollution.

If these large vessels do not pose an immediate risk to the environment, they are left to deteriorate in public waters. However, their long-term presence has serious repercussions for the environment. There is also the economic impact of all this pollution. Sport fishermen are no longer catching trophy fish. This is the result of the gutting of environmental legislation by this Conservative government, which nonetheless calls itself the champion of sport fishing and hunting. However, the Conservatives do not see the contradiction.

In my region, ecotourism is one of the economic drivers threatened by pollution. Waterways are threatened by blue-green algae, another source of pollution created by products such as detergents and industrial soaps. Swimming, fishing and camping are all activities affected by the pollution of our environment.

Les Amis et riverains de la rivière Châteauguay, the Société du vieux canal de Beauharnois, and Les Amis de la réserve nationale de faune du Lac-Saint-François, which is in Dundee in my riding, are just a few of the organizations that work with the public to raise awareness about the importance of protecting our waters, lakes, rivers and oceans. They run water-based activities to ensure that our economy is based on more than just the fossil fuel industry.

A number of environmental organizations are also raising public awareness so that we can better protect our waters. These include SCABRIC, Ambioterra, Nostra-Terra, Crivert, the Comité ZIP du Haut-Saint-Laurent, the Comité de l'environnement — Ste-Martine, the Comité consultatif en développement durable et en environnement de la Ville de Salaberry-de-Valleyfield and the Comité Environnement de la MRC de Beauharnois—Salaberry, just to name a few. All of these local organizations are very aware of the fact that we need to protect our waters.

The motion moved to eliminate the use of microbeads is one of the measures put forward by the NDP to protect our waters. All of these sources of pollution show that things are not looking good for our waterways. As I was saying, in my riding, the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area has been fighting for years to preserve plants and wildlife that are unique to the region. The wildlife area is home to approximately 20 rare or threatened species, including the yellow flag; the osprey, which is a bird of prey; and the snapping turtle, a wonderful species of turtle.

What has the Conservative government done to protect our wildlife areas? It cut the budget of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area, threatening its very survival. It also amended the legislation protecting our lakes and rivers with Bill C-38 and Bill C-45, mammoth bills that were introduced in 2012 and gutted protections for our waterways.

Châteauguay River protection groups strongly condemned the Conservatives' direct attacks on our environment. In addition to all of these efforts, many members banded together to introduce bills to protect the environment and our waterways.

I hope that all members of the House will vote in favour of this motion to ensure that we can make the consumer products that enter our homes safe and leave a healthy planet to future generations by developing a sustainable economy.

● (1745)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the debate starts to wind down on this motion, it is important we recognize that the issue of plastic microbeads is a very serious. It is an issue in which we would like to think we would see some very tangible action taken in regard to it. We know Canadians as a whole are very passionate about the need for us to do what we can as legislators to improve our environment and almost double down when it comes to our water systems in our lakes, rivers, oceans and creeks.

In recognizing how important this issue is, would the member agree that education is also an important issue in dealing with environmental issues and that we need to talk more about education and what the public or consumers could do, and even to a certain degree other stakeholders, to make our environment a better place to be? A good example of that is microbeads. I suspect if we were to canvass, we would find that less than 30% or 40% of Canadians would know what microbeads are and the impact they have on our water system.

[Translation]

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, that is a good question from my colleague from Winnipeg North.

Education is indeed important, and the Conservatives have a poor record when it comes to that. They cut the budget of the only environmental museum in North America, the Biosphere. We worked very hard to defend the Biosphere, which the Conservatives completely abandoned two years ago.

Business of Supply

With respect to plastic microbeads in particular, yes, the federal government needs to be willing to introduce a legislative framework for the cosmetics and consumer product industries. That said, we also need to make the public aware, so that people know what types of products contain microbeads and what they can do to discourage the use of these products.

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her excellent speech.

We are fortunate with this issue, since the House of Commons unanimously supports this motion. Could the member also talk to us about how it would be nice to have unanimity on other motions? Clearly all of the members in the House can, from time to time, decide to go along with protecting the environment.

This is the kind of motion and unanimity we should have more often, but unfortunately that is not the case.

• (1750)

Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach: Mr. Speaker, I support what my colleague from Marc-Aurèle-Fortin is saying.

It is clear. We should be able to move ahead on issues without stalling, or worse yet, moving backward, like the Conservatives have done on the environment.

The Conservatives withdrew Canada from the Kyoto protocol; they got rid of almost every environmental protection law; and environmental assessments have almost all disappeared, as has the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. I am repeating myself because what is happening when it comes to the environment is very serious.

They are in the process of ensuring that every scientist who works on the environment is censored. We have a lot of catch-up work to do so that we can do proper sustainable development, which is what the NDP has been proposing from the start.

Working on both the environment and the economy is part of the NDP's intrinsic values.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Before we resume debate, I will let the hon. member for Kitchener Centre know there are approximately seven minutes left in the time remaining for debate on the question. I know the hon. member was probably expecting his full 10 minutes. He will have pretty close to that, but I will give him the usual signal as we near the time provided for the business of supply today.

The hon. member for Kitchener Centre.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to provide the House with some information related to the efforts of Canada and other jurisdictions to deliver real solutions on the issue of microplastics, including microbeads.

As usual, the Conservative government is already out ahead on this issue. What is less usual but very commendable is that the opposition is now also becoming alive to it and joining with the Conservative government in responding to this issue.

Microplastics entering the environment is a matter that crosses many jurisdictional boundaries. I understand that Environment Canada is taking action on this issue with provincial and territorial governments, the United States and with the broader international and research communities, and also with Canadian industry.

Advancing research has increased awareness about the presence of microplastics in the environment. This includes Canadian research on the levels of microplastics in the Great Lakes, in the St. Lawrence Seaway and in British Columbia.

Other Canadian studies are investigating, for example, the release of microfibrils from washing clothes. Still other Canadian studies are looking at waste water effluents and sediments. While we have some answers, this research is by no means complete. Many questions remain not just in Canada but globally.

