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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, January 30, 2020

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayer

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)
[English]

PETITIONS

OPIOIDS

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to table a petition on behalf of constituents from Courtenay—Alberni. It is primarily people from Courtenay who signed this petition.

They are calling on the government to draw its attention to the fact that over 12,500 Canadians have died due to opioid-related poisoning. They cite that these deaths total more than those of all public health emergencies in the last 20 years, including from SARS, H1N1 and Ebola.

Petitioners are saying that these poisonings are preventable. They are calling on the government to declare the current opioid overdose and fentanyl poisoning crisis a national public health emergency under the Emergencies Act in order to manage and resource it, with the aim to reduce and eliminate preventable deaths, reform current drug policy to decriminalize personal possession and create with urgency and immediacy a system to provide safe, unadulterated access to substances so that people who use substances experimentally, recreationally or chronically are not at imminent risk of overdose due to a contaminated source.

Petitioners are also citing that these are our children, family members, neighbours and people in our communities. They are calling on the government to take urgent action to address this crisis.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

PROCEDURE FOR VOTES IN CHAMBER

Ms. Annie Koutrakis (Vimy, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to address remarks I made with respect to the vote on the main motion of the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne on Monday, January 27, 2020, as well as my statement yesterday, Wednesday, January 29, 2020.

I would like to inform the House that I met with my whip to discuss my responsibilities in the voting process. At that meeting, it was clear to me that I profoundly misunderstood what the phrase “put the question to the House” meant. I thought that putting the question was the entire voting process and not, as I now know, when the Speaker actually reads the question to the House.

I was on my way to the House and unfortunately got lost on my way to the chamber. As a result, I was not in the House when the Speaker put the question and arrived when the table officers were calling the names of the members for the vote. I want to sincerely and unreservedly apologize to the House and to all members for the confusion caused by my remarks and for not clearly understanding the voting process.

I understand and accept that members are of the view I misled the House. It was certainly not my intention. I ask the House and its members to forgive me for this rookie mistake. I take this matter extremely seriously, and I promise never to repeat this error again. At no time did I intend to deliberately mislead the House.

As I mentioned in my remarks yesterday, I am a new member and am not familiar with the rules and practices of the House. That unfamiliarity with these important yet rather complicated rules and practices led me to making a mistake in understanding my obligations and duties in the voting process. From this rather unfortunate event, I have learned that I need to better understand the rules of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this matter, and I also thank members for their understanding of the challenges and the great responsibility of being a new member. I hope other new members can benefit from my experience in this matter.

Government Orders

• (1010)

The Speaker: I will take that under advisement and get back to the House with a ruling as soon as possible. I want to thank the hon. member.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADA-UNITED STATES-MEXICO AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.) moved that Bill C-4, An Act to implement the Agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people.

I am truly honoured to speak here today in support of Bill C-4, an act to implement the new NAFTA. Canadians have come a long way since 2017, when Canada's most important trading relationship, indeed our national prosperity itself, was put at serious risk. The years that followed were among the more turbulent in our history. We have emerged not only with the essential elements of the North American Free Trade Agreement intact, but with a better, more effective and fairer agreement than before.

[*Translation*]

This agreement is better for steel and aluminum workers, better for auto manufacturers and factory workers, better for farmers, forestry workers and energy workers. This agreement is better for the thousands of people working hard in our service industries. It is better for Canadian artists, singer-songwriters and filmmakers and better for the companies that hire them.

Canada has always been a trading nation. We have trade agreements with Europe and the Pacific in place, and we are about to have a modernized NAFTA. That means free trade with 1.5 billion people around the world and makes us one of the world's greatest trading nations.

[*English*]

That we achieved this at a time of considerable uncertainty in global trade, with the rules-based international order itself under strain, is something of which all Canadians can be rightly proud. It is a testament to the unrelenting work of thousands of patriotic Canadians from all walks of life, representing every political view from all orders of government and from all regions of our great country. This truly has been team Canada at work.

A little more than 25 years ago, the North American Free Trade Agreement created the world's largest economic trading zone, but let us remember that it did not come about easily or without controversy. In fact, a federal election was fought over free trade in 1988, and my own mother ran against NAFTA for the New Democrats in the riding of Edmonton Strathcona. These were intense debates as

many in the House will remember, yet today the Canadian consensus for free trade is overwhelming.

[*Translation*]

That consensus is a testament to NAFTA's long-term effectiveness as a vehicle for economic growth. More broadly speaking, it is also a testament to the fact that rules-based trade advances personal freedom, fosters entrepreneurial spirit and generates prosperity.

Today, Canada, the United States and Mexico account for nearly one-third of global GDP despite having just 7% of the global population. Every day, transactions worth about \$2 billion Canadian and 400,000 people cross the Canada-U.S. border. Those are impressive numbers.

When we were first asked to renegotiate NAFTA, we were determined to improve the agreement, update it, refine it and modernize it for the 21st century. That is exactly what we did.

• (1015)

[*English*]

I would like to stress two points. Under the new NAFTA, 99.9% of our exports to the United States can be exported tariff-free, and when it comes into force, this agreement will be the most progressive trade deal our country has ever negotiated. Indeed, I believe it will be the most progressive trade deal in the world.

“Growth that works for everyone” is not just a slogan. It has been the animating, driving idea in our negotiations from the start.

Let us be honest: The negotiations that got us here were not always easy. There were some twists and turns along the way. There were, as I predicted at the outset, moments of drama. There were times when the prospect of success seemed distant, but we hung in there. Faced with a series of unconventional negotiating positions from the United States, a protectionist flurry unlike any this country has encountered before, we did not escalate and we also did not back down. We stayed focused on what matters to Canadians: jobs, economic growth, security and opportunity. That is how we stayed the course.

[*Translation*]

It was clear from the start that, in order to be successful, Canada as a whole had to come together and work as a team.

We began by consulting stakeholders across the country. We heard from Canadians in industry, agriculture, the service sector and labour. We sought and received advice and insight from across party lines. We reached out to current and former politicians, including provincial and territorial premiers, mayors, community leaders and indigenous leaders. We asked Canadians for their input and gathered over 400,000 submissions on the modernization of NAFTA.

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[English]

We established the NAFTA council with people from different political parties, as well as business, labour and indigenous leaders.

I would like to thank every member of the NAFTA council for their wisdom, hard work and collegiality. Their insight helped guide our way forward at every step of the way, right up to the present moment.

I would also like to thank current and past members of the House for their contributions. With politics, there is always partisanship, but there can also be collaboration in the national interest. I know, from the many conversations I have had with colleagues across the aisle and across Canada, that every single one of us here shares the goal of working for Canada and Canadians. This negotiation has not been a political project. It has been a national one.

There have been many hurdles. During the negotiations, we were hit with unfair and arbitrary tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum. We defended ourselves without rancour, but with firmness, imposing perfectly reciprocal, dollar-for-dollar tariffs on the United States even as team Canada fanned out across the U.S., reminding our friends, allies and neighbours that they rely on us for trade, too.

We were consistent. We were persistent. We never gave up. We just kept digging in the corners, if I may be allowed one NAFTA hockey metaphor.

The new NAFTA is a great agreement for Canada because we acted with resolve at the negotiating table to uphold the interests and values of Canadians. Our professional trade negotiators are, without exaggeration, the very best in the world. They are a group of true hard-working patriots, led by the inimitable Steve Verheul. I would like to thank them on behalf of all Canadians.

I would also like to thank Ambassador Bob Lighthizer. I found him to be a reliable and trustworthy counterpart, even though there were many times when we did not agree. He is someone who has become a friend. I would like to acknowledge his hard work, his professionalism and his willingness to find win-win compromises for our great continent. That made this agreement possible.

I would also like to recognize the efforts of my Mexican counterparts, who showed tremendous commitment, through a change in government, in renewing our trilateral relationship and in reaching a progressive outcome that raises working standards for workers across our shared continent.

Muchas gracias, amigos.

The benefits of this agreement for Canadians are concrete and considerable. The new NAFTA preserves Canada's tariff-free access to our most important market: 99.9% of our exports to the U.S. will be tariff-free. The agreement preserves the dispute settlement mechanism known as the famous chapter 19 in the original NAFTA, which provides an independent and impartial process for challenging anti-dumping and countervailing duties.

Critically, this mechanism is how we Canadians ensure a level playing field with a much larger trading partner. This mechanism is more valuable today than ever, with the WTO effectively paralyzed.

● (1020)

[Translation]

The new NAFTA preserves the general exception for cultural industries, which employ some 650,000 people across the country. These industries are an integral part of Canada's bilingual nature and our linguistic and cultural identity. This was a crucial factor, because those industries ensure that we can tell our own stories, as Canadians, in both official languages.

Our farmers are more crucial than ever to our collective prosperity. Canada and the United States have the largest bilateral trading relationship in the world in the area of agriculture, which is worth about \$48 billion annually.

At one point in the negotiations, the United States demanded that we abolish supply management. We refused that demand. This agreement secures the future of Canada's supply management system for this generation and generations to come.

