



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, March 22, 2017**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Geoff Regan**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1405)

[English]

**The Speaker:** It being Wednesday, we will now have the singing of *O Canada*, led by the hon. member for Windsor—Tecumseh.

[Members sang the national anthem]

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[Translation]

### COMMENTS PUBLISHED IN *MACLEAN'S*

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's number one magazine, *Maclean's*, has just published more of the anti-Quebec drivel that we have come to expect from it.

According to *Maclean's*, Quebec is a pathologically alienated and deficient society compared to the rest of Canada. Basically, it lacks social solidarity. We are becoming accustomed to being scorned by Canada, and increasingly outraged. Quebec-bashing has become socially acceptable in Canada. No other community could ever be humiliated this way without the House of Commons reacting with shock and outrage. If the author had written that Catholics, the Greek community, or homosexuals, for example, are pathologically alienated, the House would have rightly reacted vigorously and unanimously in the face of such an abuse. However, when Quebec is the victim, it does not matter.

Yesterday the member for La Pointe-de-l'Île moved a motion to condemn *Maclean's*, but the House rejected it. That move speaks volumes about the respect that federal parliamentarians have for Quebec.

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### “COMMANDE UN ANGELOT”

**Mr. Nicola Di Iorio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the “Commande un Angelot” campaign is a great initiative.

Designed to protect people from sexual assault in bars, the initiative is based on the success of the “Ask for Angela” and “Angel Shot” campaigns in the U.K. and the U.S., respectively. It is

essentially a protocol enabling bar employees to help women and men who feel threatened and need help.

Individuals fearing for their safety simply order an “Angelot” neat, with ice, or with lime depending on how much help they feel they need.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this initiative by raising awareness in their communities.

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### 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF CONFEDERATION

**Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoilou, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this year, 2017, all Canadians from coast to coast to coast will be emphatically united in proudly celebrating the 150th anniversary of our great Confederation. That is why, in the first weeks of my term in Beauport—Limoilou, it was my goal to make sure we organized unique festivities for all to enjoy.

Together with Limoilou en Vrac and Société d'art et d'histoire de Beauport, I am very proud to announce today that there will be two distinct celebrations of Canada's 150 anniversary this summer in my riding. One will be held in Limoilou and the other in Vieux-Beauport. Combining historic celebrations and family activities, each event promises to be exciting. We expect that more than 10,000 people from Beauport—Limoilou will attend.

In closing, I want to point out that the purpose of these festivities is to celebrate Canada, its strength, courage, dynamism, and tenacity, but especially the extraordinary people who live and work here day after day.

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[English]

### NOWRUZ

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to take a moment to send our thoughts to our colleagues in Britain in Westminster right now who are going through a very scary moment. I extend my deepest sympathy.

[Translation]

I want to take a moment today to acknowledge the Persian new year, Nowruz.

Nowruz is a great time of renewal celebrated by our fellow citizens of Afghan and Iranian descent and by many other communities in western Asia. It marks the first day of spring.

*Statements by Members*

[English]

Nowruz means “new day”, which upon reflection can be viewed as a fresh start, a second chance, a time to rejuvenate, and a time for hope.

[Translation]

As springtime begins, although it always seems to arrive a few weeks later in Canada, I remain inspired by the positive changes taking shape across our country. I sincerely believe that we live in one of the best countries in the world, a country that never ceases to get stronger and fairer, a country that is boldly focused on the future. To all those celebrating this special day, *Eid-eh Shoma Mobarak*.

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**ARMENIAN GENERAL BENEVOLENT UNION**

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, today I would like to highlight the Armenian community's contribution to Canada. There are many Armenian organizations whose contributions strengthen our society. One of them is the Armenian General Benevolent Union, a charitable organization that today is celebrating its 60th anniversary in Canada.

At the very heart of the AGBU we find its community centres, which offer services and activities for all ages and groups, from Bees, who are the youngest Scouts, to sports teams and members of seniors clubs.

The Saturday school offers children's activities such as dance, painting, and photography.

In the same vein, education is of the utmost importance to the Union. In Montreal, the AGBU supports Alex Manoogian School. In addition to passing on the Armenian culture, this school also responds to crises. For example, Alex Manoogian School warmly welcomes refugees who need to learn French.

*Shnorhagallem*. Well done and congratulations to the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

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[English]

**ISABELLA FERRARA**

**Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I also want to mention today that my thoughts are with those in London struggling with the tragedy unfolding there at the moment.

I rise today, though, to honour the life and community contributions of Isabella Ferrara, of Vaughan, who suddenly passed away on February 13. Isabella was a social activist and strong advocate for seniors' causes. She believed that an active social life could help provide important supports for many seniors. Her work, both as president of the Pine York Seniors' Club and as founder of SAVI, the Seniors Association of Vaughan Initiative, was instrumental in forging a vibrant, tightly knit, and healthy seniors community in Vaughan.

In recognition of her significant contribution, Isabella received awards across all levels of government: the Order of Vaughan, the Ontario Senior Achievement Award, and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal.

Our thoughts are with Vince, her husband, who was always supportive of her activities, and her family. Isabella Ferrara is an example to us all of a life well lived. *Grazie*.

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● (1410)

**CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE**

**Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with the British Parliament today as well.

Tomorrow the Drumheller and District Chamber of Commerce will hold its 2017 annual general meeting. I wish the Chamber of Commerce members all the best during their deliberations.

We know that the citizens of Drumheller and surrounding communities, like many places in our province and country, count on the work of a strong local chamber of commerce. The hard work accomplished by members of local chambers facilitates prosperous businesses and helps provide jobs and economic growth in the communities where they serve.

It is important for all of us to work together in the current difficult economic times. All across my large and mainly rural riding of Battle River—Crowfoot, the folks in many small towns, villages, and hamlets benefit from the work of our local volunteers, who provide their time and effort in support of their local economies, both large and small. All members of Parliament in the House should make an effort to acknowledge the good work of their local community leaders who contribute to the work of local chambers of commerce.

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**JAMES MCGRATH**

**Mr. Nick Whalen (St. John's East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. James A. McGrath, former member of the House and eighth lieutenant governor of Newfoundland, passed away on February 28. He was a generous and charismatic figure, and a staunch defender of Newfoundland.

Jim was born in Buchans in 1932 to a family of 13, and was first elected in 1957 to our riding of St. John's East. In his seven Parliaments, he distinguished himself in countless ways, notably as the minister of fisheries and also by authoring a report on the reform of our House of Commons, a report which led to our Speaker being elected by secret ballot.

In 1986, he accepted an appointment as lieutenant governor of Newfoundland, an office he served until 1991.

McGrath's devotion to Newfoundland and Labrador and its people continued throughout his life, including support for education and the arts.

He is survived by his wife Margaret, and three generations of children, some of whom are celebrating with us here today.

I thank the Hon. James McGrath and his family for a lifetime of public service.

*Statements by Members*

[Translation]

**GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY**

**Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the riding of Laval—Les Îles includes a remarkable Hellenic community of more than 11,000 people.

The families who had the courage to immigrate to Canada, to integrate, and to share their cultural heritage contributed to the success of Canada's multiculturalism. The Greek community is inclusive and supportive, and it has built strong ties with members of the broader community where they live. They have contributed to the development of our society as a whole.

Greek Independence Day is widely celebrated on March 25, and I will be wholeheartedly participating in the celebrations.

Happy Greek Independence Day to the entire Greek community in Laval—Les Îles, Laval, and Canada.

*Zito Hellas!*

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[English]

**ARMENIAN GENERAL BENEVOLENT UNION**

**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 60th anniversary of the Canadian branch of the Armenian General Benevolent Union. The AGBU in Canada is a member of the worldwide Armenian family, sharing its proud heritage. The AGBU is the world's largest non-profit organization, headquartered in New York City, with an annual budget of around \$50 million, made possible by countless benefactors.

Each year, the AGBU is committed to making a difference in the lives of 500,000 people across Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh, and in the Armenian diaspora. It has an active presence in 31 countries and 74 cities, and addresses the needs of Armenians in traditional and progressive programs worldwide, from schools, scouts, camps, support for the arts, internships, virtual learning, and young professional networks.

On its 60th anniversary, I want to salute the Armenian General Benevolent Union leadership, its volunteers and benefactors.

\* \* \*

• (1415)

[Translation]

**ARMENIAN GENERAL BENEVOLENT UNION**

**Ms. Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in 1957, the world's largest Armenian non-profit organization, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, set up shop in Montreal. The organization then spent the next 60 years providing exceptional service to the community through educational, cultural, social, sports, and humanitarian programs.

[English]

The AGBU is focused on becoming a second home to so many. It offers multi-age, multi-purpose programs and services to not only its own community but also to the community at large.

[Translation]

The Armenian General Benevolent Union has made education one of its top priorities and supports schools, such as the Alex Manoogian School in Montreal.

It has provided French language training and integration services to people from Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt and, more recently, Syria.

[English]

On this occasion, I wish to congratulate the Armenian General Benevolent Union in Canada on its 60th anniversary.

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**NOWRUZ**

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise in the House today to mark Nowruz, celebrated by 300 million people with cultural roots in western and central Asia. This joyous holiday is a festive occasion that brings together people of different cultures and languages to welcome the spring.

A 3,000-year-old tradition, Nowruz is by now also a deeply cherished holiday for thousands of Canadians from coast to coast to coast, including many in my riding of Willowdale. Many in Canada gathered around the haft-seen table to celebrate renewal and the arrival of new beginnings. Allow me to wish them a happy Nowruz.

Also, I certainly hope and trust that today's tabling of a new budget by our government in a few hours will be inspired by the very same Nowruz spirit of renewal. It was the Persians, after all, who introduced banking and finance to the world, which seems fitting to mention today.

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**LEADER OF THE ALBERTA PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES**

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise today on behalf of the Alberta Conservative caucus to congratulate our friend and former colleague, Jason Kenney. Over the weekend, Jason was elected in convincing fashion as the leader of the Alberta PC party.

First elected to the House in 1997, Jason held many portfolios while he was an MP and cabinet minister, but leader of the Alberta PC party might be the most important position he has ever held.

Jason has been recognized for his tireless work ethic, and he is one of the strongest and most respected voices within the conservative movement.

My friends Brian Jean and Jason are now tasked with a monumental challenge in uniting the conservative-principled parties in Alberta. A task of this magnitude left to lesser individuals might not succeed. Their co-operation, understanding, and dedication to all Albertans will be what puts our province back on track to prosperity, to the benefit of all Canadians. The road may not always be smooth, and there may be disagreements, but the outcome is too important and the stakes are too high.