To improve our science-based understanding of the sources and environmental impacts of microplastics, Canada is participating in several international initiatives. These include initiatives under the International Maritime Organization and also the United Nations environment program.

Canadian research organizations are also working with the U.S. based National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and American universities to integrate research on plastic marine debris in the Great Lakes.

Other countries are also working with Canada to better understand the sources, the impact and the options to address microplastics. A key interest of several of our allies is the issue of marine litter. To this end, a recent workshop of G7 member countries was held to consider that issue, and four principles were adopted to guide further action. These include: first, improvement to systems to prevent, reduce and to remove marine litter; second, support for international development assistance and investment; third, promotion of individual and corporate behaviour change through public awareness and education; and fourth recognition that prevention is key to long-term success.

While research has not yet reached definitive conclusions regarding the potential negative impacts of microplastics, efforts are under way in Canada and in other jurisdictions to prevent plastic waste from even entering the environment. Therefore, in Canada for many years we have been working hard to keep plastics out of waterways and out of the environment in general.

Canadian blue box programs, for example, promote recycling and successfully divert plastics and other materials away from landfill sites. However, there is always room for improvement. As such, the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment recently adopted a strategy to further improve Canada's record on reducing and recycling waste.

Our collective governments are implementing extended producer responsibility programs to support diversion of waste from landfills and to increase recycling. These efforts, including the reduction of single-use bags distributed to customers, have been adopted by several provincial jurisdictions and will further promote the recycling of plastics. This is all very good news.

Business of Supply

In the United States, individual states have recently launched efforts to stop the production and sale of microbeads. In June 2014, Illinois passed a law prohibiting the manufacture of personal care products that contained microbeads. By the end of 2017, these types of cosmetic products will no longer be produced in Illinois, and they may no longer be sold by the end of 2018. Similar legislation is under consideration in Ohio, New York, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Colorado and New Jersey—

• (1755)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. The time for government orders has expired. It being 5:57 p.m., and this being the final supply day in the period ending March 26, 2015, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the business of supply.

[*Translation*]

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Call in the members.

• (1835)

[*English*]

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

(*Division No. 354*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Albas
Albrecht	Alexander
Allen (Welland)	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Andrews
Angus	Armstrong
Ashton	Aspin
Atamanenko	Aubin
Ayala	Barlow
Bateman	Bélangier
Bellavance	Bennett
Benoit	Benskin
Bernier	Bevington
Bezan	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Blaney
Block	Boivin
Borg	Boughen

Boulerice	Boutin-Sweet
Braid	Brisson
Brosseau	Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Bruinooge	Butt
Byrne	Calandra
Calkins	Caron
Carrie	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Chisu	Chong
Choquette	Christopherson
Clarke	Cleary
Clement	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crockatt	Crowder
Cullen	Cuzner
Daniel	Davidson
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)	Day
Dechert	Devolin
Dewar	Dion
Dionne Labelle	Donnelly
Doré Lefebvre	Dreeschen
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)	Dusseault
Dykstra	Easter
Egliniski	Eyking
Falk	Fantino
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher
Foote	Freeland
Freeman	Fry
Galipeau	Gallant
Gameau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Gill
Glover	Godin
Goguen	Goldring
Goodale	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Gravelle	Grewal
Groguié	Harper
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
Hsu	Hughes
James	Jones
Julian	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kellway
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kent
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Latendresse	Lauzon
Laverdière	Lebel
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Leef	Leitch
Lemieux	Leslie
Leung	Liu
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacAulay	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mai	Marston
Martin	Mathysen
May	Mayes
McCallum	McColeman
McGuinty	McLeod
Menegakis	Michaud
Miller	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mourani	Mulcair
Murray	Nantel
Nash	Nicholls
Nicholson	Norlock
Nunez-Melo	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Pacetti
Paradis	Payne
Péclét	Perkins

Business of Supply

Perreault
Plamondon
Preston
Rafferty
Rajotte
Rathgeber
Raynault
Rempel
Rickford
Rousseau
Sandhu
Scarpaleggia
Scott
Sellah
Shea
Shory
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Smith
Sorenson
St-Denis
Storseth
Sullivan
Tilson
Toone
Trost
Trudeau
Turnel
Valcourt
Van Kesteren
Vaughan
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Wilks
Wong
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer — 279

Pilon
Poilievre
Quach
Raitt
Rankin
Ravignat
Reid
Richards
Ritz
Saganash
Saxton
Schellenberger
Seeback
Sgro
Shipley
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)
Sitsabaiesan
Sopuck
Stanton
Stewart
Strahl
Sweet
Toet
Tremblay
Trottier
Truppe
Uppal
Valeriotte
Van Loan
Vellacott
Warawa
Watson
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
Yurdiga

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

● (1840)

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (C), 2014-15

Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board, CPC) moved:

That the Supplementary Estimates (c) for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015, be concurred in.

The Speaker: The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion, the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

● (1845)

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

(Division No. 355)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy
Albas
Alexander
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Aspin
Bateman
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt
Calkins
Chisu
Clarke
Crockatt
Davidson
Devolin
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Eglinski
Fantino
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Fletcher
Gallant
Glover
Goldring
Gosal
Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes
Hoback
James
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kent
Komarnicki
Lake
Lebel
Leitch
Leung
Lobb
Lunney
MacKenzie
Mayes
McLeod
Miller
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Norlock
O'Neill Gordon
O'Toole
Payne
Poilievre
Raitt
Rathgeber
Rempel
Rickford
Saxton
Seeback
Shipley
Smith
Sorenson
Storseth
Sweet
Toet
Trottier
Uppal
Van Kesteren
Vellacott
Warawa
Watson
Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)

Adler
Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler
Anders
Armstrong
Barlow
Benoit
Bezan
Block
Braid
Bruinooge
Calandra
Carrie
Chong
Clement
Daniel
Dechert
Dreeshen
Dykstra
Falk
Fast
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Galipeau
Gill
Goguen
Goodyear
Gourde
Harper
Hawn
Hiebert
Holder
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Leef
Lemieux
Lizon
Lukiwski
MacKay (Central Nova)
Maguire
McColeman
Menegakis
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Nicholson
Oliver
Opitz
Paradis
Perkins
Preston
Rajotte
Reid
Richards
Ritz
Schellenberger
Shea
Shory
Sopuck
Stanton
Strahl
Tilson
Trost
Truppe
Valcourt
Van Loan
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Wilks