[English]

The new agreement strengthens labour standards and working conditions in all three countries. This is a historic milestone with, for the first time, truly muscular and enforceable labour standards. This agreement, for the first time, levels the playing field in North America for Canadian workers.

It supports the advancement of fair and inclusive trade. It addresses issues related to migrant workers, forced or compulsory labour, and violence against union members, including gender violence. It enshrines obligations related to discrimination, including discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation and gender identity.

This agreement modernizes our trade for the 21st century. Critically, it reduces cross-border red tape and simplifies procedures for Canadian exporters. It promotes increased trade and investment through new chapters dedicated to small and medium-sized businesses.

As well, the agreement preserves the provisions on temporary entry for business people. These provisions are essential to supporting cross-border trade and investments. Temporary entry ensures that investors can see their investments first-hand, and that service suppliers can enter the market to fulfill their contracts on-site.

At a time when walls are being built, temporary entry is a critical advantage for Canadians.

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Crucially, the new NAFTA also shields Canada from arbitrary and unfair trade actions. For instance, our auto sector employs 125,000 people directly and another 400,000 indirectly through a network of dealers and after-market services. The side letter we signed with the new NAFTA protects this vital industry from any potential U.S. tariffs on automobile and auto parts.

The new NAFTA is great for Canadian auto workers. We see this in new, higher requirements for levels of North American content in the production of cars and trucks. We see it in the labour chapter, which includes key provisions to strengthen and improve labour standards in the NAFTA space.

● (1025)

[Translation]

One of our government's main objectives is to ensure that women have the opportunity to participate fully and equitably in the Canadian economy. The new NAFTA is no exception. The labour chapter includes a non-discrimination clause and addresses obstacles to the full participation of women.

Environmental stewardship is essential to our collective future. The new NAFTA includes a chapter on the environment that will help ensure that our trade partners do not receive unfair economic advantages because they failed to respect the environment.

[English]

The environment chapter requires that all the NAFTA partners maintain strong environmental protection and robust environmental governance. It introduces new commitments to address challenges like illegal wildlife trade, illegal fishing and the depletion of fish stocks, species at risk, conservation of biodiversity, ozone-depleting substances and marine pollution.

It also recognizes the unique role of indigenous peoples in the conservation of our shared biodiversity and in sustainable fisheries and forest management. This is a first. For the first time in a Canadian trade agreement, the new NAFTA confirms that the government can adopt or maintain measures it deems necessary to fulfill its legal obligations to indigenous peoples.

We should note that the obligations on labour and environment in the new NAFTA are subject to dispute settlement. This is a major accomplishment. This means any laggard can be held accountable.

In his speech to the U.S. National Governors Association in 2017, the Prime Minister referred to his father's famous metaphor about Canada, of our experience of sleeping next to an elephant. He said that, contrary to his father's phrase, Canada today is no mouse, more like a moose. This negotiation and its conclusion have shown how right he was.

Throughout the formal negotiations and in the months that followed, the Government of Canada has been intent on upholding the national interest. This work continued last year, culminating in a protocol of amendments signed by Canada, the United States and Mexico that strengthen state-to-state dispute settlements, labour protection, environmental protection and rules of origin.

Our government is committed to ensuring that the benefits of trade are widely and fairly shared.

[Translation]

The new NAFTA helps us accomplish that. It promotes progressive, free and fair economic growth. More generally, it strengthens rules-based trade at a time when those rules are in great need of strengthening. It brings back stability to the trade relationship between Canada, the United States and Mexico. Above all, this agreement provides stability and predictability for companies that employ hundreds of thousands of Canadians.

● (1030)

[English]

Our focus in bringing the new NAFTA to Parliament has always been on preserving and fostering opportunity for Canadian workers, businesses, families and communities across the country. That is what we achieved, and this is what all Canadians have achieved together. It is something that all Canadians and every member of the House can be proud of. We are all here to serve Canadians.

I encourage all members in the House and Senate to work co-operatively with us to swiftly pass this legislation.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as everyone knows in the House, we in the Conservative Party are the party of free trade. I know business is really welcoming the certainty of this agreement. We just want to get that message out to Canadians that we will do our due diligence. We are still awaiting the answers from the government for the seven questions we asked back in December. It is important in these negotiations how we behave and how professional we are.

Could the minister comment on the conduct and comments of the Prime Minister during these negotiations, such as the personal attacks on the President, the irresponsible comments and being unprofessional when dealing with the American president?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking the member for Oshawa for his personal commitment to Canadian workers and for the work he has done personally on this agreement. We have had a lot of conversations and I appreciate that.

I would also like to thank the member opposite and his party for their vote yesterday supporting the agreement and the recognition we just heard of the need for all of us to work together to bring certainty to the Canadian economy and Canadian workers.

When it comes to due diligence, I would expect nothing less from all the members of the House. Let us keep talking. As I said, the inimitable Steve Verheul is at the disposal of everyone here. He has worked with governments of various political stripes and I know all of us trust him very much.

When it comes to the conduct of the Prime Minister in this negotiation and in our relationship with the United States, here, respectfully, I must very strongly disagree with the member opposite. Our Prime Minister has been an exemplary leader for Canada in this often difficult negotiation.

The Prime Minister has, as I described the Canadian approach overall, pursued a course of neither escalating nor backing down. He has not been afraid to stand up for Canada and the national interest, and he has been successful at building and leading an effective working relationship.

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the minister. Her speech was very interesting.

The Bloc Québécois is not particularly opposed to the agreement. There is only one provision that bothers us, and that is the one affecting the aluminum industry.

Can the minister explain why the aluminum industry did not get the same treatment as the steel industry in this agreement?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question.

I think it is essential to explain clearly to Canadians, as I did yesterday with my colleague for the people from Saguenay who were here, that our government is committed to defending the aluminum sector and its workers. I can give you a very clear example of that commitment. We fought to have the U.S. tariffs on aluminum fully lifted. It is important to note that out of all the aluminum producing countries, Canada is the only one that managed to have the tariffs fully lifted, without quotas. That is a tremendous advantage for Canada, the aluminum sector and its workers.

I also want to note that the new NAFTA will guarantee that 70% of the aluminum to be used in cars built in the area covered by NAFTA will come from North America. Currently that percentage is 0%. That seems like a big win to me, since 70% is much better than 0%.

• (1035)

[English]

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of topics I would not mind hearing the minister's reflections on. The first is this.

Three agreements have been signed by this government: CETA, CPTPP and now CUSMA. In each case, there has been a bit of a different process, certainly with respect to the engagement of Par-

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liament on those deals, and in some cases the engagement of the public and stakeholders as well.

I wonder if the minister can share some of the lessons she has learned in those different processes and give us some sense of whether she feels there may be a way to codify some of those lessons and establish a better trade process overall for Canada going forward.

[Translation]

I also want to know if there is a solid plan to help dairy producers and aluminum industry workers in Quebec and British Columbia. Considering the adverse effects this agreement will have for them, what is the government's plan and what steps will it take in future to ensure that these workers and industries are not overly penalized by the provisions of this new agreement?

[English]

Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking the member for Elmwood—Transcona for those thoughtful questions and for the work he has been doing on this agreement. We have had some very constructive conversations. I appreciate that very much.

Also, as someone who personally lived through some of the NDP's struggles with NAFTA, I very much appreciated the vote yesterday by the NDP. I think that is an important sign of the NDP's commitment to Canadian workers, a commitment we share.

When it comes to the specific questions the member asked, he spoke about consultation with stakeholders and Canadians and about our experience during CETA, the TPP and the new NAFTA. What I have personally learned during that experience is the value of consultation and the value of continued, and I would even say continuous, dialogue with key stakeholders. I think we are seeing some of the results of that in the fact the premiers and the heads of municipalities have come out and spoken in favour of the new NAFTA, and in the fact that we see labour, business and indigenous leaders doing so as well. That is because we have all been talking.

Therefore, in conclusion, I would say to the hon. member that I think an important lesson of this process is that working closely with stakeholders and having a process that involves Canadians is a help and not a hindrance.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague the Deputy Prime Minister for her great speech and her great work on this file.

Kings—Hants has the largest concentration of agricultural producers east of Montreal, including many dairy farmers and poultry farmers. The entire House needs to remember that the United States wanted a provision included that would give it more access to these areas.

Could the Deputy Prime Minister inform the House about the work that has been done to preserve the supply management system, the work that has been done to ensure that farmers are compensated, and the work that our government is doing to make sure that farmers are successful in the days ahead?

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Hon. Chrystia Freeland: Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the member for Kings—Hants to the House and thank him for his thoughtful question.

Canadians remember clearly that one of the key, explicit negotiating objectives of our American counterparts was the complete abolition of our supply management system. It is no secret to Canadians that this has been an objective of long standing. In the face of that American objective, Canada stood firm. We preserved the supply management system for today and for generations to come.

My hon. colleague also asked an important question about compensation for farmers in the supply management sector. We have been very clear that just and equitable compensation is essential.