### Oral Questions

On behalf of the Alberta Conservative caucus, I want to congratulate Jason on his victory. We stand ready to restore the Alberta advantage.

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#### WORLD WATER DAY

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, World Water Day gains in significance every year as it becomes more and more obvious that water, our most precious and live-giving resource, is under increasing pressure from population growth, overuse, pollution, and the drought and flooding effects of climate change.

[Translation]

Here in Canada, we are lucky to have an abundance of fresh water. Of course, there are still many challenges to overcome—for example, the fact that first nations and other remote communities are often under boil water advisories and that new contaminants may be getting into our lakes, rivers, and waterways.

[English]

Canada is home to a critical mass of expertise in water resource management. World Water Day is an opportunity to remind ourselves that we are a water nation, with a destiny to be a model in freshwater management and a leader in promoting global water security in an increasingly water stressed world.

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#### MARGARET MITCHELL

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on International Women's Day, the universe lost a champion of social justice and a staunch advocate for women's rights with the passing of former Vancouver East MP Margaret Mitchell.

In 1982, Margaret stood in Parliament and brought attention to the shameful reality that 10% of Canadian women were experiencing domestic violence and was laughed at by the men in the House. Unflinching, Margaret responded “That's no laughing matter.” It was a watershed moment that woke the consciousness of Canada.

She was never afraid to take on issues. Margaret was the first MP who stood in the House demanding the federal government redress the Chinese head tax. She challenged health authorities who wanted to stop the sale of Chinese barbecued pork and duck. Her legacy and fighting spirit will always be felt in Vancouver East.

A condolences book is available. I invite people to share their memories of Margaret with her family and friends.

\* \* \*

●(1420)

#### ATTACK ON THE PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

**Hon. Peter Kent (Thornhill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as we have heard, there has been an attack on our mother parliament in Great Britain. There are reports of multiple casualties, including a police officer, in what is being considered a terrorist attack.

While the details are still being confirmed, what is known is that today there has been an attack on democracy.

Canada and the United Kingdom share many links, bonds, and traditions, including our head of state, our system of government, and now, unfortunately, modern attacks on our parliaments.

The scenes out of London will no doubt bring back dark memories for many of us here in the House today. Our thoughts and prayers are with our colleagues across the Atlantic. We thank the police and the security forces that defend these houses of parliament, those in the U.K., and all houses of democracy around the world.

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#### ATTACK ON THE PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

**Mr. Frank Baylis (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that we learned of today's incident at the parliament of the United Kingdom. It was only last week that I and a delegation of colleagues travelled to London to reaffirm the importance of our long-standing partnership.

An attack on parliament is an attack on democracy itself. As members of the House know all too well, the democratic institutions of government can be targeted by those who seek to strike fear into the hearts and minds of our citizens.

While reports are still coming in and details continue to be confirmed, we strongly condemn violence in any form. Canada and the United Kingdom are close friends and allies. We have a shared history, and many of us are bound by family ties.

As chair of the Canada-United Kingdom Inter-Parliamentary Association, and on behalf of all members of the House, I would like to share our thoughts and prayers with the British people, as well as with our colleagues and friends from the British parliament. We stand with them.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

#### INCIDENT AT U.K. PARLIAMENT

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today in London, the U.K. Parliament is the scene of an attack, an attack all too familiar to many members of the House and those who work here. While there are still many questions yet to be answered around the circumstances, on behalf of the official opposition, I offer my sincere condolences and prayers to all of those who are affected.

Will the Prime Minister join me in condemning these attacks and offer any and all support to our U.K. friends?

*Oral Questions*

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her statement and support. We were all saddened to learn about today's incident near the British Parliament in London. I express my deepest condolences to the victims of this cowardly attack. The scene unfolding in London is one that is all too familiar to members of this House who were here two and a half years ago.

[Translation]

Today's attack on the United Kingdom Parliament is an attack on the world's democracies.

[English]

An attack on the symbol and the seat of democracy is a cowardly and reprehensible act that we condemn in the strongest terms. Canada and the U.K. are close friends and allies and our message to the citizens of the United Kingdom and our colleagues in the British Parliament is simple: we stand with you.

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**IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, for decades, Canada has had one of the strongest and most successful immigration and refugee programs in the world. That is because we have detailed laws, passport requirements, borders, and visas, all to ensure that our system is fair and rules based. This actually ensures the integrity and the success of our system.

Will the Prime Minister strongly signal to all those who want to make Canada their home that they must follow the rules?

• (1425)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada is extraordinarily fortunate because we have citizens who understand that a strong immigration policy is a benefit to the country, but also requires a rigorous process and protected borders. That is why we are ensuring that all Canadian laws are being followed. We continue to make sure that our police agencies and border services have all the resources they need to deal with situations that arise, as, for example, are arising in Manitoba and in Quebec. We continue to make sure that Canadians are confident that our system is strong and solid.

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**STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it was about a year ago the Prime Minister tried to push through changes to Parliament's rules to silence the opposition. That attempt ended in complete failure and he had to back down, but yet, here he is again, at it again, wanting to centralize his power. This time he wants to shut down debate and he only wants to show up for question period one day a week.

Why is the Prime Minister so determined to avoid accountability?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, we were pleased to put out a broad discussion paper on how we can make improvements to the functioning of this House of Commons so that members can better hold the government to account, so we can move forward on legislation, so we can make

for a better work-life balance for the many individuals in this House with young families. This is so that members can do a better job of working efficiently here in Ottawa while serving their constituents back at home.

I am excited to be launching an open conversation for all members of this House to participate in. I encourage the members opposite to continue to contribute their thoughtful ideas to this process.

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's plan undermines the very principles of responsible and accountable government. The fact that the Prime Minister does not want to show up to answer questions more than once a week shows what little respect he has for Canada's Parliament. As inconvenient as he thinks it is, Parliament is actually the seat of our democracy, and central to that is the role of the opposition.

Can the Prime Minister explain to us why he is willing to undermine our system of democracy simply to get out of answering tough questions?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased to be here in this House to answer tough questions, and easy ones like the member just asked me.

The fact is that we are always looking for ways to improve things, and today, as we reflect upon the seat of democracy in London, the fact is that we are putting forward a broad range of proposals, including one—

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

**The Speaker:** Order. I am having trouble hearing the answer. I know members are anxious to hear both the question and the answer. I would ask members to co-operate.

The right hon. Prime Minister has the floor.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I am happy to highlight that we are always open to improvements and ways to be able to hold this government to account. That includes looking at how things are done elsewhere, including in the U.K., where the prime minister has an entire question period devoted to answering questions.

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is proposing to change the rules so he can actually silence the opposition. His plan is to restrict debate, shorten the work week, and limit his attendance at question period to one day a week. No one has ever attempted gutting accountability like this.

I would like to ask him a simple question. What would he have done if former prime minister Stephen Harper had proposed the same thing?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the previous government would not have put out an open discussion paper nor would it have engaged with the opposition in proposed months of discussion in committee on the best way to move forward.

*Oral Questions*

We are happy to be launching an open conversation on how to improve the functioning of this Parliament in a way that meets the needs of Canadian families and Canadian members of Parliament. The fact is we are happy that we are launching in an open way an important conversation that apparently the members opposite really do not want to have.

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, as is often the case, we did not actually get an answer to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition. The Prime Minister is going further than Stephen Harper would have ever dared to do in telling Canadians he only wants to show up in question period once a week.

I am going to ask the question again. What would the Prime Minister's reaction have been if Stephen Harper had dared to propose what he is proposing?

• (1430)

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Again, Mr. Speaker, the way we are going about this is by opening a discussion, having an open conversation with the members opposite about how to—

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

**The Speaker:** Order. I know that the hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton and others will want to hear both the question and the answer. I am sure they will manage to calm themselves. Members in all parties can listen to what they hear even when they do not like it and not react.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder about the schoolchildren in the gallery who are wondering how effective this Parliament actually is right now.

We are proposing a way to discuss how to improve the quality of debate and allow the government to be held to account in a thoughtful, responsible way, and this kind of shouting is what they get. That is not worthy of this Parliament. It is not worthy of the people they serve.

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, with answers like that, we really could replace him with a cardboard cutout, and his peanut gallery would never notice the difference.

[*Translation*]

If the Prime Minister was serious when he said that he wanted to work with the other parties, will he agree to set up a proportional committee where no party can impose changes solely to their own advantage?

If he is worried about the reaction of the students who are here today, will he act democratically for once in his life?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to welcome all the young people in the gallery. We are going to present a budget that will help the middle class and assure its future. That is the type of thing that we should be discussing. The fact that we are proposing—

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

It is possible for members to get their point across without everyone talking at the same time. Members can raise good points, but only one person at a time.

The right hon. Prime Minister.

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are worried about their future. That is why we are pleased to present a budget that invests in their future and that helps the middle class.

I look forward to answering questions about what we are doing for Canadians, because that is what our job requires, that is, serving Canadians to the best of our ability.

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

**The Speaker:** I would ask the hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier to calm down.

The hon. member for Outremont.

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**ETHICS**

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is simple. In the Prime Minister's opinion, what would be an appropriate penalty for ministers who violate the Conflict of Interest Act?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians expect all parliamentarians to have the highest ethical standards and behaviour that is beyond reproach. It is essential that we maintain Canadians' trust and demonstrate an approach that is worthy of the trust that Canadians have in us.

**Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Outremont, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, when a minister breaches that trust, what is the penalty? Instead of going around in circles, the Prime Minister would do well to respond soon.

[*English*]

To be clear, Canadians believe that there is no problem with the Prime Minister taking a vacation, but Canadians do have a problem with the Prime Minister accepting illegal gifts, breaking the law, and then charging the taxpayers over \$125,000.

Does the Prime Minister honestly believe that paying back a mere \$4,000 is enough when he blew over \$125,000 of hard-earned taxpayers' money?

**Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as is the custom for previous prime ministers, we repaid the cost of equivalent commercial flights, but for the first time, we actually put in place a system of rules that oversee that because there was never that in previous Parliaments or under previous prime ministers.

The other fact is the RCMP makes determinations on how to protect the prime minister and we will not second-guess the decisions that the RCMP makes.

*Oral Questions*

•(1435)

**STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**

**Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if he gets his way, we really never will get to second-guess the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister would put everybody's mind at ease if he would just agree that he will not use his majority to ram through changes to the Standing Orders without all-party consent. Unanimity has always been sought for changes to the rules that divide power between government and opposition. For example, the committee that Jean Chrétien set up to review the Standing Orders had unanimous consent written into its mandate, but the current Prime Minister seems to feel that decades of precedents count for nothing.