Business of Supply

Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
Yurdiga

Wong
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer— 150

NAYS

Members

Adams
Andrews
Ashton
Aubin
Bélangier
Bennett
Bevington
Blanchette-Lamothe
Borg
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Caron
Cash
Chicoine
Choquette
Cleary
Côté
Crowder
Cuzner
Day
Dion
Donnelly
Dubé
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseault
Eyking
Freeland
Fry
Garrison
Genest-Jourdain
Godin
Gravelle
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Hsu
Jones
Kellway
Lapointe
Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Énard)
Liu
Mai
Martin
May
McGuinty
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mulcair
Nantel
Nicholls
Pacetti
Péclet
Pilon
Quach
Rankin
Raynault
Saganash
Scarpaleggia
Sellah
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Sitsabaiesan
Stewart
Toone
Trudeau
Valeriotte

Allen (Welland)
Angus
Atamanenko
Ayala
Bellavance
Benskin
Blanchette
Boivin
Boulerice
Brisson
Byrne
Casey
Charlton
Chisholm
Christopherson
Comartin
Cotler
Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Dewar
Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre
Dubourg
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter
Foote
Freeman
Garneau
Genest
Giguère
Goodale
Groguié
Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes
Julian
Lamoureux
Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Leslie
MacAulay
Marston
Mathysen
McCallum
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Mourani
Murray
Nash
Nunez-Melo
Papillon
Perreault
Plamondon
Rafferty
Ravignat
Rousseau
Sandhu
Scott
Sgro
St-Denis
Sullivan
Tremblay
Turmel
Vaughan— 130

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Motion agreed to)

[Translation]

Hon. Tony Clement moved that Bill C-54, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2015, be now read the first time and printed.

(Motion deemed adopted and bill read the first time)

[English]

Hon. Tony Clement moved that the bill be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

Hon. John Duncan: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, you will find consent to apply the results from the previous motion to the current motion.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

• (1850)

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

(Division No. 356)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy
Albas
Alexander
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Aspin
Bateman
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt
Calkins
Chisu
Clarke
Crockatt
Davidson
Devolin
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Egliniski
Fantino
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Fletcher
Gallant
Glover
Goldring
Gosal
Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes
Hoback
James
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kent
Komarnicki
Lake
Lebel
Leitch
Leung
Lobb
Lunney
MacKenzie
Mayes
McLeod
Miller
Moore (Fundy Royal)

Adler
Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Ambler
Anders
Armstrong
Barlow
Benoit
Bezan
Block
Braid
Bruinooge
Calandra
Carrie
Chong
Clement
Daniel
Dechert
Dreeschen
Dykstra
Falk
Fast
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Galipeau
Gill
Goguen
Goodyear
Gourde
Harper
Hawn
Hiebert
Holder
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Leaf
Lemieux
Lizon
Lukiwski
MacKay (Central Nova)
Maguire
McColeman
Menegakis
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Nicholson

Business of Supply

Norlock
O'Neill Gordon
O'Toole
Payne
Poilievre
Raitt
Rathgeber
Rempel
Rickford
Saxton
Seeback
Shipley
Smith
Sorenson
Storseth
Sweet
Toet
Trottier
Uppal
Van Kesteren
Vellacott
Warawa
Watson
Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
Yurdiga

Oliver
Opitz
Paradis
Perkins
Preston
Rajotte
Reid
Richards
Ritz
Schellenberger
Shea
Shory
Sopuck
Stanton
Strahl
Tilson
Trost
Truppe
Valcourt
Van Loan
Wallace
Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Wilks
Wong
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer— 150

Pacetti
Péclet
Pilon
Quach
Rankin
Raynault
Saganash
Scarpaleggia
Sellah
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Sitsabaiesan
Stewart
Toone
Trudeau
Valeriotte
Papillon
Perreault
Plamondon
Rafferty
Ravignat
Rousseau
Sandhu
Scott
Sgro
St-Denis
Sullivan
Tremblay
Turmel
Vaughan— 130

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Mr. Joe Comartin in the chair)

(On Clause 2)

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Chair, could the President of the Treasury Board confirm that the supply bill is in its usual form?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Chair, the presentation of this bill is identical to that used during the previous supply period.

[*English*]

The Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

NAYS

Members

Adams
Andrews
Ashton
Aubin
Bélanger
Bennett
Bevington
Blanchette-Lamothe
Borg
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Caron
Cash
Chicoine
Choquette
Cleary
Côté
Crowder
Cuzner
Day
Dion
Donnelly
Dubé
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseault
Eyking
Freeland
Fry
Garrison
Genest-Jourdain
Godin
Gravelle
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Hsu
Jones
Kellway
Lapointe
Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Liu
Mai
Martin
May
McGuinty
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mulcair
Nantel
Nicholls

Allen (Welland)
Angus
Atamanenko
Ayala
Bellavance
Benskin
Blanchette
Boivin
Boulerice
Brisson
Byrne
Casey
Charlton
Chisholm
Christopherson
Comartin
Cotler
Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Dewar
Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre
Dubourg
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter
Foote
Freeman
Garneau
Genest
Giguère
Goodale
Groguhé
Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes
Julian
Lamoureux
Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Leslie
MacAulay
Marston
Mathysen
McCallum
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Mourani
Murray
Nash
Nunez-Melo

Business of Supply

(Clause 6 agreed to)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Shall clause 7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 7 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

[*English*]

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Title agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Bill agreed to)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.

(Bill reported)

[*English*]

Hon. Tony Clement moved that the bill be concurred in.