We are a trading nation and we need to do trade deals. In order to have popular support for those trade deals, we need to be fair to all Canadians as trade deals are concluded. That is what we are absolutely committed to doing. As farmers in the supply management sector know, we have already been working in detail with them for some time to put together the details of what is inevitably a complex program.

● (1040)

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am going to do something a little unusual here this morning. It is something all parties have already been briefed on.

The government would like to see this legislation moved rather rapidly through the House and I know that a lot of businesses and the premiers are asking us to do this as quickly as possible, so I would like to ask for unanimous consent to allow my time to be dropped to 10 minutes to allow another member to have an opportunity to speak to this issue. If it would be the will of the House for me to have unanimous consent, that is what I would like to do.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the hon. member for Prince Albert have the unanimous consent of the House to divide his time in this first round?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, it is great to start off this debate with the co-operation of all parties, which we are going to need as we proceed down this road.

I will be splitting my time with the new member for Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, whose riding happens to be right next to mine. I think this chamber will come to enjoy working with him, seeing his positive contribution to the House and watching him in action with his speech.

I want to thank the minister; the team; the negotiator, Steve Verheul; and the guys in the background, such as Andrew Leslie, the member for Malpeque, Mark Eyking and the other members of the trade committee. There are all these people, such as the member for Oshawa, who is sitting right next to me. There was a tremendous effort put forward to make sure that there was a team Canada approach so that everybody understood how important this deal was, not only here in Canada but also in the U.S.

I know that those on the team tried their best and did their best. That said, there are some shortfalls and problems, which is why we need to do our due diligence and go through it. Where there are

problems and shortfalls, we will do things like we did with the briefing here this week. There the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord said that we have the greenest aluminum in the world, which comes out of his riding, and made the point to Steve Verheul, the negotiator, that we could sell it under the environmental chapter, so why not put that into the implementation side of things? We could see that the negotiator was thinking that he had not thought of that, but it was a good idea.

These are the types of things we can do if we work together and if we have proper briefings and documents to solve or mitigate some of the issues or missed opportunities in this agreement.

Today we begin debate on Bill C-4, the implementation of the legislation for the new NAFTA. This deal, as described by President Trump, is something negotiated totally on his own terms, which I think is right. It is sad, but I think that is what has happened here. I think that the reality is that President Trump sat down with Mexico, and they did a deal and told Canada to take it or leave it, which is disappointing. It did not have to be that way.

The good news is that after rigorous debate in Parliament and in committee, Canada will continue to have a trade agreement with our largest trading partner. The bad news is that it was negotiated by the Liberal government, which made concession after concession to the United States and Mexico. The good news is that we have an agreement, but the bad news is that it could have been better.

This agreement, if we had done it right, would have set North America up for the next 50 years to become the most competitive sector in the world. With companies in the U.S., Canada and Mexico using our strengths and working together as we have in the past, we could have been so competitive that we could compete with anybody around the world. However, we did not get that in this agreement. In fact, if anything, we got more barriers, more red tape and more hassles for our businesses. It is disappointing.

Unfortunately, the mismanagement of the deal by the Liberal government is going to cost taxpayers money, because the reality is that we will have to have a plan for the sectors and industries that have been left out. During the election we heard quite clearly President Trump talking in the Rust Belt states about people who supposedly lost their jobs because of previous trade deals. There were other things in play, such as modernization and robotics and things like that, which never got talked about, but there was this idea that people were left behind. We cannot do that. In a new trade deal in this day and age, we cannot leave sectors behind, which is why, again, we need to have the proper documents and processes in order to go through the deal, do what we can to mitigate it and create a plan for those people who may have been negatively impacted by it.

However, I want to make it clear that our party supports and wants the free trade deal with the Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. Some things are just too big to play politics with.

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The United States is our largest trading partner, and NAFTA has been good for Canada, with \$2 billion a day in trade crossing our border, which represents 75% of all Canadian exports. U.S. direct investment in Canada in 2018 was over \$400 billion, which is huge. Since NAFTA was first implemented, over 5 million jobs have been created, and total trilateral trade has quadrupled to \$1.2 trillion. Who says trade does not work? This is proof that trade does work.

The majority of major industry associations in Canada want us to ratify this deal. The Canadian premiers put out a joint statement urging us to ratify it quickly, but it is our democratic obligation to analyze this legislation, and we have to do our due diligence. It is even more important for us to do our due diligence since the government is still refusing, 50 days now since we made the request, to release the economic impact analysis that it has on this new NAFTA.

• (1045)

It looks like the government has something to hide, which is probably true because even though the majority of industries support the deal, many of them have expressed concerns and are looking for clarification on how this deal is actually going to affect them.

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce wants further details, especially with respect to the intellectual property provisions. CAFTA wants to confirm that any changes would not negatively impact their producers. The CME wants to know what steps the government has taken to ensure that Canadian productivity levels are equal to those of other OECD countries, to maintain competitiveness here in North America. They also want to know what the impacts of the concessions will be to our aluminum industry.

The shortcomings and missed opportunities of the deal are clear.

First, the Canadian dairy industry is possibly the biggest loser in this deal, as 3.6% of the Canadian market is now opened up to imports. Milk classes 6 and 7 have been eliminated. That is a big deal. That is very important to dairy producers. That was a way for them to get extra value from some of the dairy products that they produce and they now have lost that opportunity.

The deal dictates specific thresholds for Canadian exports to anywhere in the world on milk protein concentrates, skim milk powder and infant formula. As the industry grows and wants to export more, or if the industry should have a surplus in these products to export abroad, it is limited to quotas. If the industry actually does exceed the thresholds, Canada adds duties to the exports in excess. That makes them more expensive, so it makes them uncompetitive to export. That is something Canada has never agreed to before. We really need to see the ramifications. It also sets a precedent for future trade deals.

We have relinquished some of our sovereignty. If we want to do a deal with a non-market country, for example, China, we have to actually go to Big Brother, the United States, and get permission. That does not make sense to me. That is a growing market. It is a market that we have to trade into. We have to find a path forward to have a proper relationship with China. However, we should not be worrying about the U.S. and its issues with China. We should not

be drawn into those issues. We should have our own relationship with China and this could impact our ability to do that.

Second, the missed opportunities in this deal make up a long list. Aluminum is not afforded the same provisions as steel. To be defined as North American, it would have to be smelted and poured in one of these three countries. We do not know why aluminum was left out. Why did it not get the same treatment as steel, other than maybe something was going on in the U.S. and China that they wanted aluminum to come through Mexico and go down that path?

On temporary entry for business persons, the list of professionals in chapter 16 was not expanded to include professions that exist in the 21st century. Why did we not modernize that list? We could have added a whole pile of new jobs that have been created in the high-tech sector and the service sector. That was not done.

Buy American was not addressed. Mexico got a chapter on Buy American; we did not.

Our forestry workers are hurting. They are going through some tough times. This should have been talked about in the deal. I understand we had a claim in front of the WTO. I also understand that the WTO appellate body is in trouble right now because of the U.S. not appointing judges. Who is paying for that? That would be the guys who were laid off in British Columbia and the folks who were laid off in New Brunswick in the forestry sector because that market has turned down due to the unfair, illegal tariffs of the U.S. government.

Third, the Liberal government made concessions that will result in continued business uncertainty to a certain extent. The ISDS chapter was removed, with no more protections from politics in the U.S. and Mexico. A sunset clause sets out a formal review of the agreement every six years. The agreement will terminate in 16 years unless it is renegotiated. Again, when someone is looking at their business and trying to plan things, it makes it really tough to work in those types of cycles because it does create some instability.

There are more things in this deal I could talk about, but I understand I am down to the last minute and I will use my time at committee to do that.

However, I want to say one thing. We are plugging our noses because the industries and communities say we need to get that bankability, that stability of a trade deal with the U.S., and we are going to provide that. This deal will go through, but we really need to look at who is impacted negatively by this deal. The government really needs to come up with a serious plan, whether it is compensation, finding new markets, training or reallocation. I am not sure what those are. Every sector might have a different solution, but they need to have a plan.

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● (1050)

I look forward to working in the committee to identify those sectors, giving them a chance to speak on how this is going to impact them and also trying to find solutions so that we can move forward. In the end, Canadian businesses will win from this deal, but it could have been better.

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member opposite for his vote yesterday and signifying that the Conservative Party will support this moving forward.

Part of his speech talked about the suggestion that this government has somehow hidden the agenda, and I take great exception to that. The Deputy Prime Minister made her remarks earlier this morning. She talked about the fact that there was a NAFTA council in place, and I know that there has been an inner partisan working group on this issue. I want to relay that to my colleague across the way.

The former interim leader of the Conservative Party, Rona Ambrose, had said that this was the best deal that could be struck. Now this member suggests that this deal could have been better. Is he suggesting that Rona Ambrose does not know what she is talking about?

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of respect for Rona Ambrose; she is a very wise person. This is being taken out of context. In light of who we had negotiating the deal here in Canada, it was the best that they could do. If we had had a Conservative prime minister, a Conservative finance minister and a Conservative trade minister, it would have been a better deal, no doubt about it.