Why the fiddle duddle will he not commit to the long-standing practice that we do not change the rules without unanimous consent?

**The Speaker:** Members know we cannot say indirectly what we cannot say directly. I would encourage them to be judicious in their choice of words.

The hon. government House leader.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise to respond to the member's question and to remind all Canadians that we have shared a discussion paper with members of Parliament as well as the public. This government, including myself, respects the work of the committee and I believe that members have the opportunity to have an honest conversation.

I actually appreciate a lot of the work that the member opposite has done. I know the committee sat late last night and I know that conversation is starting. All we are asking is let us have a constructive conversation to really modernize the way this place works.

**Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister once expressed his admiration for the basic dictatorship of China. Now it turns out he is trying to bring that dictatorship to life right here in Canada. He is trying to avoid any accountability to Canadians by eliminating debate and by giving the Liberals unprecedented control over the House of Commons and its committees. On top of this, he wants to give all his Liberal MPs Fridays off, and it turns out he, himself, only wants to show up to work one day a week.

Why does the Prime Minister have such a blatant disregard for being held accountable to Canadians?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have shared with members in the House as well as with Canadians, our objective has always been to ensure that Parliament is more relevant for Canadians, to ensure that we can make this place more efficient, more predictable, more transparent, and more accountable. That is the purpose of the discussion paper. It is a conversation we would like to have with all colleagues in this place. I am also encouraging Canadians to be part of this conversation. As we all know, this place belongs to Canadians and that is exactly whom we are here to serve.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canadian workers get up every morning and go to work to earn a living. Now the government is considering cutting back our hours of work here in Ottawa. Spending more and working less: what kind of example is that setting for society?

Merely thinking up the idea is immoral. The Liberals say this is just a consultation. Can the Liberal government work to create a prosperous Canada? Can the government respect all members and commit to changing the rules only if there is unanimous consent?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government knows that the work members do here in the House and in their ridings is important.

During the election campaign, we vowed to modernize Parliament and turn it into a 21st-century workplace. Our objective has always been to ensure that Parliament is relevant to Canadians and that the House is accountable, predictable, efficient, and transparent.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mark Strahl (Chilliwack—Hope, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals say they want to make Parliament more predictable. The only thing predictable around here is that the Liberals will do whatever it takes, including rigging the rules, to avoid accountability. Predictably, the Prime Minister only likes to show up to places where it is all selfies, slogans, and superficiality, so when he finds an opposition instead of an audience, he predictably heads for the exit.

Since he loves to be loved, will the Liberal whip demand his MPs start applauding the Prime Minister more often so that he could be predicted to maybe show up here for question period more than once a week?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a discussion paper that I released was made available for members of Parliament as well as Canadians. I believe it is a reasonable discussion paper, encouraging members in this place to have a conversation, to have a discussion. The member opposite is misrepresenting the document, as there are many ideas being shared. We would like to see people actually having a thoughtful conversation where we can have opposing views but really come to modernizing this place and bringing it into the 21st century.

•(1440)

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the government House leader introduced a discussion paper, and then mere days later tried to ram that, and is currently ramming that discussion paper, through Parliament.

This is not a discussion. This is not a conversation. This is a dictatorship.

I implore the House leader. I implore the government. All we are asking for is that we all be able to come to agreement, as precedent has set, before any major changes are made. I am asking the government to reset this horrid mess it has created and listen to all of us before any changes are made.

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a discussion paper, and I encourage all members, as well as the public, to read it in its entirety. There are many great ideas, and we are asking the committee to actually broaden the scope of its study. We know that many ideas have already been presented. I have made myself part of that conversation.

Every single member of Parliament is here to do important work for Canadians. We would like to make this place more relevant to Canadians, and I am sure all members would agree that we can work better together.

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this is unbelievable. There can only be one conclusion drawn.

This is a quote with which I am sure the Prime Minister is very familiar: “Solutions to important problems are decided not by Party committee...but by one individual.” Do members know who said that? It was Chinese dictator Chairman Mao.

Canada is not China. Canada is not a dictatorship. The Prime Minister is not the supreme emperor, so maybe he could do Canadians a favour, take another vacation, and not come back until he is ready to stop acting like those dictators he so admires.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected—

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

**The Speaker:** Order. Order—

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

**The Speaker:** Order.

The member for Grande Prairie—Mackenzie will come to order. I have heard lots of members yelling and heckling, and I have heard enough of it. The hon. government House leader has the floor.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. This question period could be a lot shorter if it is not quiet.

Order. The Speaker can only see so much, folks, and I can only put up with so much, and I am looking in all directions.

The hon. government House leader has the floor. We will have some order.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do believe that this is actually demonstrating more of a reason why this conversation and discussion is necessary.

Every single member of Parliament is elected by their constituents to represent their voice in this place. It is important for us to have these conversations so that we can better serve the Canadians that we are here to represent. These are tough conversations, I agree, but I think they are important conversations for us to have, and that is why I released a discussion paper not only for members of Parliament but

for the public to also participate in so that we can have the important conversations that we need to have.

\* \* \*

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in an unprecedented act, the federal government is dropping its judicial case against 36 individuals arrested in the largest anti-Mafia sting since the Rizzuto case. Thanks to Liberal dithering, serious criminal charges are being either stayed or withdrawn.

Is this the reason that the Liberal government is abandoning this case? Is the Minister of Justice going to throw six years of anti-Mafia investigations in the trash because they refuse to provide proper resources to our justice system?

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, decisions such as this are made by the Public Prosecution Service, which is independent of government. I will say that there are still charges pending in this case.

Further to that, I will use this opportunity to again talk about the reforms that we are making and the comprehensive review of the criminal justice system that we are undertaking, including sentencing reform and looking at bail reform. We introduced an open and transparent process for judges to ensure public safety, respect for victims, and respect for the charter. I look forward to continuing this work.

\* \* \*

● (1445)

[*Translation*]

**SOFTWOOD LUMBER**

**Ms. Karine Trudel (Jonquière, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, budget day brings with it high expectations about the future of thousands of jobs in the softwood lumber sector in the Saguenay and across Quebec.

We are still waiting for the government to share information about its plan for the forestry industry. The government has a unique opportunity to show that it is taking the possibility of a trade war with the United States seriously by proposing a plan B that involves loan guarantees.

Will the government step up once and for all and show that it is ready to act on behalf of workers in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean and Quebec?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday, we recognize the importance of Canada's forestry sector. We have initiated a very good dialogue with the provinces that could be affected by new measures. We will absolutely have a plan to work together to protect jobs in this country. Canadians can count on us.

*Oral Questions*

[English]

**ETHICS**

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister thinks he is elected royalty and Canadians should lavish him with exotic island vacations, nannies, and a jet-setting lifestyle. The Prime Minister spent \$127,000 on his island excursion with the famjam and his BFFs. Seventeen hundred dollars were spent on food and drinks alone for a three-hour flight. There are people in my riding who are struggling to pay the mortgage, but the Prime Minister thinks he is entitled to his caviar and champagne.

Why does this wealthy trust-fund Prime Minister think he can abuse taxpayers' dollars entertaining himself this way?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as was the case for previous prime ministers, including the former prime minister, for security reasons the RCMP accompanies the Prime Minister, whether for personal or business purposes. It was this government that recognized that there was not a policy in place and asked the Clerk of the Privy Council office to help set some guidelines.

I would also like to remind the member that it was this government that lowered taxes on middle-class Canadians by increasing taxes on the wealthiest 1% of Canadians. Conservatives voted against that measure, but I am sure the member would agree that the middle-class tax cut has benefited hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Canadians.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Red Deer—Lacombe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder the Prime Minister only wants to be here one day a week. When someone thinks he is elected royalty, he does not have to work, and the average Canadian can pick up the tab for caviar and champagne, but when the Prime Minister wants to fire up the old Challenger, jet off to an island, and get away to entertain his friends, he just pulls out the old taxpayer credit card.

Can the Prime Minister justify to Canadians why they are on the hook for his \$127,000 vacation and his \$1,700 snack bill?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is this government that lowered taxes on middle-class Canadians by increasing taxes on the wealthiest 1% of Canadians. It was this government that introduced the Canada child benefit to help families with children who need help the most, to ensure that they get the most. It was this government that took unprecedented levels of public consultation so that we could respond to the very real challenges that Canadians are facing.

In regard to the member's question, when we took office, there were no guidelines in place. One of the first things we did was ask the Clerk of the Privy Council office to put guidelines in place, and we will continue to do the good work Canadians expect us to do.

**Mr. Alupa Clarke (Beauport—Limoulu, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is not just a question of role and money. It is a question of principle and honour, and the government has none.

[Translation]

A prime minister must adhere to three guiding principles: he must show humility, show restraint, and manage finances carefully.

When will this Prime Minister finally act with honour, lead by example, and stop wasting Canadians' money?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what exactly was the protocol for previous prime ministers, including the former prime minister?

The RCMP always accompanies the Prime Minister when he travels, whether for business or pleasure.

One of the first things we did was ask the Clerk of the Privy Council to put guidelines in place regarding the travel expenses of the sitting Prime Minister, his family, and their guests.

• (1450)

[English]

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am interested to know how much the finance minister will put in the budget for the Prime Minister's future vacations to billionaire islands.

We just learned it cost taxpayers \$127,000 the last time, and that is before we add the cost of the Ethics Commissioner's investigation. When will the Prime Minister realize that real Canadians are struggling to make ends meet, and they cannot afford, and do not want to pay for, his lavish lifestyle?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians elected our government on a plan to grow the economy and strengthen the middle class, and we are delivering on that very commitment.

Over the last six months, almost 220,000 jobs were created, the majority of which were full-time jobs. This is the strongest six months of job growth in almost a decade. This is evidence that the plan we have put in place is working.

We will continue to make the necessary investments in budget 2017 to continue to strengthen the middle class and those working hard to join it and to create the conditions for growth of our economy.

\* \* \*

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Ms. Sheri Benson (Saskatoon West, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals love to talk up the Canada child benefit. It was supposed to help nine million children out of poverty, but in my riding, there are many families that have to jump through one hoop after another just to submit a claim. What good is a benefit if families that really need it are not getting it?