Hon. John Duncan: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it you will find to apply the results from the division at second reading of this bill to the current motion.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(*Division No. 357*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Egliniski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace

Business of Supply

Warawa
Watson
Sky Country
Weston (Saint John)
Williamson
Woodworth
Young (Oakville)
Yurdiga

Warkentin
Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Wilks
Wong
Yelich
Young (Vancouver South)
Zimmer— 150

NAYS

Members

Adams
Andrews
Ashton
Aubin
Bélangier
Bennett
Bevington
Blanchette-Lamothe
Borg
Boutin-Sweet
Brosseau
Caron
Cash
Chicoine
Choquette
Cleary
Côté
Crowder
Cuzner
Day
Dion
Donnelly
Dubé
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dusseauit
Eyking
Freeland
Fry
Garrison
Genest-Jourdain
Godin
Gravelle
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Hsu
Jones
Kellway
Lapointe
Laverdière
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)
Liu
Mai
Martin
May
McGuinty
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Mulcair
Nantel
Nicholls
Pacetti
Péclet
Pilon
Quach
Rankin
Raynault
Saganash
Scarpaleggia
Sellah
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)
Sitsabaiesan
Stewart
Toone
Trudeau
Valeriotte

Allen (Welland)
Angus
Atamanenko
Ayala
Bellavance
Benskin
Blanchette
Boivin
Boulerice
Brisson
Byrne
Casey
Charlton
Chisholm
Christopherson
Comartin
Cotler
Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Dewar
Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre
Dubourg
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter
Foote
Freeman
Garneau
Genest
Giguère
Goodale
Grogulé
Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes
Julian
Lamoureux
Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Leslie
MacAulay
Marston
Mathysen
McCallum
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Mourani
Murray
Nash
Nunez-Melo
Papillon
Perreault
Plamondon
Rafferty
Ravignat
Rousseau
Sandhu
Scott
Sgro
St-Denis
Sullivan
Tremblay
Turmel
Vaughan— 130

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

The Speaker: When shall the bill be read a third time? By leave now?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Tony Clement moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

[*English*]

Hon. John Duncan: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, you will find consent to apply the results from the previous motion to the current motion.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(*Division No. 358*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy
Albas
Alexander
Allison
Ambrose
Anderson
Aspin
Bateman
Bernier
Blaney
Boughen
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)
Butt
Calkins
Chisu
Clarke
Crockatt
Davidson
Devolin
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Eglinski
Fantino
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)
Fletcher
Gallant
Glover
Goldring
Gosal
Grewal
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
Hayes
Hoback
James
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kent
Komarnicki
Lake
Lebel
Leitch
Leung
Lobb
Lunney
MacKenzie
Mayes
McLeod
Miller
Moore (Fundy Royal)
Norlock
O'Neill Gordon

Adler
Albrecht
Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Amblor
Anders
Armstrong
Barlow
Benoit
Bezan
Block
Braid
Bruinooge
Calandra
Carrie
Chong
Clement
Daniel
Dechert
Dreeschen
Dykstra
Falk
Fast
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Galipeau
Gill
Goguen
Goodyear
Gourde
Harper
Hawn
Hiebert
Holder
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lauzon
Leaf
Lemieux
Lizon
Lukiwski
MacKay (Central Nova)
Maguire
McColeman
Menegakis
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Nicholson
Oliver
Opitz

Business of Supply

O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poillievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	Wilks
Weston (Saint John)	Wong
Williamson	Yelich
Woodworth	Young (Vancouver South)
Young (Oakville)	Zimmer— 150
Yurdiga	

NAYS

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélanger	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brison
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseault	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Freeland	Freeman
Fry	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Martin	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclat	Perreault

Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Sims (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	
Sitsabaiesan	St-Denis
Stewart	Sullivan
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valeriot	Vaughan— 130

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

(Bill read the third time and passed)

* * *

INTERIM SUPPLY**Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board, CPC)** moved:

That this House do concur in Interim Supply as follows:

That a sum not exceeding \$25,776,976,948.58 being composed of:

(1) three twelfths (\$15,713,127,306.75) of the total of the amounts of the items set forth in the Proposed Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016, except for those items below:

(2) eleven twelfths of the total of the amount of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited Vote 1, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Vote 1, Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission Vote 1, Marine Atlantic Inc. Vote 1, Office of Infrastructure of Canada Vote 5, Treasury Board Secretariat Vote 5 and Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority Vote 1 (Schedule 1.1), of the said Estimates, \$892,687,978.43;

Schedule 1.2), of the said Estimates, \$163,221,484.66;

(4) seven twelfths of the total of the amount of Canada Council for the Arts Vote 1, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Vote 1, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission Vote 1, Canadian Polar Commission Vote 1 and Public Health Agency of Canada Vote 10 (Schedule 1.3), of the said Estimates, \$249,329,318.00;

(5) six twelfths of the total of the amount of Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs Vote 5, Employment and Social Development Vote 5, Health Vote 10 and Royal Canadian Mounted Police External Review Committee Vote 1 (Schedule 1.4), of the said Estimates, \$1,696,722,693.50;

(6) five twelfths of the total of the amount of Agriculture and Agri-Food Vote 5, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Vote 1, Canadian Food Inspection Agency Votes 1 and 5, Canadian Space Agency Votes 5 and 10, National Arts Centre Corporation Vote 1, Public Health Agency of Canada Vote 1, Statistics Canada Vote 1 and Transport Votes 1 and 5 (Schedule 1.5), of the said Estimates, \$1,370,857,681.24;

(7) four twelfths of the total of the amount of Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada Vote 1, Citizenship and Immigration Vote 5, House of Commons Vote 1, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Votes 1 and 10, Industry Votes 1 and 10, Library of Parliament Vote 1, National Battlefields Commission Vote 1, Natural Resources Vote 1, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Vote 5, Public Service Commission Vote 1, Public Works and Government Services Vote 1, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Vote 1, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Vote 5 and VIA Rail Canada Inc. Vote 1 (Schedule 1.6), of the said Estimates, \$5,500,651,897.00;

(8) four twelfths of the total of the amount of Parks Canada Agency Vote 1 (Schedule 2.1), of the said Estimates, \$190,378,589.00;

be granted to Her Majesty on account of the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016.