I have been to Kings—Hants and I have talked to dairy producers there. I know they are very concerned about what they have given up in market access and their inability to take advantage of possible opportunities in the future to sell infant formula and powdered milk. That was taken away from them. Why would the member say that is a good deal? It is not a good deal. The disappointing part of this deal is there were so many things that should have been done to position our country in North America going into the future. It did not happen, and it could have.

It would have been different if we had a prime minister who was not insulting the President every third day. The reality is that when we started these negotiations, Canada was not the target, it was Mexico. It ended up that the U.S. and Mexico did the deal and Canada got the leftovers.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, earlier today, my colleague from Jonquière asked the hon. minister if she could explain why aluminum did not get the same treatment as steel under the new NAFTA.

She answered indirectly by saying that 70% of aluminum is protected. Unfortunately, that is not true. It is actually 70% of parts made from aluminum that are protected. This means that parts manufacturers can source their aluminum from anywhere in the world, including China, which produces the dirtiest aluminum, whereas Quebec makes the greenest aluminum in the world.

I was a little disappointed that the question was not answered directly, so I will put it to my hon. colleague. Why does he think steel got better treatment than aluminum in the new NAFTA?

● (1055)

[*English*]

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, one could speculate about all sorts of reasons why it was not given the same consideration. Maybe the U.S. just felt that it would rather have the ability to use Mexico as a place to bring in Chinese steel that is dumped into Mexico. Maybe the U.S. does not have a big enough aluminum industry to worry about. One could speculate on a variety of things.

However, the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord made some good suggestions for the workers in his riding. He talked about green aluminum. I think the member would also agree that green aluminum should have been focused on. That could have been our angle going in. We could have said that this is why Canadian aluminum should be bought and why that dirt cheap aluminum from China should not be bought. The good quality stuff from Quebec here in Canada should be bought.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will admit that I am somewhat confused by the comments of the member for Prince Albert. I remember six or seven months ago, when we had a very similar deal with respect to the dairy sector and the requirement to consult the U.S. on a new trade agreement with China, the Conservatives said that the only problem with the Liberals was that they were not ratifying the deal quickly enough. Then some changes were made and we have gotten rid of requirements that would raise the price of prescription drugs and there are more protections for workers in Mexico, and now the Conservatives are saying that this is a terrible deal.

I am just trying to understand what changed between the first iteration of the deal and this iteration of the deal, such that we have gone from saying that we need to ratify this as quickly as possible to saying this is a really bad deal, we need to study it and we are not sure we should have it at all.

Mr. Randy Hoback: Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the member's comments on that. If he goes back to the last election, the Conservative Party leader was saying this is not a great deal and a Conservative government would make it a better deal. It was part of his election platform, so I am not sure why the member thinks Conservatives were so quick to say this is such a good deal.

The reality on this piece of legislation is that the premiers, the aluminum associations and the dairy associations are kind of saying they are going to pay for it, but they understand they have to give something up. There are a lot of people saying that overall, they have to let this happen. Do they like it? No. Anyone who speaks to the members individually knows they are not happy. A lot of them would like to just stay with what they have. The reality is that is not an option either, so what do they do? They want bankability, stability, to make sure the economy keeps growing and to maintain partnerships with the U.S. and Mexico. Yes, there are some flaws for sure, but when a Conservative government is elected next time around, it can maybe start addressing those flaws one by one, pick away at them and make sure they are better for producers, consumers and manufacturers.

Mr. Gary Vidal (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the member for Prince Albert, who has done a great amount of work on this file on behalf of our party. Also, as he has mentioned, he is the member for my neighbouring riding and he has been a tremendous source of encouragement and support for me as I have gone on this journey. I want to thank him for that.

It is indeed a privilege and an honour this morning to stand in the House for my first speech representing the people of Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River. I am very grateful for the trust the people have shown in me and I commit to do my very best to represent each and every person for every moment of time they see fit to grant me the opportunity to be here and to serve them in this place.

From my nomination in December 2018 until the election on October 21, our campaign was a fabulous opportunity to get to know many people in this vast riding, and I will cherish that experience forever. My wife Lori and I continue to be thankful to the many people, some who worked tirelessly during the campaign, to provide me the opportunity to serve in the House. I would be foolish to begin mentioning names, as I am sure I would inadvertently exclude someone, but I know that each of them know who he or she is, and I thank each of them.

I will be forever grateful for the support that Lori and my entire family have been to me on this journey. I thank Kent and Rebekah, Mac and Hannah, Nicole and Washington, and Alex for their constant support and encouragement. Lori's commitment and sacrifice may go unnoticed by many, but it will never go unnoticed by me. I honestly do not know how anyone could serve in this place without the unwavering support of their family.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not point out that the highlight of the campaign for me was becoming a grandparent for the first time on October 8.

For those who are not aware, Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River is basically the north half of Saskatchewan. In fact, it is 52% of Saskatchewan geographically. It is the second-largest riding in the 10 provinces, and its approximately 70,000 residents are spread over 342,000 square kilometres. Just for reference, the country of Germany has nearly 83 million people spread over a slightly larger 357,000 square kilometres.

As my team and I travelled over 25,000 kilometres during the campaign, speaking to people, one of the common messages I heard

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was the need for Canada to get our fiscal house in order. I believe that because of my experience as a partner in an accounting firm for nearly 30 years and my service as mayor of the City of Meadow Lake for nearly eight years, voters sent me to this place to be their voice and to hold the government accountable for its wasteful spending.

I feel very fortunate to have built a great team of people, both here and in Meadow Lake, my home community. These people are credible, capable, competent and they are committed to working hard to represent the interests and to bring forward the concerns of all the people of northern Saskatchewan. We know we have much to learn, but we are prepared for that challenge.

Being appointed the shadow minister for indigenous services in November was a tremendous honour. It is a welcome opportunity to be part of an incredible team of people working on behalf of all indigenous Canadians in addition to those I serve in northern Saskatchewan.

My years of coaching minor hockey and my time as mayor, working with my immediate neighbours from Flying Dust First Nation, have taught me how first nations and non-first nations communities, which have relationships built on trust, can work together to find solutions that benefit everyone. I am proud to say that when I set out to seek the nomination for my party, one of my first endorsements was from Chief Jeremy Norman of Flying Dust First Nation. I believe that is a testament to the positive relationship we have built over many years.

I am personally excited in my role as shadow minister to have the opportunity to continue building relationships with indigenous communities across Canada and to continue working to understand the challenges faced by these communities.

However, we are here today to talk about a trade agreement.

The Conservative Party of Canada is the party of free trade. It was under former prime minister Stephen Harper that Canada signed a record number of trade agreements, providing our Canadian businesses with unprecedented access to markets around the world. We have long supported free trade and will continue to support a free trade agreement with the United States and Mexico.

● (1100)

However, we cannot blindly support a free trade deal for the sake of supporting a trade deal. We need to take time to ensure it is a good deal for Canadian businesses. We must do our due diligence and examine all aspects of this deal. After all, this is a deal with Canada's largest and most important trading partner. Unfortunately, as has been mentioned earlier already, the government has withheld some important information from us, like the economic impact analysis, and this has hindered us from adequately scrutinizing the deal to this point.

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It seems to me that Canadians have every reason to be a bit leery of this new NAFTA. We only need to look at how the government has mishandled very important trade issues for the farmers in my riding.

Throughout the campaign, I heard from canola and pulse crop producers who, over the past couple of years, have had to deal with the failures of the government on the international scene. I think specifically of pulse crop exports to India and canola exports to China. These are real issues and challenges for the farmers in my riding.

As we consider the legislation before us today, I would also like to highlight something that is missing from this agreement.

I am not aware of any agreement on softwood lumber being included in the new NAFTA. This is a significant issue for our forestry sector. I know we often think of B.C. and the workers who are suffering extreme hardships there due to the current government's failure on this file. My colleague, the member for Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, spoke very capably on this issue in the House on Tuesday afternoon when she pointed out that over two dozen mills had closed in British Columbia, while the government had focused western diversification funds predominantly to the major urban centres of Victoria and Vancouver.

Let me share a story from my own riding on this.

My riding in Saskatchewan also has a very significant forest industry. There are two lumber mills, an oriented strand board mill and a pulp mill, all within a few miles of my small community. I am sure members can appreciate the number of direct and indirect jobs and the economic spinoff this creates in a number of small communities in that area.

In question period in December, I highlighted one of these companies, NorSask Forest Products. This is a sawmill that supports over 400 direct jobs in the Saskatchewan forestry sector. It also has the highest proportion of indigenous forest employment in Canada.

NorSask is a 100% first nations-owned company, whose profits are directed to the nine bands that make up the Meadow Lake Tribal Council. The profits from NorSask Forest Products are funds that are used for core programs like housing, education and health care. This would also include suicide prevention programs, which unfortunately is a very significant challenge in these same ownership communities of which I speak.

As I pointed out in December, since 2017, NorSask has paid over \$10 million in softwood lumber tariffs. That is \$10 million of lost dividends that could have been paid to the ownership first nations. Imagine the services that could have been provided to the people of these nine small communities with \$10 million.