*Oral Questions*

How many eligible parents have yet to receive the Canada child benefit, and when will the government shift its priorities from protecting the wealthiest to making life more affordable for all Canadians?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all members of the House were delighted with the introduction of the Canada child benefit, which is the most important social policy innovation in a generation. It is because we are not sending benefits and cheques to families of millionaires anymore that we are able to help nine families out of 10, families with six million children across Canada who receive on average \$200 per month, non-taxable, unlike the earlier inequitable tax system.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry—Suroît, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Service alimentaire communautaire, the SAC, has been providing a unique food assistance program to the families of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield since 2001. It may have to close its doors in June, leaving many vulnerable families with nowhere to turn unless the federal government takes urgent action.

A letter was sent to the minister one month ago, but the organization and my constituents have not received a response. A growing number of families in the region are having difficulty putting food on the table. Last December alone, the use of food banks skyrocketed following a 300% increase in demand.

When will the minister take action?

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government was elected because it promised to grow the economy and the middle class and to help more Canadians join the middle class. With that in mind, today's budget will introduce an even more solid program to make our society more inclusive and to ensure that Canadian families that are struggling have a better chance to flourish and succeed.

I would ask the member to listen very carefully to what will be said in just a few minutes.

\* \* \*

**GLOBAL AFFAIRS**

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are proud that their government takes openness and transparency seriously. They appreciate the fact that their government gets them involved in finding solutions to their problems.

Now, it is the international community's turn to demonstrate its confidence in Canada's leadership and openness.

Can the minister explain to the House Canada's new role on the global stage, now that we have been elected to a seat on the steering committee of the Open Government Partnership?

**Hon. Scott Brison (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud that Canada was elected by its international partners to hold one of the four seats on the steering committee of the Open Government Partnership.

The Open Government Partnership is an international organization that brings together 75 countries and hundreds of civil society organizations. We are going to help promote the global movement towards more open and accountable government.

\* \* \*

• (1455)

[*English*]

**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence has been playing fast and loose with the truth. First, there was the Liberals' fabricated fighter jet capability gap, which is really a Liberal credibility gap. Then the minister put an unprecedented gag order on DND officials and stifled debate right here in Parliament. Now the defence minister says it was not him who cut danger pay from our troops fighting ISIS, but I have a document right here with his signature on it that proves that it was.

Will the minister come clean and apologize for misleading Canadians, or is he going to double down on his alternate facts?

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I understand that the member opposite might be feeling a bit of guilt from the time when he was the parliamentary secretary sending our troops overseas without the tax exemption. That was his original question from yesterday. As I told him very openly, we looked at the problem in February 2016 and sent a letter to the finance minister to get this changed. There are rules that were placed in 2014 that we are now reviewing so that we can make sure that when we send troops, they do not have to deal with this issue ever again.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, when I was a young officer in the army, I was taught to be honest, but from what I can see, not everyone received that training.

The minister distorts the facts whenever it suits him. He has made up a capability gap because that will allow him to purchase Super Hornets and please his friends at Boeing. Secondly, to justify the fact that he has not done anything to improve protection for cadets, he is saying that they no longer handle weapons, even though many cadet corps participate in shooting competitions.

Will the minister stop misleading the House and apologize?

[*English*]

**Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am proud of my service in the Canadian Armed Forces as a reservist. I am proud of my combat time.

Every time I make a decision, it is about thinking about when I had boots on the ground. That is how I will take every future decision.

### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, at festivals and events, at consulates and the Canadian embassy in the U.S., cardboard cut-outs of the Prime Minister have started appearing. Much like the real-life version of the Prime Minister, there were plenty of selfies but not much in the way of substance. The cut-outs are so vain that the Prime Minister probably thinks a certain Carly Simon song was about him.

When Canadian seniors and families are paying for the Liberals' tax-and-spend agenda, who thought a cut-out was a good idea, and how much did it cost? What was the Prime Minister thinking?

**Mr. Matt DeCourcey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the promotional item in question was at the discretion of our missions in the United States. The missions have been asked to no longer use these for their events.

Regardless, under this government, Canada is re-engaging in the world to champion the values Canadians hold dear, both here and abroad. This includes taking all opportunities to engage with our international counterparts, including the United States, Canada's partner and ally.

**Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it turns out that the cut-outs became an international embarrassment to the Liberals because of inappropriate things people were doing and posting on social media.

Global Affairs ordered the life-sized effigies taken down, as Liberals knew that they were tarnishing the Prime Minister's celebrity persona. Now the government is refusing to tell Canadians how much they cost.

In just over an hour, Canadians will find out how much more will be lifted from their wallets to pay for frivolous and out-of-control Liberal spending.

Who authorized this half-baked idea, and what were they smoking?

[Translation]

**Mr. Matt DeCourcey (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will reply in our other official language this time.

The use of the promotional item in question was at the discretion of our Canadian missions in the United States. They have been asked to no longer use it for their events.

Regardless, under this government, Canada is re-engaging in the world to champion Canadian values. This includes taking all opportunities to engage with our international counterparts, including the United States, our international friend and ally.

\* \* \*

[English]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Calgary Olympic bid exploration committee is making plans to include Banff's Lake Louise ski area in its 2026 bid. Putting the Olympic Games in Canada's oldest national park would require expanding the resort into protected natural areas. The environment

### Oral Questions

minister has been silent on whether she would permit Olympic expansion in this UNESCO world heritage site.

Will she stand today and firmly reject any further development in Banff National Park?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has a rich and proud history of hosting both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Any bid from any city and province will definitely be looked at within the context of this submission, including under our international hosting sports strategy and policy. We will make a decision once we have all the information, once we have government guarantees, and certainly taking into consideration where this event is supposed to be hosted.

\* \* \*

● (1500)

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, four months ago, a South Korean cargo ship lost 35 containers at sea, and potentially harmful debris is still arriving every day on Vancouver Island's west coast. Large pieces of metal and chunks of styrofoam are contaminating our sensitive ecosystems.

The Liberal government continues to delay and refuses to act. Community volunteers have been forced to start cleanup efforts themselves. Now we learn that the government received \$72,000 from the company to clean up the mess, but it still has not released the funds. Will the government finally step up, do its job, and clean up the mess?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, occasionally incidents such as this do happen, and we have made it clear to the owner of the ship that it is responsible for the cleanup, and we will make sure that it does happen.

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### STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Hon. Tony Clement (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the spectacle in the House today was not a good one for the Prime Minister. He was there laughing and heckling and over-talking the Conservative House leader when she was trying to make a pertinent point about the future of parliamentary democracy in this country. The Prime Minister treats this chamber as his personal chew toy.

We are going to stand in our place, we are going to fight for democracy, and we are going to fight for Canadians' rights. When is the Prime Minister going to be on our side and live up to his promises in the last election, rather than throwing it all out the window for his own personal gain?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate once again the opportunity to rise in the House to talk about the important discussion paper I presented to members of Parliament as well as the public. An important conversation needs to take place. It is important that we read the document in its entirety.

I remember when I was growing up that I talked about change and the importance of change. I remember a good friend of mine saying to me that change starts with me. Every single one of us has a responsibility to Canadians to be part of this conversation. I know we can have a good conversation, a meaningful, constructive conversation, and I encourage all members to be part of it.

**Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals campaigned on a promise of real change. This is real change, a move from democracy to what? A dictatorship? The Chinese style of dictatorship the Prime Minister seems to prefer is creeping its way into committees. Discussions are more like directives.

I would like to ask the vice-chair of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, what is the schedule, what is the agenda, and what are the priorities of the committee on procedure and house affairs?

**Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as we speak, opposition MPs continue to stand up to defend Canadians from the Liberals' attack on democracy. Not only does the Prime Minister only want to show up and be accountable to Canadians one day a week, but I have never seen a more pathetic display of arrogance than I saw in question period today as he laughed and smirked as opposition MPs tried to hold him accountable for his actions.

I can assure him that in the next election, Canadians will wipe that smirk right off his face.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister purports to be a feminist, yet when a strong, confident woman dares to question his arrogance and unilaterally changing the fundamentals of Canadian democracy, he tried to stare her down and yell at her. Will this so-called feminist stand up and apologize to my colleague, or will he once again make a woman do his dirty work?

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be a strong woman who has been empowered by a government to have a voice and to help create the change we were elected to create.

It is clear that this House needs modernization. The House needs this conversation. The House needs a solid, substantial discussion, and that is exactly what I am encouraging all of us to do.

Each of us has a role. Each of us represents a riding. We represent Canadians all together. Let us work better together.

• (1505)

[Translation]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured today to talk about some young leaders in my community. Some of them belong to my riding's community group. These young people are very interested in the environment and want to know how they can get more involved in protecting the environment.

[English]

I would like to ask the Minister of Environment and Climate Change if she could share with the House how young people in Canada can get more involved and play a bigger role in climate change.

[Translation]

**Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook for his question.

It is a shame, but our young people are already seeing the impact of climate change in their communities. I am very happy to see them be part of the solution by buying reusable products, reducing waste, using public transit, and preserving natural spaces.

[English]

I also strongly encourage young Canadians to submit their bold ideas for clean growth to the North American youth innovation challenge. Winners will receive \$5,000 and will have a chance to pitch their innovations to me and my counterparts from Mexico and the United States.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**CANADIAN HERITAGE**

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, now that the Minister of Canadian Heritage is not denying that 87% of the projects approved for Canada 150 are in Liberal ridings in Quebec, can she explain to the House why the objectives and criteria for the Canada 150 program were changed in the summer of 2016?

Does the Prime Minister think it is acceptable to change the criteria and objectives of a program that is already under way?

**Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are very excited about the 150th anniversary celebrations. This is obvious from the thousands of projects we received, all totalling nearly \$2 billion, when we have only \$200 million in available funds.

My colleagues and Canadians know that the celebrations will feature four main themes: youth, the environment, inclusiveness and diversity, and reconciliation with indigenous peoples. I am very pleased to say that Canadians will come through, there will be equitable regional distribution, and when all is said and done, 2017 will be a big year.

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

**Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, an organization in my riding, Projet Harmonie, has been receiving funding since 1999 from the community action program for children. The organization offers services to extremely vulnerable young people, including some struggling with problems related to street gangs.

As a result of a serious internal crisis and administrative management problems, which it has recognized, the organization's funding was cut. Project Harmonie has gotten back on track and would like to restore its partnership with the Public Health Agency.

Will the minister step up and support this important organization?

[English]

**Hon. Jane Philpott (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I assume that the member opposite is speaking about the community action fund. I have heard from several members of the House about the importance of the community action fund. The Public Health Agency of Canada is making sure that all programs that are doing this good and important work have the resources necessary for them and is working with the provinces and territories in that regard. We look forward to continuing to support this kind of work.