● (1855)

Hon. John Duncan: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, you will find consent to apply the results from the previous motion to the current motion.**The Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

● (1900)

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

(Division No. 359)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Bruinooog
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Egliniski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leef
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayer	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin

Watson
 Sky Country
 Weston (Saint John)
 Williamson
 Woodworth
 Young (Oakville)
 Yurdiga

Business of Supply

Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
 Skies)
 Wilks
 Wong
 Yelich
 Young (Vancouver South)
 Zimmer — 150

NAYS

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélanger	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brison
Brousseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Freeland	Freeman
Fry	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguhé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Martin	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclet	Perreault
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	St-Denis
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sullivan
Sitsabaeslan	Tremblay
Stewart	Turnel
Toone	Vaughan — 130
Trudeau	
Valeriote	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Business of Supply

Hon. Tony Clement moved that Bill C-55, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2016, be read the first time.

(Motion agreed to and bill read the first time)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Tony Clement moved that Bill C-55, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the federal public administration for the financial year ending March 31, 2016, be read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

[*English*]

Hon. John Duncan: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, you will find consent to apply the results from the previous motion to the current motion.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(*Division No. 360*)

YEAS

Members

Abлонczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Bruinooogé
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Egliniski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)

Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shiely	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Yurdiga	Zimmer— 150

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)
Angus
Atamanenko
Ayala
Belavance
Benskin
Blanchette
Boivin
Boulerice
Brison
Byrne
Casey
Charlton
Chisholm
Christopherson
Comartin
Cotler
Cullen
Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Dewar
Dionne Labelle
Doré Lefebvre
Dubourg
Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Easter
Foote
Freeman
Garneau
Genest
Giguère
Goodale
Groguhé
Harris (St. John's East)
Hughes
Julian
Lamoureux
Latendresse
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
Leslie
MacAulay
Marston
Mathysen
McCallum
Michaud
Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Mourani
Murray
Nash

Business of Supply

Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclet	Perreault
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	
Sitsabaiesan	St-Denis
Stewart	Sullivan
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valeriotte	Vaughan— 130

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee of the whole, and I do now leave the chair for the House to go into committee of the whole.

(Bill read the second time and the House went into committee of the whole thereon, Mr. Joe Comartin in the chair)

(On Clause 2)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, can the President of the Treasury Board confirm that the bill is in its usual form?

[*English*]

Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Chair, I can give a little more fulsome reply. The proportions requested in the bill are intended to provide for all necessary requirements of the federal public administration up to the second supply period in fiscal year 2015-16. In no instance is the total amount of an item being released by the bill. The form of this bill is the same as that passed in the previous supply period.

[*Translation*]

The passing of the bill will not prejudice the rights and privileges of members to criticize any item in the estimates when they come up for consideration in committee. The usual undertaking is hereby given that such rights and privileges will be respected and will not be curtailed or restricted in any way as a result of the passing of this measure.

The Chair: Shall clause 2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 3 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 6 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall clause 7 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Clause 7 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 1.1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1.1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 1.2 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1.2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 1.3 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: On division.
(Schedule 1.3 agreed to)

[*English*]

The Chair: Shall Schedule 1.4 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.
(Schedule 1.4 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 1.5 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.
(Schedule 1.5 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 1.6 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.
(Schedule 1.6 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 2 carry?

Business of Supply

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Schedule 2 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Schedule 2.1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Schedule 2.1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall Clause 1 carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Clause 1 agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the preamble carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Preamble agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the title carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Title agreed to)

The Chair: Shall the bill carry?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Bill agreed to)

The Chair: Shall I rise and report the bill?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: On division.

(Bill reported)

● (1905)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Tony Clement moved that the bill be concurred in at report stage.

[*English*]

Hon. John Duncan: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, you will find consent to apply the results from the division at second reading of this bill to the current motion.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(*Division No. 361*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bemier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Bruinooge
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeshen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Eglinski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finlay (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
Kent	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poilievre	Preston
Raiitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shipley	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost
Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Yurdiga	Zimmer — 150

Business of Supply

NAYS

Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brison
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Freeland	Freeman
Fry	Gameau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Groguié
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Martin	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclet	Perreault
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	
Sitsabaiesan	St-Denis
Stewart	Sullivan
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turnel
Valeriot	Vaughan— 130

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

The Speaker: When shall the bill be read a third time?

Hon. Tony Clement moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Hon. John Duncan: Mr. Speaker, if you seek it, you will find consent to apply the results from the previous motion to the current motion.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to proceed in this fashion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

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

(Division No. 362)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adler
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Barlow
Bateman	Benoit
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brunoogee
Butt	Calandra
Calkins	Carrie
Chisu	Chong
Clarke	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Devolin	Dreeschen
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra
Eglinski	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hiebert
Hoback	Holder
James	Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Kenny (Calgary Southeast)
Kerr	Kerr
Komarnicki	Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
Lake	Lauzon
Lebel	Leaf
Leitch	Lemieux
Leung	Lizon
Lobb	Lukiwski
Lunney	MacKay (Central Nova)
MacKenzie	Maguire
Mayes	McColeman
McLeod	Menegakis
Miller	Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Nicholson
Norlock	Oliver
O'Neill Gordon	Opitz
O'Toole	Paradis
Payne	Perkins
Poilievre	Preston
Raitt	Rajotte
Rathgeber	Reid
Rempel	Richards
Rickford	Ritz
Saxton	Schellenberger
Seeback	Shea
Shiple	Shory
Smith	Sopuck
Sorenson	Stanton
Storseth	Strahl
Sweet	Tilson
Toet	Trost

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Trottier	Truppe
Uppal	Valcourt
Van Kesteren	Van Loan
Vellacott	Wallace
Warawa	Warkentin
Watson	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to
Sky Country)	
Weston (Saint John)	Wilks
Williamson	Wong
Woodworth	Yelich
Young (Oakville)	Young (Vancouver South)
Yurdiga	Zimmer — 150