Many stakeholders are affected by this agreement. They are looking for the certainty that comes with knowing they are getting a fair deal, so they can make good business and good investment decisions. That is why I personally look forward to reviewing this deal in detail and contacting many of the businesses in my riding to ensure their success will not be impeded as a result of this trade agreement.

I consider it an incredible honour to serve as a member of Parliament and I will never take that privilege for granted. I again thank all the people of Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River for putting their trust in me.

• (1105)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge and express appreciation for the amount of support that has been given to the agreement. Yesterday, for example, the Conservatives, the New Democrats and the Greens recognized the importance of this agreement to all Canadians, and that was encouraging.

I listened to my colleague's comments on the indigenous community. One of the things we really underestimate is the potential of indigenous entrepreneurs. This trade agreement will help those entrepreneurs who are looking to exporting into the future and getting these secured markets. Those entrepreneurs are one of the faster-growing communities across our country. The agreement will do a great deal in benefiting entrepreneurs in general.

Could the member provide his thoughts on secure markets and the benefits of today's and tomorrow's entrepreneurs, going forward?

Mr. Gary Vidal: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that there is no secure market for the forestry industry in the United States at this time.

During my campaign, I talked a lot about opportunity for all in the indigenous communities in my riding. What I mean is that the creation of great jobs is one of the very significant solutions we have for many of the challenges facing northern Saskatchewan, in my riding in particular. If we could provide people the opportunity to have a great job, we could give them some economic stability, self-worth and the fulfillment that comes with having a good job.

However, what we also provide in northern Saskatchewan with good jobs is hope. What is lacking in northern Saskatchewan is the hope that comes with having opportunity.

I have spoken many times about how the suicide crisis in northern Saskatchewan is because of a lack of hope. If young people in northern Saskatchewan could look to the people they look up to, their parents, big brothers and sisters, and if they could look to the people they respect and see them succeed by being part of the industry in northern Saskatchewan, they would have hope. With that hope, they would not have to consider suicide as an outcome.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent speech.

In the negotiations for the past few multilateral agreements, Quebec always seems to end up as a bargaining chip. It happened with softwood lumber, which still has no protection, it happened with the many breaches in supply management, and it is happening today with aluminum.

I wonder if my colleague has any thoughts on this. Why does Quebec always end up as a pawn in bilateral negotiations between this government and other countries?

• (1110)

[*English*]

Mr. Gary Vidal: Mr. Speaker, I do not think it was just Quebec that was a pawn in the negotiations for some of these deals. Many industries and individual players in Canada have maybe been used as pawns in this agreement.

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Mr. Speaker, one of things I am very pleased about with this new trade agreement is that it has eliminated the investor-state dispute settlement provisions in the trade agreement, which give corporations extraordinary rights and powers to challenge our laws and policies that are put in place to protect citizens, our environment and workers.

Would the member opposite like to see investor-state dispute settlement removed from the other trade agreements we have signed, historically, and would he like to see Canada renegotiate some of these trade agreements to get rid of this anti-democratic measure that was in NAFTA, which will be removed in the CUSMA?

Mr. Gary Vidal: Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure that all Canadian businesses have the ability to prosper.

With the indigenous services file, one of the things we are looking for is partnerships between indigenous communities and industry, allowing indigenous people to be part of the private sector, to be part of the market so they create economic activity that will help them take care of the very demanding needs in their first nations communities.

The Deputy Speaker: Before I go to resuming debate, I have a comment for hon. members. I see many members standing up to participate in the time for questions and comments. I encourage hon. members to continue doing that and eventually we will get to them. We will do our best to apportion the opportunities to speak in this regard.

[*Translation*]

I invite members who would like to participate in questions and comments to continue to stand up. They will eventually be given the floor.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as we saw yesterday, the first bill was passed with the support of all parties in the House except for the Bloc Québécois. That does not mean that we are against free trade and openness to trade, far from it.

In fact, if we look at Quebec's history, the separatist movement has nothing to prove in that regard. The great economists, who were also some of the greatest statesmen of modern Quebec, such as Bernard Landry and Jacques Parizeau, were the fathers of free trade in Quebec. We need not be lectured about that. It would be in extreme bad faith to accuse us of being opposed to trade with other countries.

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Nevertheless, that did not prevent Jacques Parizeau from opposing certain agreements. We had to vote against the agreement as presented yesterday for somewhat similar reasons. There seemed to be more arguments against than for. This is politics, not religion. Just because this agreement has a free trade label on it does not necessarily mean that it will get our vote, if it has negative impacts.

Sure, the agreement has some positives and we wish we could have supported it. Some real progress has been made, compared to the old NAFTA. However—and I think that the outcome and the policy positions show exactly why the Bloc is necessary—we represent Quebec, and Quebec is getting the short end of the stick with this agreement in many respects.

Some significant concessions were made, and this came up earlier in some of the questions that were asked. Quebec is bearing the brunt of these concessions, as usual. This agreement contains two deal breakers in particular. First, it undermines our agricultural model, which relies heavily on supply management. Once again, the dairy industry is an example of that. Second, it significantly hinders our aluminum industry's future prospects. This industry is Quebec's second-largest exporter and is a jewel in the crown of our economy.

Our aluminum industry shines for its small carbon footprint. Some even call it carbon neutral, and my colleagues from Saguenay—Lac-St-Jean would know about that. This agreement benefits Chinese aluminum, which would literally flood the North American market through Mexico. A great deal of carbon pollution is created in manufacturing this aluminum.

We are working very hard to force the government to take into account Quebec's interests, which it bargained away during the negotiations. That is our job as parliamentarians and our mission for the immediate future. We are reaching out to the government so that it will work with us to find ways to limit the harm it is causing to the aluminum industry and dairy farmers. As members know, we proposed a way to improve the agreement without having to open it completely. That does not mean that we will not do our job in committee by asking questions and trying to take the agreement in a better direction. Nevertheless, we suggested an approach that would not require opening the agreement.

If the government finds a way to limit the harm that the agreement will cause our dairy industry and to protect our aluminum smelters, particularly against Chinese dumping, then we will be pleased to support the next steps. That is what we want for Quebec.

The government started speaking about openness the very evening it was elected. We have also heard about openness in this debate. However, openness goes both ways. We are willing to negotiate and discuss, but we will not compromise our principles.

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Let's talk first about the key sectors of the Quebec economy that are threatened by this agreement. We believe that supply-managed products are a non-negotiable item, yet the government undermined protections for these products when it gave the Americans oversight over our trade practices.

We also believe that the aluminum industry is a non-negotiable item, yet the government agreed to allow Chinese aluminum to flood the North American market by going through Mexico.

Obviously, the government did not stand up for Quebec with the same vigour as it did for Ontario and western Canada. We cannot support the bill to ratify the CUSMA as it stands.

• (1115)

That is why we want the government to co-operate with us and take Quebec's needs into account.

Let's start with aluminum. Canadian and U.S. courts determined that Chinese aluminum was being dumped. That is not our allegation; it is the courts' finding. Unfortunately, as we all know, dumping is common, unfair and illegal. Canada and the United States both impose anti-dumping tariffs. Mexico, however, has no aluminum smelters, so it does not impose anti-dumping tariffs on Chinese aluminum.

As written, the agreement makes it possible for Chinese aluminum to flood the North American market, even though Canada and the United States have protective anti-dumping tariffs. Chinese aluminum is simply processed in Mexico, circumventing the protections we put in place. For free trade to be truly free and profitable for all, it must make unfair trade practices such as dumping impossible.

We also want to minimize our dairy producers' losses. In addition to opening up 3% of the Canadian market to American producers, CUSMA will make it harder for our producers to sell their milk protein to processors. As a result, American diafiltered milk imports could skyrocket, which is an ongoing issue we have been talking about for years.

As drafted, the agreement gives the Americans oversight into all our milk protein exports outside North America. Having a provision like this in a trade agreement is unheard of and it has the potential to completely destroy the dairy industry. We are trying to raise the main concerns with that aspect of the agreement.

I want to come back to aluminum to recap. Under NAFTA, automobile and truck manufacturers are under no obligation to buy North American steel and aluminum. Under the terms of the new CUSMA, 70% of the aluminum and steel bought by car and truck manufacturers has to originate from North America. To qualify as originating from North America, the steel and aluminum will have to undergo significant processing in North America.

On December 10, 2019, the three negotiating parties of the agreement signed a protocol of amendment to CUSMA. The protocol states that seven years after entry into force, steel purchased by manufacturers will have to be refined and cast in North America. That is the rub. There is no such provision for Quebec's aluminum. The amendment also states that 10 years after entry into force of this agreement, the parties will review the appropriate requirements

in the interest of the parties so that aluminum can be considered as originating from North America.

Groupe Performance Stratégique, or GPS, examined the absence of a definition for aluminum similar to the definition included for steel in the protocol of amendment, and the economic impact this will have on Quebec between 2020 and 2029. According to GPS, the absence of this definition will jeopardize six major projects on the North Shore and in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, in other words, the heart of Quebec's aluminum sector. The authors explained that Mexico can continue to transform primary aluminum purchased at a very low price from China or elsewhere and export it to the United States.