\* \* \*

**INNOVATION, SCIENCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, I see more and more entrepreneurs and businesses either starting up something new in the clean-tech sector or creating a business line that offers clean-tech innovation. In a recent report on B.C.'s clean-tech sector, it was reported that there are now 273 clean-tech companies with 8,650 jobs based in B.C. These companies are diversified and operate in everything from transportation to agriculture.

Could the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development please share with us what the government is doing to support this sector and to create good, quality jobs?

**Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge for his leadership on this file.

Last week, I was in beautiful British Columbia and saw first-hand the diversity of this innovative economy, especially the vibrant clean tech sector.

The member opposite has highlighted the leadership role that B. C. is playing in clean tech, with the number of companies, the number of jobs, and these are good-quality jobs that, on average, pay \$84,000. That is why our government invested \$58 million in clean tech jobs. This is about addressing the problems of tomorrow and creating good-quality jobs today.

● (1510)

[Translation]

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Beauport—Côte-de-Beaupré—Île d'Orléans—Charlevoix, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Commissioner of Official Languages tabled a report denouncing the shortage of bilingual agents at Canadian airports. Only 9% of employees in Vancouver, Edmonton, and Toronto speak French.

The Official Languages Act stipulates that all Canadians flying through an airport in Canada should be able to be served in the official language of their choice. Complying with legislation is mandatory, not optional.

When will the Minister of Transport enforce the use of official languages by the employees in question?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, bilingualism is very important to our government, as is respect for official languages. Federal services must be provided in accordance with the Official Languages Act.

Airport security is important and CATSA does good work, but it must also do so by providing service in both languages with courtesy and respect, of course.

\* \* \*

[English]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the International Energy Agency have all urged governments around the world to do two things, at a minimum: to put in place a carbon price and to eliminate all fossil fuel subsidies.

I wonder if the Prime Minister could update us on where we are. We know progress is being made on the carbon price. Where are we on eliminating fossil fuel subsidies?

**Hon. Jim Carr (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad for the question, especially on budget day, because it gives us the chance to reflect back to budget 2016.

The commitments that were made included \$81 billion over 11 years in public transit, green infrastructure, transportation, and smart cities. We are committed to transitioning to a low-carbon economy, while encouraging businesses to innovate, grow, and create good, well-paying jobs for Canadians.

I am sure all members will be very anxious to hear what the Minister of Finance will have to say on the subject only minutes from now.

*Routine Proceedings***POINTS OF ORDER**

## ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Our purpose during question period is to question the government and hold it to account. After asking the question today, the government House leader looked at me and said, "I'm going to get you for this." In that sense, I believe my privilege, and others here, has been violated. As such, I ask you to look into this matter.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have said in the House time and time again, I have the utmost respect for this place. No such comment was made. If the member feels that was the case, I have no problem having a conversation with her. I personally was surprised after their response of what we were getting, but I do believe we can work better in this place.

**The Speaker:** I will review the blues and recordings and come back to the House.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Montcalm on a point of order.

## STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when a parliamentarian is deeply hurt and wronged by comments and debates in the House that undermine the very essence of his work, he must immediately stand up and say so. I therefore rise on a question of privilege.

I humbly address all my colleagues. I heard the House leader of the official opposition refer to the government's approach to procedural reform as dictatorial. I heard the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons say that she wanted to hold a discussion and have all parliamentarians take part in it. I would humbly submit to the House that we have had to witness this exchange even though we cannot sit on the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs or any other committee. Indeed, since October 19, 2015, we have been banned from this type of debate and thus ostracized as parliamentarians.

What I am humbly stating today is that if we want to reform the Standing Orders, I imagine that we want to do so for the good of parliamentary democracy. Therefore, no one would oppose our right to speak, which we had in the case in the Special Committee on Electoral Reform. It is an affront to hear people who have millions of dollars, and so much the better for them, to spend on being heard and having their constituents' voices heard. I was legitimately elected by people who pay their taxes to the federal government and I have the right to sit on the committee that will study parliamentary reforms.

• (1515)

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member from Montcalm for raising this question of privilege.

As the matter is before the committee, I would ask the hon. member to discuss its membership with the committee.

[*English*]

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on much the same point.

[*Translation*]

I completely agree with my Bloc Québécois colleague. This is a problem, but I believe that there is a solution.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** I did not hear the first part of the member's statement. Would she start again, please.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Elizabeth May:** Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with my Bloc Québécois colleague because we have the same problem. Of course I am the only member of the Green Party, but the Green Party is a parliamentary party.

[*English*]

We recognize that the motion before the committee at the moment recognizes that parties that do not sit on the committee as a caucus have some ability to participate, but we are not, at this point, informed as to what that ability would be, and unfortunately, the discussion paper itself makes a large mistake in vocabulary in describing members of the Bloc and members of the Green Party as though we were independents, which we are not.

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel wants to add his comments.

**Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to add that this is the only democracy in the western world that has a double standard for members. We do not see this in any Canadian province or in any western democracy. It is time to address this injustice.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. members for their comments.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

[*English*]

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

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

\* \* \*

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

## INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Mr. Dan Ruimy (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the third report of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology entitled "BillC-25, an Act to amend the Canada Business Corporations Act, the Canada Cooperatives Act, the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and the Competition Act".

*Routine Proceedings*

● (1520)

**PETITIONS**

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to submit a petition from more than 1,600 residents of Alberta.

Many of us in the House will remember the flood of June 2013, which devastated many communities in my riding, including High River. However, what made that flood more damaging to the community was the actions of the RCMP after the flood, where it allegedly illegally entered more than 4,600 homes in the community.

The petitioners ask the government to look into and determine if any of these were unwarranted entries that violated the privacy rights and property rights of High River residents; determine if these entries were contrary to any provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and debate and vote on a motion calling on the government to rebuild trust within the RCMP among High River residents by holding an independent judicial inquiry into the legal justification from the RCMP entering 4,600 homes in High River.

THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table a petition signed by hundreds of young students from my riding of Vancouver Kingsway and the greater Vancouver area who are petitioning the House to draw our attention to the fact that Nestlé is taking water from Hope, B.C. and only paying the price of \$2.25 per million litres. That is less than the price of a chocolate bar. From this, it is making huge profits from our water.

The petitioners point out that numerous droughts and wildfires have happened in B.C. recently. They ask that our House consider stopping Nestlé and other big companies and conserve our water for future generations to come. They also want us to encourage the public to start using reusable bottle and stop buying plastic bottles.

I would like to thank the students of Windermere Secondary School in my riding for their wonderful concern about the environment and our freshwater supplies.

PALLIATIVE CARE

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition in regard to palliative care and the approach that is needed to improve the quality of life of patients and their families.

While I am on my feet, I move:

That the House proceed to orders of the day.

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And five or more members having risen:*

**The Speaker:** Call in the members.

● (1600)

*During the taking of the vote:*

**The Speaker:** Order. The pages will not bring the documents in now. You have to wait.

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

**The Speaker:** Order. We will carry on with the vote.

● (1605)

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

*(Division No. 233)*

**YEAS**

Members

Aboultarif	Albas
Albrecht	Aldag
Alleslev	Allison
Ambrose	Amos
Anderson	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Ayoub	Bagnell
Bains	Barlow
Baylis	Beaulieu
Beech	Bennett
Benson	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boissonnault
Bossio	Boucher
Boudrias	Boutin-Sweet
Brassard	Bratina
Breton	Brisson
Brosseau	Brown
Caesar-Chavannes	Calkins
Cannings	Carr
Carrie	Casey (Cumberland—Colchester)
Casey (Charlottetown)	Chagger
Champagne	Chan
Chen	Choquette
Christopherson	Clarke
Clement	Cooper
Cormier	Cuzner
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	DeCoursey
Deltell	Dhaliwal
Dhillon	Di Iorio
Diotte	Donnelly
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubé	Dubourg
Duclos	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona)
Dusseau	Duvall
Dzerowicz	Eglinski
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Ellis	Erskine-Smith
Eyking	Eyolfson
Falk	Fast
Fergus	Fillmore
Finley	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Foote	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser (West Nova)
Fraser (Central Nova)	Fry
Fuhr	Gallant
Garneau	Garrison
Généreux	Genus
Gerretsen	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goldsmith-Jones	Goodale
Gould	Gourde
Graham	Grewal

*Privilege*

Hajdu  
Harder  
Harvey  
Hoback  
Housefather  
Hussen  
Iacono  
Johns  
Jordan  
Julian  
Kelly  
Khalid  
Kitchen  
Kwan  
Lametti  
Lapointe  
Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation)  
Lebel  
Lebouthillier  
Lemieux  
Levitt  
Lighthouse  
Lockhart  
Longfield  
Lukiwski  
MacGregor  
MacKinnon (Gatineau)  
Malcolmson  
Marcil  
Mathysse  
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)  
McCrimmon  
McGuinty  
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)  
McLeod (Northwest Territories)  
Mendicino  
Miller (Ville-Marie—Le Sud-Ouest—Île-des-Soeurs)  
Monsef  
Morneau  
Motz  
Murray  
Nassif  
Nault  
Obhrai  
Oliphant  
O'Regan  
Paradis  
Pauzé  
Peterson  
Philpott  
Plamondon  
Poissant  
Qualtrough  
Rankin  
Reid  
Richards  
Robillard  
Romanado  
Rudd  
Rusnak  
Sahota  
Sajjan  
Sangha  
Sarai  
Scarpaleggia  
Schmale  
Serré  
Shields  
Sidhu (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon)  
Simms  
Sopuck  
Sorenson  
Stanton  
Stewart  
Stubbs  
Tabbara  
Tassi  
Tilson  
Trudeau  
Van Kesteren  
Vandal  
Vaughan  
Viersen  
Wagantall

Hardcastle  
Hardie  
Hehr  
Holland  
Hughes  
Hutchings  
Jeneroux  
Joly  
Jowhari  
Kang  
Kent  
Khera  
Kmiec  
Lake  
Lamoureux  
Lauzon (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)  
Laverdière  
LeBlanc  
Lefebvre  
Leslie  
Liepert  
Lobb  
Long  
Ludwig  
MacAulay (Cardigan)  
MacKenzie  
Maguire  
Maloney  
Massé (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia)  
May (Cambridge)  
McCauley (Edmonton West)  
McDonald  
McKenna  
McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)  
Mendès  
Mihychuk  
Morrissey  
Mulcair  
Nantel  
Nater  
Nicholson  
O'Connell  
Oliver  
Ouellette  
Paul-Hus  
Pescholido  
Petipas Taylor  
Picard  
Poilievre  
Quach  
Ramsey  
Ratansi  
Rempel  
Rioux  
Rodriguez  
Rota  
Ruimy  
Saganash  
Saini  
Samson  
Sansoucy  
Saroya  
Schieffe  
Schulte  
Sheehan  
Shiple  
Sidhu (Brampton South)  
Sohi  
Sorbara  
Spengemann  
Stetski  
Strahl  
Sweet  
Tan  
Thériault  
Trost  
Trudel  
Van Loan  
Vandenbeld  
Vecchio  
Virani  
Warawa

Warkentin  
Waugh  
Weir  
Wilkinson  
Wong  
Young  
Zahid

Watts  
Webber  
Whalen  
Wilson-Raybould  
Wrzesnewskyj  
Yurdiga  
Zimmer — 300

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Moore

Sgro — 2

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

**Mr. Gordon Brown:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I know members were very enthusiastic about voting today, but in the process of the vote that we just took, a couple of members, the opposition House leader and the New Democratic Party deputy House leader, voted twice. They might want to clarify what their vote is.