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Members

Adams	Allen (Welland)
Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala
Bélangier	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brisson
Brosseau	Byrne
Caron	Casey
Cash	Charlton
Chicoine	Chisholm
Choquette	Christopherson
Cleary	Comartin
Côté	Cotler
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Day	Dewar
Dion	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Freeland	Freeman
Fry	Garneau
Garrison	Genest
Genest-Jourdain	Giguère
Godin	Goodale
Gravelle	Grogulé
Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Hsu	Hughes
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Latendresse
Laverdière	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)
LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Leslie
Liu	MacAulay
Mai	Marston
Martin	Mathysen
May	McCallum
McGuinty	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Péclet	Perreault
Pilon	Plamondon
Quach	Rafferty
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Rousseau
Saganash	Sandhu
Scarpaleggia	Scott
Sellah	Sgro
Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Windsor)	
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	
Sitsabaiesan	St-Denis
Stewart	Sullivan
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turnel
Valeriotte	Vaughan — 130

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.
(Bill reported, concurred in, read the third time and passed)

The Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the delay there will be no private members' business. Accordingly the order will be rescheduled for another sitting.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

● (1910)

[English]

ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pursue a question I asked of the Minister of the Environment on January 26. It was my first opportunity to raise with the Minister of the Environment and the House the results of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties at the Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was COP20, which occurred in Lima, Peru in December.

In the terms of the agreement to which Canada has agreed, countries that are ready to do so would provide their targets and planned actions under a basket of terms now in the UN lingo called INDCs, intended nationally-determined contributions, no later than the end of the first quarter of 2015. Next week, March 31, is when Canada's statement of intentions are due. I would certainly hope Canada would want to fulfill its responsibilities with the rest of the industrialized world.

I will back up in terms of why this is so critical. Members of the House will recall that the negotiations that took place in Copenhagen, at what was then the 15th conference of the parties, were not successful. However, there was a kind of patched together side deal called the Copenhagen accord, which the current Conservative administration greeted favourably. That approach was launched by President Barack Obama in sort of a backroom deal with other nations, in which a two-page agreement was provided to world leaders, such as our Prime Minister, with an approach that was basically fill in the blanks, "This country will sign on, and this country will reduce by x amount by x year our greenhouse gas emissions".

The goal that was crystal clear and that was not fill in the blanks was that the collective level of commitments of the countries that adopted this accord would be sufficient to avoid global average temperatures increasing 2°C more than they were before the industrial revolution. Further, the text of the so-called Copenhagen accord left open the possibility of a much more important target; that we avoid allowing greenhouse gas levels to rise so fast and become so concentrated in the atmosphere that we could actually avoid 1.5°C, which would be a much safer level for a new stabilization in the climate system.

Adjournment Proceedings

Leaving Copenhagen, once they filled in the blanks, the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change started crunching the numbers to see if those countries met their commitments would it be sufficient to meet the goal of avoiding 2°C or even 1.5°C? It quickly concluded that even if every country met their targets from 2009, it would be wholly insufficient to avoid very dangerous levels that soared far above a 2°C increase.

To avoid that same phenomenon of commitments being made at the large event, only to be totted up later and found insufficient, the parties, which includes the Government of Canada, agreed to the approach to ensure that all of the commitments, including commitments to funding, adaptation and technology transfers, but very specifically reduction of emissions, would be tabled in the first quarter of 2015 to determine if each country that gathered in Paris this year met their targets would it be sufficient. We now know Canada has no hope of meeting the targets that we set for ourselves in 2009.

That is why it is critical that Canada gets its plans, its intended nationally-determined contribution, tabled with the UN Secretariat next week.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government's record is clear. We have taken decisive action on the environment, while protecting our economy.

Our government is working to negotiate a new global climate change agreement that includes commitments from all major emitters. We take the challenge of climate change seriously, which is why we are doing our part, reducing emissions in Canada and working with our international partners.

• (1915)

[Translation]

At the Lima conference, the parties agreed to announce their intended nationally determined contributions well before the 21st Paris conference.

The analysis of Canada's post-2020 contribution is currently being done and will take into account Canada's economic, geographic, and demographic circumstances.

This government's international efforts with regard to climate change go beyond the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations. We are working with other countries through complementary forums, such as the Arctic Council, the Montreal protocol, and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition.

[English]

As we approach the meeting at the end of this year in Paris, Canada will continue to take decisive actions domestically to reduce our emissions while we work with our international partners to confirm a durable global agreement that will put in place a long-term framework for collaborative action.

Our government will continue to implement its domestic sector-by-sector regulatory approach to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions, while supporting economic growth and job creation opportunities for Canadians.

We know the NDP and the Liberals support a reckless and irresponsible private member's bill that would require Canada to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 80%. To achieve this, we would literally have to shut down the entire oil and gas sector and all electricity generation that produces emissions, and stop all transportation in the country. This is an approach that shows once again how far removed from reality the NDP and the Liberals are.

We remain fully committed to the development of an international climate change agreement that is fair, effective and includes meaningful and transparent commitments from all major emitters.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I am profoundly disappointed by my hon. friend, the parliamentary secretary. I asked this question on January 26. Knowing the amount of notice, I had expected that the response might at least treat the subject matter of my question. The point of these adjournment proceedings is to follow up on questions that are inadequately answered.

In the last four minutes, I am afraid to say that my friend has ignored the subject matter of my question, which is very specific and very urgent. Will the Government of Canada tender the promised intended nationally-determined contribution data to the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change when it is due, which is March 31, next week?

It is all fine, well and good to hear platitudes about being committed to the convention, but the most important required step by any country really committed to this process is to tender the INDCs on time within the first quarter of 2015. Will we be doing it? Will the parliamentary secretary commit now?

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, Canadians can be very proud of our record. For example, in Canada we have one of the cleanest electricity systems in the world, with 79% of our electricity supply emitting no greenhouse gas emissions.

Canada also became the first major coal user to ban the construction of traditional coal-fired electricity generation units.

We will continue to move forward with regulatory measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while maintaining job creation and economic growth.

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today for this adjournment debate to raise a question that I asked the Minister of Public Safety on January 30. It was my second question on the same subject. I told him that it was all very well to introduce law after law on terrorism, but that we should do something else. Not only do the Conservatives' laws violate people's rights, but they are completely ineffective on the ground. In any event, that is what I have heard.