I am pleased that my colleagues from Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean are here for the debate, because those six projects involve construction investments worth about \$6.2 billion. I am sure everyone would agree that this is a lot of money. Between 2020 and 2029, if you add up the combined economic impact of the development and construction phases of the six projects, we are talking about investments worth \$12.2 billion and 60,000 jobs created, at an average salary of \$59,775.

• (1120)

These projects would generate revenues of more than \$900 million for the Government of Quebec and almost \$325 million for the Government of Canada. These projects would also produce 829,000 new tons of the greenest aluminum on the planet.

As we have been told repeatedly by the government, nothing in the former NAFTA protected the aluminum sector. We agree. This addition may look like progress, yet that is exactly where the problem lies. They are mixing up aluminum parts and aluminum. My colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean just talked about that. Why is aluminum, a Quebec product, not being offered the same protection as steel, which is a product of other provinces? That is where the problem lies and I will say that we are going to stand firm on this issue.

The definition of steel is clear. It includes the entire process, from melting, to mixing to coating. This will come into effect in seven years. Auto and parts manufacturers will have time to switch suppliers and to start purchasing North American steel. That is all very well and good. We have no problems with that at all.

However, a definition for “originating good” was not adopted for aluminum. Back in 2018, since there was no definition, the agreement was nothing more than a statement of intent that essentially allows automobile and parts manufacturers to get their primary aluminum wherever they want.

I should point out that Canada is the only of the three signatory countries for which protection against Chinese dumping is a real issue. In Quebec, it is imperative. For parts manufacturers in Ontario, this will be more of a long-term issue, which may explain why the government is so reluctant to deal with it.

Now, I want to talk about dairy farmers. Quebec needs a strong voice standing up for it, and we hope to be that strong voice. As members know, supply management is extremely important in Quebec, but less so in the rest of Canada. This is what makes us different as a people, as a nation. This is why we will not compromise on this.

Since 2001, which, coincidentally is the same time when the Bloc lost its recognized party status, there have been three breaches in supply management. When the Bloc had power, there were no breaches in supply management. Once again, this very fact demonstrates why we need to be here.

The Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, or CUSMA, opens up a new breach in supply management that will take away more than 3% of our dairy market, which amounts to a loss of about \$150 million a year, every year. The government announced that there would be full compensation. Let us be clear about the nature of that compensation. It is out of the question for this support to come in the form of a modernization program, like the fiasco that happened in 2018 with the European agreement. We are demanding a direct support program, starting with the next budget. That is what farmers are calling for. We will not budge on this either.

One issue that is not getting much attention, but that has the potential to destabilize the industry, is milk protein. Consumers in both Canada and the United States are drinking less milk but eating more butter, cream, cheese and ice cream. This leaves dairy farmers with surplus protein to dispose of. The Canadian International Trade Tribunal ruled in 2006 that above a certain concentration, these proteins became so denatured that they could no longer be considered dairy products and were therefore no longer subject to supply management, the existing laws that prohibit cross-border imports. The American agrochemical industry has developed milk protein concentrates designed specifically to circumvent supply management and enable U.S. farmers to dump their surplus into the Canadian market at lower prices than our farmers can afford to sell for. In Canada, the price paid to farmers is regulated by the Canadian Dairy Commission, as we know. However, imports of diafiltered milk, which does not even deserve to be called milk, have simply skyrocketed.

• (1125)

From zero in 2008, they shot up to 20,000 kilograms in 2014 and 33,000 kilograms in 2015, and they probably would have kept rising.

To solve the problem, farmers came to an agreement with processors on a price that would enable them to switch from American diafiltered milk to our domestic surplus protein. Their agreement was endorsed by Ottawa, the Canadian Dairy Commission, the provinces and the marketing boards.

Canada created a new class of dairy products, surplus protein, that could be sold at a low price. It was commonly known as class 7. Imports of diafiltered milk collapsed, prompting a flurry of irate tweets from U.S. President Trump, who promised to solve the problem during the renegotiation of NAFTA, as members may recall.

In CUSMA, the Americans insisted on spelling out in black and white that Canada would abolish class 7, and Ottawa agreed. To

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make sure that the class was not revived under a different name, they demanded that they get a say in Canada's protein trade. This whole section of the agreement is deeply disappointing to farmers, but sadly, with a certain sense of resignation, they are giving up the fight. They are not asking the government to push back on this. What they are asking for is a little time to adjust, as much time as is necessary and reasonable.

The government's eagerness to hastily ratify this agreement could cause a lot of harm. Let us take our time on a debate like this one. Let us not rush through this or there will be collateral victims.

Right now, our dairy farmers are selling some of their surplus milk protein concentrates on international markets, for example, in Asia and the Middle East.

The wording of CUSMA regarding the trade of protein concentrates seems to give the United States a say in all of our exports. Washington could decide to limit the quantity of protein concentrates that our farmers can sell to third country markets. Depending on how this CUSMA provision is interpreted, Washington could limit the quantity of protein concentrates that our farmers have the right to sell to the rest of the world. This would enable the Americans to get rid of a competitor on global markets at very little cost. It is a first in the history of international trade to give a foreign country oversight over our trade with the rest of the world. It basically hands over a part of Canada's sovereignty to Washington.

Our producers are likely to end up with huge surpluses of milk solids they cannot sell, which would totally destabilize the system. As written, CUSMA makes that catastrophic scenario a possibility, but the wording is unclear. We need clarity about things like that before we can support the agreement.

Fortunately, there will be a process to debate it. We are perfectly willing to do our job as parliamentarians with the government and the other opposition parties, but let me make it clear that some things are off the table. We are willing to compromise, but not to be compromised.

• (1130)

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his comments and ideas.

I think this version of NAFTA is a major win for Quebec's aluminum workers. We fought to get rid of U.S. tariffs. We are the only major aluminum producer not subject to U.S. tariffs. The new agreement guarantees that 70% of the aluminum used in cars will be North American. Currently, there are no such guarantees.

Is it not true that this agreement will make things better for aluminum producers and workers? Is it not true that the Government of Quebec supports this agreement?

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Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, aluminum workers have expressed their fears. The best way to discuss what is right for them is to ask them directly. A full delegation from Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean actually came here yesterday to make their voices heard. It was made up of local elected officials, union leaders and representatives from the economic sector, and its message was not that this agreement would be good for aluminum workers. It is easy to assume all kinds of things and say that it is a better agreement, but at the end of the day, when we ask those people, the answer is clear.

As for whether this constitutes progress compared to NAFTA, the use of the word “parts” basically waters down any potential benefit that might have come from such protection. This is a problem. When we talk about parts rather than molten aluminum, that changes everything—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. We are currently at questions and comments.

I would like to remind hon. members that, during questions and comments, it is important to glance at the Speaker every so often, to have an idea of how much time remains.

The hon. member for Prince Albert.

[*English*]

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened quite attentively to my colleague from the Bloc. I look forward to working with him on the international trade committee to find some solutions to the problems the Liberals have created.

In fact, there are solutions. The member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord brought forward the solution of green aluminum that uses Quebec aluminum, which is the most environmentally friendly aluminum in the world. It is another example of why Canadian technology should be exported around the world. Instead, in this scenario, Chinese aluminum will be dumped into Mexico and it will end up in our cars.

Does the member not think there are some good ideas to find at committee? I do not mean by bringing in the associations, because they do not necessarily represent the members, the plants, the facilities or the unions. Does he not agree we should bring in these people, listen to them and take their ideas, like that of the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord on green aluminum, and look for solutions for those folks?

• (1135)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question. Indeed, we have always said that we are open to good ideas, and I thank the member for pointing that out. In fact, the hon. member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is already working closely on this issue with my colleagues from neighbouring ridings.

We are certainly in favour of green aluminum. It is already green, and it is set to become even greener. The problem with the provisions in the current agreement is that this green aluminum, which has the potential to be a real ecological and economic success, is in jeopardy. The study I cited earlier is about projects that are truly at risk if the agreement remains unchanged.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by saying that I remember the fine work that former MPs Ruth Ellen Brosseau and Tracey Ramsey did on behalf of dairy farmers. We share the concerns of the workers and producers in this sector and in the aluminum sector.

The NDP always likes to be constructive where possible. Given that it is highly unlikely that we will manage to change the agreement, I ask my colleague what constructive steps could be taken to help dairy farmers and workers in the aluminum sector.

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, with respect to aluminum, our party has submitted a proposal to the government. Discussions and negotiations are under way, but we cannot talk about them yet. Let's see what happens next, and we can discuss it in due course in the House or elsewhere.

As for supply management, we have clearly stated that we hope to table a bill during this parliamentary session that would prohibit any further breaches in supply management. We are also thinking of the future. We are tired of these secret negotiations at the expense of our farmers, and we are tired of being told, when the terms are made public, that it is just a small breach. In fact, all these little breaches add up to a huge hole. I hope that all parties will support us. It is good that they are promising not to touch the dairy sector. However, in my opinion, supporting a bill that would make such breaches legally impossible would remedy the situation once and for all.