**Hon. Candice Bergen:** Mr. Speaker, I wanted to vote yes on that. The reason for this vote is that if the Liberals have their way, this will be the last budget where the opposition will be able to hold them to account. The—

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

● (1610)

[Translation]

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly is rising on a point of order.

**Mr. Matthew Dubé:** Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to clarify something. I wanted to vote in favour of the motion.

[English]

While I am on my feet, since we are talking about unilateral moves and privilege, I would point out that some members received the budget before others. In the spirit of what we are debating today, about the government wanting to do things on its own and not include the opposition, I think that is a great point to raise as well.

**The Speaker:** Order. The member has raised a point of order. I thank the hon. member for Beloeil—Chambly for his point of order.

In fact, the pages were instructed earlier today to distribute the documents. We are not going to blame the pages for this. I will certainly take responsibility for this. We have an unusual circumstance, as we know, and I have previously seen documents distributed before the speech actually begins.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## PRIVILEGE

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE BUDGET

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we all recognize the important work that the pages have to do and this is not about them personally.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Mr. Speaker, you and I both saw that the official opposition, the second opposition party, and the members of the Bloc Québécois and the Green Party applauded the pages. However, the people on the government side had a more muted response.

We believe that the incident that occurred earlier is completely unacceptable because we know that the tabling of a budget is very serious business. The Minister of Finance and any parliamentarians who are consulted about the budget are sworn to secrecy. In that respect, any breach of secrecy, heaven forbid, would be a criminal matter.

Something unprecedented has happened. This most sacred document was distributed while a vote was taking place and dozens of government members had access to it before all parliamentarians did and before the Minister of Finance rose. That is completely unacceptable. I would ask that you get to the bottom of this, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent for raising this question of privilege. I see that the hon. member for Victoria is rising on the same question.

•(1615)

[English]

**Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, I wish to associate ourselves with the remarks by the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

I believe you will say, Mr. Speaker, that there has never been a precedent of this kind in this place, where some government members have received a budget document in advance of others. Therefore, it is a breach of my privilege and our privilege as parliamentarians. This cannot be allowed to occur.

**The Speaker:** Is the hon. member for Milton rising on the same question of privilege?

ACCESS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Hon. Lisa Raitt (Milton, CPC):** It is not the same question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

I heard the call for members to come back to the House. I returned to the House. Unfortunately, I was told by security at the bottom of the Hill that we were unable to access the House of Commons through our normal transport, because they were holding the buses on account of empty cars for the Prime Minister needing to return in order for us to be brought to the House of Commons.

I missed the vote. I apologize to my colleagues for missing the vote, but this is absolutely ridiculous. What kind of control are the Prime Minister and the government trying to exert over members of the House, when I cannot return to vote on orders of the day and could perhaps be detained from hearing the budget?

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. member for Milton for her different question of privilege that she has raised, which I will certainly look into. I will get a report from the Parliamentary Protective Service, because this should not happen.

*Privilege*

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BUDGET

**Mr. David Sweet (Flamborough—Glanbrook, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising on the same point as the member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

I understand that you wanted to take responsibility for the distribution, Mr. Speaker, but after the distribution, we all have the electronic capability of communicating messages outside. Many of the members who had those documents in their possession, instead of handing them back after you stood and motioned that it was inappropriate, started texting. I would ask that you—

**Mr. Fin Donnelly:** It is still on the desk. Does anyone have a copy over there?

**Mrs. Alexandra Mendès:** Show me one.

**Hon. Peter Van Loan:** It is a serious breach of privilege, my friends.

**Mr. David Sweet:** Mr. Speaker, this is a demonstration of the lack of respect for our privilege, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that you undertake an investigation to find out exactly how many messages from members of Parliament on the government side actually left this House and communicated items of the budget prior to the budget being delivered by the Minister of Finance.

[Translation]

ACCESS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Hon. Maxime Bernier (Beauce, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a question of privilege to confirm what my colleague from Milton told you earlier.

I wanted to exercise my member's right to vote, but with everything going on on the Hill, I was prevented from doing so, and I apologize to my constituents for that.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you investigate this matter. I am prepared to share what happened to me today. I was prevented from exercising my parliamentary privilege because of tactics employed by the party in power. That is utterly unacceptable.

•(1620)

[English]

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BUDGET

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member mentioned earlier that certain members of the House were given privileged access to sensitive budgetary information. There are historical and procedural reasons why all members of Parliament are given equal access to this sensitive information, but there is also a very important economic reason, and that is, any individual having advance access to this sensitive information could potentially profit from it. We do recall that roughly a decade ago, an RCMP investigation was launched into a previous budget measure because certain individuals were given an advance view of a decision with respect to income trusts. That RCMP investigation led to charges.

We have no evidence at this point that anything of that nature has occurred here. However, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to broaden the investigation that the hon. member has asked you to carry out to ensure that none of the sensitive information contained in the budget was shared by members of the government who had advance access to it, prior to its public and parliamentary release.

*Privilege*

**Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question of privilege as well. It is similar but different from the ones that have been raised previously.

In addition to what we have seen today and the last couple of days in terms of the display of this attack on democracy from the government, we now have seen the arrogance the Prime Minister displayed in question period today, and then we had the budget documents distributed to government members prior to opposition members receiving them. However, Mr. Speaker, after you had called for those documents to not be released, the pages had stepped back, as you had instructed. I can understand why members would be eager to find out how much their taxes are going to be raised or to see how much bigger the deficit is going to be this year, but I did see one member in particular on the government side, after you had instructed for the documents not to continue to be released, and the pages had stepped back, the member for Orléans then had a page come back to his desk from the back and give him the budget documents following that. He accepted those documents, knowing full well he was not supposed to be receiving them.

I would say that was a breach of all members' privileges, and I would ask that you investigate that as well.

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

## TAKING OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN CHAMBER

**Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that the hon. member for Don Valley East has been taking pictures in the House of the opposition and tweeting them. I have evidence before me to that effect. That is an entirely inappropriate action and contrary to the rules of this place.

**The Speaker:** I want to remind members that they are not allowed to take photographs in the House and they should put away their devices if they are using them for that purpose. They are allowed to use their devices, but they are not allowed to take photographs in here.

The hon. member for Perth—Wellington on the same question.

**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The picture taken by the member for Don Valley East is on Twitter. It has been uploaded. I would encourage you to direct the member to delete that picture. Consistent with the rules of the House and privilege of this hon. place, that picture should be removed with all due haste.

**The Speaker:** The member is quite correct. I direct the member who took the picture and tweeted it to delete it immediately.

The hon. opposition House leader on the same question.

\* \* \*

• (1625)

**PRIVILEGE**

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE BUDGET

**Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, if you do find that a prima facie case of privilege has occurred on the

issues that have been raised, I would be prepared to move the appropriate motion.

**The Speaker:** Order. In response to the House leader of the official opposition, I want members to understand that it is customary for the member who has raised the question of privilege to move the appropriate motion when the time arises, and if that is the case, that is what we will look for.

The hon. member for Calgary Nose Hill is rising on the same—

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Yes, a point of order on decorum, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the member for Don Valley East's tweet, she accused the opposition of being infantile while she was taking pictures of us and actually being in violation of the Standing Orders.

Actually, as a point of clarification, to educate the member, what has been happening here is that we are raising questions of privilege because we believe that our privilege has been violated by sensitive government information being released prior to the speech on the budget. The media has this as well.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you look into this member's violation of the privilege of all members here.

**Mr. Murray Rankin (Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I believe that in response to the hon. House leader of the official opposition, you indicated that it was for the person who moved the motion to actually bring this to the attention and move the appropriate motion, which I now hereby do.

**The Speaker:** I think the member for Victoria will know that if the Speaker finds a prima facie case of privilege, it is not for the Speaker to determine whether there has been contempt or not; it is for the House to determine. The Speaker may find a prima facie case, in which case, the Speaker then calls upon the member who raised the question of privilege to move the motion. Should I come to that point, that is what I would do.

I will take it under advisement, examine the question, and come back to the House on it.

**Hon. Peter Van Loan (York—Simcoe, CPC):** With due respect, Mr. Speaker, you did make a prima facie finding with regard to the member for Don Valley East. It is in that regard that there is an effort to move the appropriate motion.

If you are saying you did not make that prima facie finding, that is a very different matter indeed. However, I believe I heard you find that the member's actions were in breach of the privileges of the members of this House as they are set out in our rules and our traditions.

I would appreciate your clarification on whether you did in fact rule on that and make a finding on that.

**The Speaker:** I ruled on it as a matter of order, as these things are, not a matter of privilege in that case.

The House will now proceed to the consideration of Ways and Means Proceeding No. 10 concerning the budget presentation.

*The Budget***GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[English]***THE BUDGET**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

**Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.)** moved:

That this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by saying I very much appreciate the advance applause.

*[Translation]*

I would like to begin by stating that our thoughts are with our friends in the United Kingdom.

*[English]*

We think about our friends in the United Kingdom at this time, knowing that they are facing a tragedy. We think about the families who are facing something that is indescribably difficult. I would like to start by saying that it is important for all of us to reflect upon.

• (1630)

*[Translation]*

I am pleased to rise in the House today to table budget documents for 2017, including notices of ways and means motions. The details of the measures are contained in these documents, and I am asking that an order of the day be designated for consideration of these motions.

I also wish to announce that the government will introduce legislation to implement the measures in the budget.

*[English]*

As Canadians come together to celebrate Canada 150, we proudly reflect on the generations that came before us, generations that built a country on the belief that with hope and hard work they could deliver a better future for themselves and for their children, and for their grandchildren. That optimism and that confidence helped define us as a country.