Adjournment Proceedings

I told the minister that these laws would not prevent young people from going to Iraq or to Syria. Quite the opposite. I see no additional support whatsoever. The government constantly talks about national security, but it has not given additional resources to the RCMP or CSIS.

Take, for example, the RCMP. I learned that this agency was asked to handle national security without being given the necessary resources to do so. In reality, that means that resources currently allocated to the fight against criminal organizations will be allocated to national security. Accordingly, the fight against organized crime, which is very important, is being abandoned. That is a monumental mistake. Instead of giving more responsibilities and fewer resources, the government should make more investments in national security.

The other important aspect is prevention, a word missing from the Conservatives' vocabulary. It is a difficult concept for them to understand. It is unfortunate that there is no discussion about prevention when it comes to fighting crime and national security. I give this government a failing grade on prevention.

Not a single cent has been invested in national security. Prevention involves public awareness campaigns and training. It also involves working on the ground with organizations, schools and so on. Once again, I would give the government a failing grade, unfortunately.

Research is another important aspect. Research on crime is extremely important, as it is in many other fields. The Kanishka research project was worthwhile, but the government decided not to renew it.

There are other great initiatives, like the Extreme Dialogue project, which is another prevention tool. This project still exists, but will it have funding to continue? We do not know. There is little research being done, and the tools we have now will not be maintained. The government is not doing any prevention and it is telling the police to handle national security without giving them a single cent more.

This government's policy on combatting violent extremism is a big fat failure.

• (1920)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we take the recruitment of young Canadians by jihadi terrorists very seriously. We are well aware that jihadi terrorists have declared war against Canada.

[*English*]

It is important to remember whom we are talking about. These are groups like the Toronto 18 and ISIL, people who are intent on murdering Canadians to drive their ideology forward.

Allow me to quote what Ontario Superior Court Justice Deena Baltman had to say about a terrorist who was sentenced to 10 years in jail for planning to join the Islamic jihadist group in Somalia. She stated, "Terrorists are the worst kinds of cowards because they deliberately target innocent members of the public who are not prepared for combat".

The government is taking action to ensure Canadian families are safe and that our police forces have the tools they need to get the job

done and stop people like this. Our approach to countering jihadi terrorism is clearly articulated in this year's Public Report on the Terrorist Threat to Canada.

The first step in dealing with radicalization to violence is ensuring that families and communities understand the problem and recognize it when it is happening. Through the Cross-Cultural Roundtable on Security, the government is working with leaders and communities across the country to detect problems early on, before they can lead to radicalization. This effort is helping communities develop strategies to take action against jihadi terrorism on their own terms. An underlying goal of these engagement efforts is to build mutual trust and respect between law enforcement and the community it serves.

It is important to reach a wide range of community members, including other law enforcement agencies, families, educators, health care professionals, and social services. Bill C-51, the anti-terrorism act, 2015, would provide a number of new tools that can be used in the countering of jihadi terrorism. These include a proposed new Criminal Code offence that would criminalize the promotion of terrorism. This new offence would provide an additional tool to counter radicalization through arresting and prosecuting terrorist recruiters and propaganda agents and would assist community leaders and family members in their efforts to counter radicalization.

Jihadi sympathizers, who are only too happy to relay this message of hate and have used platforms like Facebook to prey upon the young and recruit them to their hateful cause, are no less guilty than the goons of ISIL. This legislation would make sure that the law acknowledges this and that ISIL promoters are held accountable. As well, the new legislation would make it easier for the police to detain suspected terrorists before they can harm Canadians and give CSIS a new mandate to take action to disrupt threats to the security of Canada.

It is important to recognize the roles and responsibilities that we all have for preventing people from being radicalized to violence and criminality. This is not only a law enforcement issue. Each and every relative has a vital role in addressing the threat from radicalization to violence. Those responses must be based upon a real understanding of the issue on the part of all Canadians.

For such reasons, the Government of Canada is investing in research and the development of new and innovative tools to counter violent extremism through the Kanishka project, a \$10 million initiative that is directly contributing to our implementation of the counterterrorism strategy. At the same time, we must also ensure that our security and intelligence agencies have the tools they need to investigate and, where appropriate, take reasonable measures to address threats.

I am confident our government has struck the right balance, working with communities to build their resilience to radicalization while enhancing the tools available to our security and intelligence agencies.

Adjournment Proceedings

•(1925)

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani: Mr. Speaker, fighting terrorism requires resources, not just laws. I have heard a lot about Bill C-51 from police officers on the ground who, until now, have been working with communities to identify at-risk youth. These officers have told me that Bill C-51 will interfere with their work and the trust they have built with these young people and their families.

Moreover, the RCMP does not have all the resources it needs. We cannot tell a police force that it has to handle national security without giving it additional resources. Resources allocated to organized crime will be transferred to national security, and that is unacceptable.

I would like to make another point. They talk about understanding the phenomenon and addressing it, but for that to happen, there has to be research. Research needs funding, not cuts.

To close, I want to say that it is fine for people to do some verbal sparring and talk about what they are going to do, but what really matters is taking action. That is not what we are seeing from this government.

[*English*]

Mr. Colin Carrie: Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we are committed to keeping Canadian families safe. We are dedicated to ensuring that young Canadians do not become radicalized by jihadi terrorists and their sympathizers and that these agents of hate are stopped.

We will continue to work with communities and law enforcement to develop the tools and support that they need to intervene with people who are on a pathway of radicalization. We will also ensure that our security and intelligence agencies have the tools they need to respond to developing threats and keep Canadians safe.

[*Translation*]

PENSIONS

Ms. Manon Perreault (Montcalm, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the House will agree with me that the cost of living keeps going up. Whether we are talking about food, the cost of energy, or housing, the situation has changed considerably over the past few years.

Current banking policy, the real estate market and the concentration of wealth lead us to believe that the situation will not improve any time soon, while the value of our personal savings seems to keep falling.

In that context, a vast majority of Canadians are worried about the quality of life of their elders, their grandparents, their neighbours, or their colleagues who are starting to experience financial difficulties at an advanced age.