Right now, however, we need to address the issue of the compensation that is required because of the agreement. It is paltry compensation, but we will have to wage that battle.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what an incredible speech from my colleague. He eloquently articulated the difference between protections for steel and protections for aluminum. I think my hon. colleagues on the other side of the House will now understand the difference. I explained it to my eight-year-old daughter yesterday, and she understood. With all due respect, I think they should also be able to understand the difference between the two.

Could my hon. colleague tell me why it was Quebec that kept getting used as a bargaining chip in the last few treaties, not the rest of Canada? Take, for example, supply management, aluminum today and softwood lumber, which has no protection.

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, I have a lot to say, but I just have a minute.

He explained the difference to his eight-year-old daughter, but to be fair, my colleague comes from a politically active family. She already had it in her to understand.

Of course, in politics, everything comes down to the balance of power. When the Bloc Québécois had recognized party status in the House, there were no breaches in supply management. After the Bloc Québécois lost that status, there were three breaches in supply management. We are here, and we will be keeping watch. We will speak up.

Generally speaking, the absent are always in the wrong. For the agreement with Europe, the Quebec negotiator had already stated that he was happy to let the delegation take over. In other words, he was not at the bargaining table. The absent are always in the wrong. There is one solution that would give Quebec a voice, and that is for Quebec to become independent.

• (1140)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the new member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot. This is my first time asking him a question, and I want to take this opportunity to say welcome.

My question is about aluminum and the massive subsidies that the Liberal government has granted to a project in British Columbia, the LNG Canada project in Kitimat. This is a shale gas development project that will be built with aluminum from China. A huge subsidy has been granted to build this project in China.

Why is this project not required to use aluminum from Quebec?

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay: Mr. Speaker, that is an excellent question, and I think the member raises a great point that is worth examining. We would be delighted to work with the member and monitor this file very closely.

[English]

Mr. Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood—Transcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to share some reflections on behalf of the NDP with respect to the final version of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, as it is formally known, or as it is known by many, simply the new NAFTA. Before delving into the details of the agreement, I want to give some context to Canadians who may be listening at home.

Donald Trump was elected President of the United States in 2016, claiming that “NAFTA was the worst deal ever”. While no one in Canada would question the significance of our trading relationship with the United States to the Canadian economy, there are many Canadians who would rightly question who the big winners under NAFTA have been.

The original NAFTA was negotiated by Conservatives and signed by Liberals in 1994. People were promised jobs, rising productivity and secure access to the largest market in the world. However, during the years since NAFTA was signed, Canada lost over 400,000 manufacturing jobs and its textile industry was devastated. While automation has played a role in those job losses, there is no question that many of those jobs moved to Mexico because it was a low-wage economy that could sell finished products back into Canada and the U.S. without penalty.

We can ask auto workers from southern Ontario. Half of Canada's current manufacturing trade balance with Mexico is made up of cars and parts. The overall automotive trade deficit between

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Mexico and Canada has gone from \$1.6 billion to \$8.7 billion under NAFTA.

In addition, Canada has paid millions of dollars in court fees and penalties when sued by corporations under investor-state dispute resolution mechanisms. Perhaps most memorably, the Canadian government was successfully sued by a U.S. chemical company, Ethyl Corporation, in 1997 for having dared to try to ban the import and interprovincial trade of the gasoline additive known as MMT.

MMT is a suspected neurotoxin that automakers also claim interferes with automobile on-board diagnostic systems. Under NAFTA, Ethyl won a settlement with damages totalling \$19.5 million, but that was not it. The Canadian government was also forced to overturn the regulatory ban and issue a formal apology to the corporation.

It was a stark example of how international trade agreements could override the authority of democratically elected governments to make rules in the public interest. In this case, rules meant to protect human health and the environment.

Canada has been challenged more than any other country under NAFTA chapter 11. Other cases against Canada include challenges to wildlife conservation measures, provincial water and timber protection policies, fracking in the St. Lawrence River basin and the sale and use of pesticides.

The proportionality clause in the original NAFTA also challenged Canada's energy sovereignty, allowing the United States to require a significant share of Canada's oil and gas production be sold to our southern neighbours, whether it was in Canada's national interest or not.

Over the decades under NAFTA, Canada's GDP and cross-border trade no doubt grew, but wealth inequality also grew. Today, Canadians are finding it harder to make ends meet. Each month, 48% of Canadians are within \$200 of not being able to pay their bills or defaulting on their debt.

Liberals and Conservatives are far too quick to gloss over, far too often, that it has not been all sunshine and roses under NAFTA. While the rich were getting richer, far too many Canadians were left to fall behind.

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Governments and trade tribunals were, and are, quick to defend corporate rights and to bail out big companies when the risks do not pay off. However, when things go wrong for workers, they are offered simple condolences. Maybe they are told they need to accept that this is how the market works, or that they are the victims of downsizing or global restructuring. It is as if these things were natural events, like earthquakes or snowstorms, and not the result of calculated human decisions designed to maximize shareholder profit at the expense of everything else.

In other words, Canadian workers have a lot to be upset about when it comes to trade deals and the global corporate agenda that drives them. That is also why there is a growing political backlash across the western world directed at these kinds of agreements.

Nevertheless, 25 years under NAFTA has led to an integrated North American supply chain for many businesses, and has created confidence for many entrepreneurs that they can invest in cross-border commerce without fear of the kind of arbitrary reprisal we have seen from time to time for certain industries, including softwood lumber, the cattle industry and most recently steel and aluminum.

• (1145)

The understandable desire to maintain that confidence, coupled with an economic interdependence that grew under NAFTA, explains why so many Canadians were concerned when Donald Trump moved to renegotiate the deal. The President's own personality compounded that concern. To say the least, he is a known bully who is quick to throw even his closest allies under the bus when it suits his short-term political needs.

Instead of leaning into the possibility of renegotiating and improving the deal, the Liberals' first instinct was to say that the original NAFTA was the best deal that Canada could get.

They were not the ones to propose the elimination of the chapter 11 investor-state dispute settlement mechanism that gave Ethyl Corporation its win over Canadians' health and the environment. In fact, they initially said they would fight to keep it.

It was only once the U.S. made it clear that it would insist on renegotiation that we really started to hear the government admit that the deal was not perfect and that it could in fact be improved. Suddenly, better was possible after all.

To hear that NAFTA had flaws was no surprise to New Democrats, but to hear that from the mouths of Liberals who had spent years mocking New Democrats for saying as much certainly was a bit of a shock.

As usual, just like Liberals and Conservatives before them, the present Liberal government engaged in a highly secretive negotiation process. While a broader range of stakeholders may have been consulted, there was no information made available to the public or to Parliament. In fact, we are still waiting for some basic economic analysis of the agreement from the Liberal government, something a number of our trading partners not only make available, but make available early on in the process, and I will have more to say on that later.

At the end of the first round of bargaining, the Liberals declared once again that we had the best deal that Canada could get. What New Democrats saw was an agreement that hammered the supply-managed dairy sector, increased the price of already high-cost prescription drugs, and continued to put the rights of corporations on a pedestal without offering real protection for the rights of workers and the planet.

Thankfully, even though the government was eager to pack it in, Democrats in the United States shared some of those concerns and signalled their intention to fight for a better deal. In spite of the promise of a better deal, Liberals in Canada were rushing to ratify it, and the only real criticism they were getting from Conservatives at that time, a short six or seven months ago, was that they were not ratifying it quickly enough.

When the NDP called on the government to delay ratification until the Democrats' campaign to improve the agreement had run its course and to seize the opportunity to push for something better, we were met with a combination of outrage and scorn.

For example, the Deputy Prime Minister told us in May 2019:

Mr. Speaker, what the NDP needs to understand is that reopening this agreement would be like opening Pandora's box. Why is the NDP prepared to risk our economic stability? It would be naive for the NDP to believe that Canadians would benefit from reopening this agreement. The NDP is playing a very dangerous game.

In June, the minister continued along the same vein, saying:

...we do not want and we do not need a new NAFTA negotiation. Canada has done its work. We have our deal. We are not going to create an opportunity to have this hard-won agreement...put in jeopardy.

There are more examples but I do not wish to belabour the point. I simply want to point out that happily the Liberals were not able to ratify the first version of CUSMA before last year's election. The Democrats continued their work and they made some meaningful improvements to the agreement.

It turns out the game the NDP was playing was the one that would allow for the elimination of measures that otherwise would have raised the cost of prescription drugs. It turns out we were playing the game that allowed for the establishment of first-of-their-kind provisions for binding, enforceable and internationally monitored labour standards in Mexico.

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That may have been a dangerous game for pharmaceutical companies looking to maximize their profits on the backs of the sick. It may have been a dangerous game for companies looking to drive out competition by moving their manufacturing to a low-wage economy like Mexico. However, I do not think we can say it was a dangerous game for everyday Canadians trying to pay for prescription drugs or worried about their jobs moving south.