Sharing those beliefs with others made Canada a beacon of diversity, openness, and generosity around the world, yet over the last few decades, the middle class and those working hard to join it have fallen behind.

Everyday folks who work hard to provide for their families are worried about the future. They are worried that rapid technological change, the seemingly never-ending need for new skills, and growing demands on our time mean that their kids will not have the same opportunities they had, and who can blame them?

For a decade, middle-class struggles were simply swept under the rug. People were left without a clear vision at a time of unprecedented change. However, the good news is that Canadians, on their own accord, worked hard and persevered. We have always been resilient, innovative, able to adapt and prosper in the face of change.

*[Translation]*

Knowing that, we put together a plan to ensure that, in a changing world, Canada's middle class and those working hard to join it can—and will—succeed.

A year and a half ago, our government set out to deliver the kind of change that would make a real difference for Canadians. We said we would help people retire with dignity. We said we would ask the wealthiest 1% to pay a little more, so we could cut taxes for the middle class. We said we would make smart, responsible investments in our communities.

That is exactly what we did. We have delivered on behalf of Canadians, and we are just getting started.

*[English]*

We realize there is much more hard work in front of us than behind us, but I remain inspired that we are on the right path.

One of the most memorable moments I have had as Canada's finance minister actually happened in a taxi cab in Toronto. On the way home one night, my taxi cab driver, Mian, recognized me and we started chatting. Then he did something that surprised me. He called his wife and put her on the speakerphone. They wanted to talk to me about the difference that the Canada child benefit had made in their lives.

You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that this benefit gives nine out of 10 Canadian families with kids more help with the high cost of managing their family.

In Mian's case, with three children aged 11, 9, and 10 months, the Canada child benefit means that he and his wife receive about \$300 more each month than they did a year ago. That is an extra \$3,600 tax-free every year, money that can be put toward groceries, school supplies, and new clothes for going back to school.

There are countless other stories just like this one across the country, each a sign that confidence is building and our plan for middle-class prosperity is working.

Stories like Dave's, a plumber from British Columbia who took advantage of a training program supported by the federal government to get his Red Seal certification last year. Now he has a well-paying job and is able to return to work in his community.

*[Translation]*

There is also Nebis, a mother of three from a remote Algonquin community in Quebec. The Canada child benefit has helped keep her three kids enrolled in hockey this season.

• (1635)

*[English]*

Mian, Dave, Nebis, like millions of middle-class Canadians, want to see progress for themselves and their families. They want a government that puts people first. They want a government focused on creating good jobs today, while also preparing Canadians for the jobs of tomorrow. They want a government that puts our skilled, talented, and creative people at the heart of a more innovative and globally competitive Canada.

*The Budget*

Here is our plan.

Across the country, we are building stronger communities.

[*Translation*]

We are doing it by creating jobs, shortening commutes, ensuring clean air and water, and improving quality of life for millions of Canadians.

In the last year and a half, 744 public transit projects have been approved.

[*English*]

In Calgary and Ottawa, long-awaited and transformative light rail transit projects are under way.

In Montreal and Vancouver, riders can look forward to a more enjoyable commute thanks to rehabilitation work being done to the metro and SkyTrain systems.

We are repairing nearly 50,000 social housing units, to make sure families have a safe and secure place to live. We have lifted 18 long-term boil water advisories in first nations communities. Our work continues, because we will not stop until every child in Canada has access to clean drinking water.

Ten years from now, our cities, towns, and northern and rural communities will be healthier and better connected. Our air and water will be cleaner. More Canadian goods will get to international markets, and modern, efficient public transit systems will get hard-working parents home more quickly at the end of a long day.

As we look to the coming decades, we also see the potential of new innovations to transform our lives. Self-driving cars, artificial intelligence, genomics, quantum computing, mobile payments, the sharing economy, these ideas are changing our world for the better, just like the innovations that preceded them.

A few decades ago, we never could have imagined how mobile computing would impact our lives. Thanks to e-commerce platforms, an Alberta farmer can sell top-quality beef to millions of potential buyers all over the world.

[*Translation*]

Cutting-edge research from Montreal has led to breakthrough treatments for multiple sclerosis.

[*English*]

We must see the immense opportunities that these changes bring with them, opportunities for progress and prosperity.

While the rapid pace of change can seem dizzying at times, we must never lose sight of what is driving these breakthrough innovations, people, people like Mian, Dave, and Nebis. Therefore, as we create the jobs of tomorrow, we will support a culture of life-long learning to help workers and their families adapt to the changing demands of our time. We will help students get the skills and work experience they need to kick-start their careers. We will make it more affordable for thousands of parents of young children to learn new skills while raising their families. We will give people who have lost their jobs the chance to go back to school for further

training, helping these Canadians to advance their careers, and turn challenges into opportunity.

[*Translation*]

To give our young people the best possible start, we will promote hands-on learning in science, technology, engineering, and math, especially for young women, girls, and indigenous youth.

[*English*]

Building on work being done by impressive organizations like Ladies Learning Code and Actua, we will encourage students to learn coding in the same way they learn to read and write, preparing our kids for the jobs of the future.

Budget 2017 is about creating good middle-class jobs now, and in the years to come. To do that, we need to focus on our strengths, where we can lead globally and create good jobs for Canadians.

In this budget, we are making investments in six economic sectors where Canada can lead the way: digital, clean technology, agrifood, advanced manufacturing, bio-sciences, and clean resources.

In the realm of digital technology, I know two things to be true: one, Canada can be a world leader; and, two, we just cannot afford not to be.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

That is why we will launch a pan-Canadian artificial intelligence strategy, and bring together Canada's main centres of AI expertise to drive investment and job creation across the country.

[*English*]

In agrifood, too, we are positioned for success. By 2050, global demand for food is expected to rise by 70%. That means more demand for prairie canola, Atlantic crab and lobster, and B.C. berries. It also means more jobs in the fields of southwestern Ontario and on the maple syrup farms of Quebec's Eastern Townships. We will help farmers, producers, and processors build their businesses globally, and do so sustainably.

Canadians know that our environment and our economy go hand in hand. It is why we have worked with the provinces and territories to adopt the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. This not only means cleaner air to breathe; it means business and investment opportunities. That means jobs installing solar cells, manufacturing electric cars, or developing cleaner fuels will be in high demand.

*The Budget*

Luckily, our energy sector is already well positioned to not only compete but to lead.

By investing in clean tech and responsible resource development, we will preserve our environment for future generations, create great jobs, and re-stake our claim as a leading supplier of energy to the world for the next 150 years.

Our plan is clear. Smart, ambitious investments in people, communities, and high-growth industries lead to opportunity, opportunity lead to jobs, jobs lead to a more confident and growing middle class, and a more confident, growing middle class is the only path to strong and sustained economic growth.

The government's role in all of this is to lend support to those who are driving us forward and to make sure that everyone has a real and fair chance at success. This means ensuring that our most basic needs are met, and health and well-being are at the very top of that list.

[Translation]

Though our universal health care system is a source of pride for many Canadians, we know that more can be done for families caring for loved ones. It is why this budget provides support for caregivers helping loved ones at home and makes it easier for Canadians living with disabilities to get the tax relief they need.

[English]

We believe that whether their ailments are physical or mental, Canadians deserve the best possible care that we can provide. They deserve our help. I am pleased that with leadership from the Minister of Health over the last several months, we have reached health agreements with nearly every single province and territory.

Through these landmark agreements and historic health transfers to provinces and territories, representing over \$200 billion over the next five years, we will reduce stress for families. We will ensure that every young person under the age of 25 gets the mental health support he or she need and deserve.

Having had the honour of representing and meeting families in St. James Town and Regent Park in Toronto, I have seen first-hand the challenge of affordable housing. Therefore, it is my privilege to announce that the government will be investing over \$11 billion, the largest single commitment in budget 2017. This is in support of a national housing strategy to protect every Canadian's right to a safe and affordable place to call home.

• (1645)

[Translation]

Our government has shown, and will continue to show, national leadership on housing. We will prioritize support for vulnerable citizens, including seniors, indigenous peoples, survivors fleeing domestic violence, persons with disabilities, those dealing with mental health issues, and veterans.

[English]

The decisions we make and the policies we create impact men and women differently.

[Translation]

In order to make laws and develop policies and programs that are in the best interests of all Canadians, we have to know what kind of impact they will have.

[English]

We know, for example, that while Canadian companies are getting better when it comes to hiring more women, they are still less effective at promoting women to senior roles, and we know that fewer women join or stay in the workforce than men. That means that as a country, we are not taking full advantage of the talents, insights, and experience of more than half of our population. It makes no sense. We need to do better.

Therefore, as a first step, we have asked the Canada-United States Council for Advancement of Women Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders to quickly advise us on how we can better empower women entrepreneurs and remove barriers for women in business.

However, not all obstacles to progress are as obvious, so in budget 2017, we did something that should have been done a long time ago: we published the government's first-ever gender statement. This is an assessment that ensures all budget measures, not just those aimed specifically at women, help us advance the goals of fairness, gender equality, and stronger workforce participation.

[Translation]

We realize that this is just the start, and we look forward to feedback on this first effort, which we will then build into future budgets.

[English]

Another challenge we must confront is access to quality child care. Too often we hear stories of single parents living in poverty because the cost of child care is so high they cannot afford to go back to work. That is not acceptable in our country.

To help low- and middle-income families with the costs of child care, we are committing \$7 billion over the next decade to increase the number of high-quality child care spaces available across our country. In order to provide immediate relief, this will be working together with provinces and territories. We know that doing this could create up to 40,000 new subsidized child care spaces over the next three years. Canadian parents deserve our support, and we are delivering.

*The Budget*

We know that strong partnerships between the federal government and indigenous communities are crucial for our success. Over the next five years, funding for indigenous peoples will have increased by over 27% from what it was when our government took office, well in excess of what would have been provided under the decades-old 2% funding cap. It will contribute to a higher quality of life on reserves, while setting Canada on a path toward true reconciliation with indigenous peoples.

This work continues today, both because it is a recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and because it is essential to our economic future.

[Translation]

Together, we will build stronger, more resilient communities and renew our nation-to-nation relationship with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

[English]

We will help break down employment barriers, with a focus on skills development, training, and better education. We will provide greater access to mental health, wellness, and suicide prevention services, while working with indigenous communities to combat substance abuse.

This is our plan for Canada. For it to succeed, we all have to do our share. I have been very fortunate in my life to have had a successful career in business and I have always paid my fair share of taxes, but it can be tempting for some to be too aggressive in their tax planning. Our review of federal tax expenditures, for example, highlighted a number of issues around tax planning strategies using private corporations. These are strategies that can result in some very wealthy individuals getting tax breaks at the expense of others.