To experience economic uncertainty after spending a lifetime saving money for a comfortable retirement is a sorry injustice. In most cases, seniors' pensions are calculated at a strict minimum, which is often not commensurate with the services rendered.

The current government has not only failed to propose solutions but it is also failing to protect retirees' assets. With its measure on the

age of retirement, the government is again pushing the tolerable limits in terms of how long people can keep working. Budget cuts will not help our retirees at all. The government must change the age of retirement from 67 back to 65. It must also improve the Canada pension plan and increase the minimum guaranteed income supplement.

I repeat: the cost of living is increasing and we cannot reduce the resources available to our seniors.

I am sure that no member here wants to see retirees live in poverty, and that everyone cares about the quality of life of seniors. We need to take concrete action, whether that means implementing appropriate and targeted tax measures, improving access to social housing or implementing any other effective measures.

In my opinion, the crux of the problem is the Canada pension plan, which does not provide seniors with enough support for a peaceful, dignified retirement that meets their expectations. This is a legitimate request that is quite simple in and of itself. We need to act quickly and correct the problem before all gains are lost.

A well-deserved retirement should remain an ideal to strive for and increasing the amounts granted is the first step in helping retirees to maintain their lifestyle.

The government promised to improve the Canada pension plan and the guaranteed income supplement, but it is slow to propose concrete solutions and to implement more humane policies in this area.

If this was just my opinion based on moral principles, we could discuss it at length. However, in this case, the opinion I am expressing echoes the views of many stakeholders who are familiar with the challenges faced every day by Canadian retirees.

Experts such as seniors' advocacy groups, unions and financial experts on pensions are clear. There is a definite consensus: we must improve the Canada pension plan.

It obviously goes without saying that the principles of sound management require an appropriate response from the government. We cannot stand by and watch the degradation of our seniors' quality of life. There are solutions, and the options available to us require greater use of our collective resources.

Given that it would be irresponsible and dangerous to take an ideological approach to this debate, here is my question to the government here today: what concrete action does the Conservative government realistically plan to take to help our seniors stay afloat? Also, could the government give us an idea of what sort of timeframes Canada pension plan recipients will have to face, since they are struggling to make ends meet, before seeing a substantial improvement in their quality of life?

•(1930)

[*English*]

Hon. Mike Lake (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I welcome the opportunity to address the question of the hon. member for Montcalm.

Adjournment Proceedings

It is understandable that hard-working Canadians want their pensions to be protected. That is why our government has taken broad-based action to ensure that these benefits are protected and continue to be protected.

Our government understands the challenges that an employer's restructuring or insolvency can cause for employees and pensioners. The government has taken several steps to better protect Canadian workers when their employers become insolvent.

We have acted to improve the solvency of pension plans and the security of retirement income for Canadians, while avoiding measures that would have negative consequences for the Canadian economy and our shared prosperity.

For example, in July 2008 we introduced the wage earner protection program to guarantee that Canadian workers receive their unpaid wages of up to \$3,400 in a receivership or a bankruptcy. We then took additional steps to expand the wage earner protection program to include severance and termination pay.

It is also important to mention that, in July 2010 and in April 2011, our government implemented important pension reforms to strengthen the federal private pension framework in order to benefit pension plan sponsors, plan members, and retirees.

These reforms have enhanced protections for pension plan members, reduced funding volatility for defined benefit pension plans, made it easier for participants to negotiate changes to pension arrangements, improved the framework for defined contribution plans and for negotiated contribution plans, and modernized the rules for pension fund investments.

Our government has also amended Canadian insolvency law to protect hard-working Canadians. Our reforms ensure that insolvent employers pay outstanding pension contributions to their employees' pension plans ahead of the claims of secured and unsecured creditors.

In addition, our government has undertaken a very serious and public discussion with Canadians on their retirement income, now and in the future.

Recognizing that retirement income issues have federal, provincial, and territorial dimensions, finance ministers set up a joint federal-provincial working group to conduct an in-depth examination of retirement income adequacy. Based on the working group's findings, it was agreed at all levels to proceed with analysis of options to improve Canada's retirement income system.

In December 2010, Canada's finance ministers agreed on a framework for defined contribution pooled registered pension plans. These plans will provide a new, accessible, large-scale, and low-cost pension option for employers, employees, and the self-employed.

Pooled registered pension plans are now available to employees in federally regulated industries as well as residents of the territories.

This is an important step forward in helping Canadians prepare for retirement. Pooled registered pension plans will allow many small business owners and their employees to have access to such a plan for the very first time. They establish a large-scale, broad-based, voluntary pension arrangement available to employees, including the self-employed.

Canadian pensioners have worked hard to build this country, raise their children, and prepare for their retirement. As a result of our government's actions, pensioners will have more choice and flexibility in regard to life, work, and retirement.

● (1935)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Manon Perreault: Mr. Speaker, above and beyond maintaining our seniors' quality of life and preserving the dignity of workers who retire, there is another economic factor that is important to consider when it comes to pensions.

When seniors become impoverished, our society as a whole is affected. If the purchasing power of a large segment of the population is diminished to the level of a subsistence income, many Canadians will have to absorb those losses.

Our economic system is built on a delicate balance that we absolutely must maintain. Businesses, services, the tourism and recreation industry—everyone suffers when the government goes after seniors' pensions.

Can the member give us a clear idea of the government's plan to stop this increasingly shameful situation from getting even worse?

[*English*]

Hon. Mike Lake: Mr. Speaker, our government's amendments to the Pension Benefits Standards Act in 2010 and 2011 brought Canada's pension regulations in line with international benchmarks and best practices. Therefore, our government has demonstrated a strong commitment to protecting workers and pensioners and has taken concrete action to help them.

These changes, as well as our government's sound economic management, have coincided with significant improvements in the financial status of federally regulated pensions.

According to the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, federally regulated private pension plan assets increased by 10% between April 1, 2013, and March 31, 2014. Additionally, as of December 31, 2013, solvency positions of federally regulated pensions improved to 0.98%, up from 0.83% at year-end 2012.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:38 p.m.)

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