[Translation]

Canadians expect a fair tax system. Our government is committed to taking action on this issue, and we will have more to say on this in the near future.

One of our government's very first actions was to raise taxes for the wealthiest Canadians, so that we could cut taxes for the middle class. Because of this tax cut, nine million Canadians see more money on their paycheques. These measures are making a real difference in people's lives.

We also gave the Canada Revenue Agency more resources to detect, audit, and combat tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance.

• (1650)

[English]

Going forward, we will close loopholes that result in unfair tax advantages for some at the expense of others. We will eliminate inefficient tax measures, especially those that disproportionately benefit the wealthy. We will work with the provinces and the territories to crack down on those who hide their identity to avoid paying taxes. Let me be clear. All Canadians must pay their fair share of taxes, period.

[Translation]

Canada has always played an important role on the international stage. Going forward, as needs change, so too will our approach. In

international assistance, for example, we remain committed to helping the world's poorest and most vulnerable, and we will continue to modernize our efforts so we can deliver better results, improve transparency, and foster innovation around the world.

[English]

To support our women and men in uniform in increasingly complex and unpredictable times, our government will soon release a new defence policy for Canada, following extensive consultation and analysis.

We also know that as a trading nation, our future depends on openness and investment. That means never missing an opportunity to remind the world of what makes Canada a great place to live, to play, and to do business. Nowhere is this truer than with our neighbours to the south.

Canada and the United States have the most successful economic relationship in the world, supporting millions of middle-class jobs on both sides of the border. We are proud of this fact. We are also proud to have recently concluded CETA, free trade agreement that will create jobs, reduce red tape, and give Canadian businesses preferred access to half a billion potential customers across the European Union.

As we prepare for the global economy of tomorrow, we will put our best foot forward, always looking to develop strategic partnerships to attract talent and investment, partnerships that will help our companies succeed, create good middle-class jobs at home, and do well globally.

Canada 150 reminds us all that we have a lot to be thankful for.

[Translation]

Economically, our talented, skilled, educated, diverse, and innovative workforce gives us tremendous potential for growth. Our values, our stories, and our cultures shine for the world to see. Our two official languages open the doors of the entire world to us and make our country unique.

[English]

Our natural resources and natural beauty are unparalleled, allowing us to share the joys of building a campfire with our kids, hiking with a college friend, or swimming in cool, clean waters. In fact, this year we are putting our national parks on full display, as we invite Canadians and families from around the world to enjoy them, free of charge.

Most important, we have begun to see signs of confidence and optimism return to our middle class. Consumer spending is up since we introduced the Canada Child Benefit.

*The Budget*

In the last seven months, we have seen a quarter million new jobs, the best job gains seen in a decade. Unemployment has fallen in the time since we took office. These are good, early signs that plan that is working.

•(1655)

[Translation]

That is why we will continue to invest in our people, our communities, and our economy while maximizing the value of every dollar and ensuring that public funds are spent responsibly and that our debt-to-GDP ratio drops by the end of our term in office.

[English]

Our approach to investing deliberately will enable us to maintain our enviable position as the G7 nation with the best balance sheet. Most important, at the same time, we will have built a better future for our kids.

However, we know there is so much more to do on behalf of middle-class Canadians, middle-class Canadians like Mian, Dave, and Nebis. Working together, we will embrace change and deliver prosperity for all.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, now we understand why the Minister of Finance had a photo op with children two days ago. Children and grandchildren will pay because the government has lost control of spending public money. This is totally unacceptable.

[Translation]

Without a shadow of a doubt, we have come to understand one thing today: the Liberal government has completely lost control of public finances. I would remind members that barely two years ago, those people were elected by promising a small \$10 billion deficit and a balanced budget in 2019. In 2019, Canadians will have a deficit of \$27.9 billion. That is completely unacceptable.

This government has no regard for Canadians because it has completely lost control of government spending. Over the next six years, this government is going to run up a deficit of \$113 billion. Barely six months ago, it gave us an economic update and today we see that it was off by \$13 billion. Those people do not know how to count.

Even worse, as of midnight, Canadians are going to pay new taxes on tobacco, on alcohol, and, soon, on Uber. This government is making up taxes. On top of that, even though this government constantly lectures everyone about the environment, it is going to abolish the tax credit for people who use public transit.

They say one thing and do another.

[English]

Therefore, my question is quite simple. When will Canada get back to zero deficits?

[Translation]

**Hon. Bill Morneau:** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be here with my colleagues today to explain our plan, an ambitious plan for Canada. One and a half years ago, we began by implementing measures that have substantially improved the confidence of the middle class. We can now see that our plan is starting to work: the

unemployment rate is lower than it was one year ago and the situation of Canada's middle class is beginning to really improve.

[English]

What we know is this. Taking that increase in confidence for the middle class and making ambitious investments in the long term is going to grow our economy. That is what is going to make Canada better for future generations.

What the people on the other side of the House do not seem to understand is what happened over the 10 years before we came into office. The previous government did not make the investments needed to grow our economy. We have set about to increase confidence and to grow our economy so our children and our grandchildren will be better off.

•(1700)

[Translation]

This is an ambitious plan that will be very good for jobs and people across the country.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, this budget is a disappointment to all of the people living in misery who were hoping for a helping hand from the federal government. They have been told that they are going to have to wait a little longer. Basically, they will have to wait until the next federal election, which is when the floodgates will open and investment dollars will flow into our communities.

The Liberal Party has often told the House that it would close the gap between indigenous children and non-indigenous children, which is what the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal called for. However, there is nothing in this budget about keeping that promise. Instead, the government has kept a tax loophole open so that CEOs and the wealthiest members of society can get tax breaks for stock options. The government is giving the richest 1% a tax break that is worth six times more, but it is turning its back on indigenous children and the Canadian federation.

Can the minister justify this shameful political choice?

**Hon. Bill Morneau:** Mr. Speaker, the numbers speak for themselves: our country is undergoing a major change. Over the past seven months, 250,000 people have found work. That is a major change. We have made real investments to make things better for Canadians.

Other numbers are even better. The Canada child benefit has lifted 300,000 children out of poverty this year. That is a big deal. We also enhanced the guaranteed income supplement for seniors and made investments to lift 13,000 seniors out of poverty.

The numbers speak for themselves. Our plan is beginning to bear fruit, and our vision is a much better one for Canadians.

*The Budget*

[English]

**Hon. Michelle Rempel (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am looking at the GDP growth projections presented in budget 2016 and budget 2017. The GDP real growth projection in 2016 was 1.4%; in budget 2017, it is 1.3%. In budget 2016, it was 2.2%; in budget 2017 it is 1.9%. In budget 2016, it was 2.2%; in budget 2017, it is 2.0%, and, the trend continues.

From budget 2016 to budget 2017, we have seen a massive increase in the projected deficit that the current government has presented, yet the government is presenting a decreased projected forecast in real GDP growth.

Can the finance minister stand in the House and explain to the many of us who may not be economists—although I am—exactly what the GDP growth calculation is, exactly how GDP is calculated, and then what part of that calculation is failing due to this budget deficit? Can he also explain to Canadians why, if the Liberals are going to stand up and say that this deficit is supposed to create jobs and economic growth, they are showing a decreased GDP growth here?

**Hon. Bill Morneau:** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to talk about our economic situation.

What we have seen over the last year is that the ambitious plan that we have put in place is having a real impact. It is having an impact on the most vulnerable in our society by taking children out of poverty. It is having an impact on families. Because of the Canada child benefit, families will have more money to spend, money that will be going into our economy.

What we are seeing is very important. We have seen a decline in unemployment. That is critically important. It has gone from 7.1% to 6.6%. What we are seeing as well is that our economy is proving resilient because of the measures we have put in place. What we know is that as we make those investments in the future, we will see an increased level of growth.

Economists, in doing their forecasts, look at the global situation and put out those numbers. We use those numbers as our base. What I can tell the House is that we are ambitious. We want to help Canadians. We know that we will do so. We know that as they get better jobs, more jobs, we will have better economic outcomes. That is the future for Canada, for our children, and for our grandchildren.

• (1705)

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up with a few things.

First, both Conservative and Liberal finance ministers in the past took pride when they presented this place with a balanced budget, yet the current finance minister continues to treat balanced budgets as if it were a dirty word. The member for Louis-Saint-Laurent has asked him 16 times when we will return back to balance, and now we know why. Between the time of the last fall economic update in 2016 to today, which is six months, we have seen an extra \$13 billion, as presented on page 37 of the budget, showing that these guys are spending more and more, and we are hearing that the economy, the GDP, will go down and down.

When will the current finance minister present responsible planning for Canada's future? When are the Liberals going to stop talking about investments in the middle class? Right now they are mortgaging the middle class.

**Hon. Bill Morneau:** Mr. Speaker, we started our plan on our very first day. We took a look at middle-class anxiety and we decided that we were going to ask the richest to pay a bit more and give a tax reduction to the middle class.

Then what we did was we went further. We helped people with more money for their kids. We are seeing that this money is making a difference. Unfortunately, the government before us, which racked up over \$100 billion in debt, left us with a low growth rate, so making investments is critically important for us to make a difference in the future.

That is what we are doing. We are making those investments so we will all be better off in the future, so we will have a growth rate that will make it clear that Canada continues to be a country that can lead the world. That is the ambition we have, leading the world so our children and grandchildren will have great jobs in the future.

**The Speaker:** The hon. government House leader.

**Hon. Bardish Chagger:** Mr. Speaker, I am tabling documents containing government responses to Questions Nos. 831 to 836.

**Hon. Rona Ambrose (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we will continue to be the voice of the taxpayer on this side of the House, and the voice for Canadians across the country who see today how the government has once again failed to recognize the challenges faced by regular, hard-working Canadians. They were hoping for a break today. They needed a break and they did not get one.

Instead of taking the necessary steps to help our businesses grow and create jobs, this Liberal budget caters only to the interests of the Prime Minister and his friends, not the families and workers of our country. Instead of lowering taxes and giving people a badly needed break, they are raising taxes and spending more.

When I conclude my remarks tomorrow, I will make clear how the Prime Minister's preference for this reckless spending while never delivering results is going to hurt Canada today, but also for years to come.

Before I finish, I would like to commend the finance minister on one thing, and that is on his choice of footwear, because he bought them in my hometown of Edmonton, in a great store named Poppy Barley. I thank him for doing that. It is much appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the debate be now adjourned.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 83(2), the debate is adjourned.

It being 5:10 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 5:10 p.m.)





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