There are still real concerns for many Canadians, and I suspect big pharma and the big three will still find a way to make money, although maybe not quite as much.

The problems have not all been fixed, but Canadians will be a little better off than they otherwise would have been thanks to the hard work, not of this government that wanted to rush ratification, but of U.S. Democrats who were not willing to throw in the towel so easily.

Canadians should not have to depend on politicians in foreign countries to get a better deal at the bargaining table. They should be able to have confidence that their government is at the table fighting for them instead of acting at the behest of corporate lobbyists.

● (1150)

We can give Canadians that reassurance by making our trade process more open and transparent and by involving Parliament at the outset. We can build confidence in the process by formalizing the consultation process so that Canadians know when, where and how they will be able to express their hopes and concerns with respect to a prospective trade agreement, and by ensuring that all the right people, organizations and institutions are consulted.

We can build confidence by having the government clearly and formally state its objectives for the negotiation, by having a debate and vote in Parliament on those objectives before formal negotiations begin and by requiring the government to prepare and publish economic data and analysis on the likely impact of a deal. These are things that to many would seem to be simple common sense.

Why should Canadians not have a right to know how they will be consulted on trade issues instead of having a different process every time? Why should Canadians feel confident their government is fighting for them, if it will not be transparent about its goals?

How can Parliament play a truly meaningful role in setting Canada's trade policy if it can only debate and vote on the merit of trade with a country once a deal has already been signed? How can Canadians and their elected representatives be truly expected to judge the value of an agreement with no economic data or analysis? This is the very situation that we find ourselves in.

Before my colleagues and other parties begin dusting off their straw men to say things like, "You're talking about negotiating in public. You can't do that. You don't understand trade", let us consider this, because we have heard that many times before in this place.

The executive in the United States is required to give at least 90 days' notice to Congress of its intent to enter trade discussions with another country. Congress is able to define trade policy priorities and specify negotiation objectives. The executive is expected to honour those objectives in its negotiations, and Congress can set

out consultation and notification requirements so that it is satisfied the executive is actually following it through.

In other words, legislators in the United States have far more authority and involvement in the trade process, yet they were still able to conclude a deal. It did not mean they could not get a deal done. The sky did not fall. Americans had more information about what their government was trying to do at the bargaining table, but it did not impede them from getting a deal.

In the European Union, the very first step in the trade process is for its executive to prepare an assessment of the likely economic impact of a proposed deal. The EU publishes its negotiating directives online before negotiations even begin. The executive publishes online a report of each negotiating round and its initial negotiating proposals.

The commission also informs the European Parliament at every stage of the talks, about the latest developments. When the EU is close to finalizing the text of a deal, the commission tells Parliament and informally sends the final text to EU member states and the Parliament.

That is only a summary of some of the highlights of the EU trade process. It may be that some members found that tedious but, if so, they should reflect on the fact that despite all that consultation, all those steps and all that sharing of information, the EU has been quite capable of negotiating trade agreements, including the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement it recently signed with Canada.

In Canada, we have no formal process at all. The government is free to go to any country in the world and negotiate and sign any deal it wants. It does not have to tell anyone. It does not need any parliamentary approval. In fact, the only reason Parliament is studying the deal at all is that the implementation requires changes to the law. However, by the time we get to that stage, the deal itself is already signed and negotiations are already concluded.

I want Canadians to know that we do not have to do it that way. Adopting some of the practices of our trading partners could make for a more open, democratic, transparent and accountable trade process in Canada. It could do that without jeopardizing our ability to get a deal. That is a false argument. We know, because we have deals with places that do those very things.

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The time to set up that kind of process is right now. It is while we are talking about this deal. It is while we are concluding this deal. It is while it is in the media. It is while people are paying attention. If we wait, the issue may not draw public attention again, and I worry it may not draw the attention of the government either until the next negotiation, say between Canada and the United Kingdom, which may not be that far away. Once that process is already started and is in the news, it will be too late to do it right, which is why we should set it up now.

That is why the NDP has called on the government to move quickly on the institution of a proper trade process for Canada. We look forward to a substantive discussion about how best to move forward on that in this Parliament.

• (1155)

To conclude, I want to come back to the substance of the agreement. I mentioned already that the NDP looks favourably on the elimination of chapter 11 and the proportionality clause. We are, however, concerned about the so-called good regulatory practices chapter and whether it will continue to put downward pressure on public interest regulation, making it harder to create and maintain regulations for the public good.

We are concerned about the requirement that Canada consult the United States before entering into negotiations with any non-market economy. Unless we bring in a meaningful domestic trade process, this means that the U.S. government will have more right to know about Canada's trade intentions than our own Parliament will, which makes no sense to me at all.

We are encouraged by the new provisions enabling monitoring and enforcement of labour standards in Mexico, but we want to better understand how exactly those are meant to work. Study at committee will be a good opportunity to do that.

[*Translation*]

We have heard concerns about the chapter on e-commerce, and we would like to hear what the experts have to say about the implications for Canada's digital economy.

We also share the concerns of dairy farmers and aluminum workers, and we want the government to tell us what concrete measures it plans to take to help workers and farmers in those sectors after CUSMA is ratified.

These are the concerns we hope our study of the bill will address. That is why we voted to let the government table the bill yesterday. There is no such thing as a perfect agreement, but we will keep an open mind while asking certain questions.

Does this version of the agreement place Canadians in a better position than the existing agreement? We want an answer to that question.

Could the ratification process for this bill lead to a trade process that offers Canadians more transparency, more consultation and more accountability?

Those are our thoughts so far. We are anxious to delve deeper into these matters in the coming weeks.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I believe the minister, on behalf of the government, working with the negotiators and the many different stakeholders achieved the optimum agreement given all the circumstances over the last number of years.

I also get it. The Conservatives believe that if they were in government, they could have negotiated a better agreement. The NDP believes that if it was in government, it could have negotiated a better agreement. The Green Party believes that if it was in government, it could have negotiated a better agreement.

What is encouraging is that we have seen those parties, along with the government, support the principle of the fact that this is a better deal than the previous agreement. We saw that in terms of the vote that took place yesterday. Having that agreement passed provides additional support for the Canadian economy and all Canadians benefit.

I am actually very encouraged in regard to the trade file, the positioning and the speech by the member across the way this afternoon. Is there something very specific that comes to the member's mind in regard to the old agreement? Is there anything within the old agreement that he believes has been lost in a negative way with respect to the new agreement?

• (1200)

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, I am not sure if there was a double negative there.

As I said in my remarks, some of the things that are out of the agreement that were there before that we think constitute an improvement are the elimination of chapter 11 and the proportionality clause.

I take the hon. member's point that it is often the case in partisan politics that parties tend to have a lot of confidence in their own ability to secure better agreements than their opponents. However, the point for us is that Canadians should be able to judge that by having a uniform and formalized process where the government is required to disclose its objectives in a way that allows Parliament to debate and comment on them, that allows Parliament to have a vote before the negotiations begin and that provides adequate economic data and analysis to be able to assess the impact of a deal.

We should be moving in that direction so that it is not up to Canadians to simply decide who they are going to trust when we all say we could get a better deal. They should have the facts they need to make an assessment about who really could make that better deal and what the government is actually doing at the negotiating table and what it intends to get for Canadians.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to welcome my colleague from the NDP to the Standing Committee on International Trade. I am really looking forward to his enthusiasm and commitment to making sure this is a good deal. He mentioned issues that we share in common, such as the issue of sovereignty and our responsibility as opposition to do our due diligence.

In December we asked the government seven questions. One of them was to look at the economic impact. I think the member shares our concern that the government would like us to rubber-stamp this without even having proper economic impact studies. One of the issues that is really important for Ontario and particularly my community is the effect of this deal on auto workers and the auto sector.

I was wondering if he could take a few moments to talk about the importance of this deal and the part that benefits auto workers.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, the North American content requirements are good for auto workers. Having 75% of the vehicle made here in North America is a good thing. Some of the guarantees around steel and aluminum content are good things, although there is more work to do on the aluminum side to make sure that the primary level production is also happening within North America in order to support aluminum workers in Quebec and also in British Columbia where there is aluminum production happening as well. Those are definitely good things and steps in the right direction.

One of the questions I would want answered in an economic impact analysis, and we have not heard these figures from the government, is about the 70% steel and aluminum guarantee we have on paper but nobody has actually said what the current percentage is. If we take the North American rules of origin in the new agreement and apply them to the current economic scenario, right now is it 40% North American steel and aluminum in cars, or 80%, or 90% or 10%? We do not actually know and we have not heard from the government.

If we had a proper economic impact analysis, those are some of the facts and figures we would expect to see so we could judge what this actually means. If we are already at 80%, then having a 70% guarantee is not that impressive. If we are at 40%, it is certainly a lot better.

That is why we think that information is crucial to get as we study this deal.

• (1205)

[Translation]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Madam Speaker, I really enjoyed my esteemed colleague's speech. He talked about how the negotiation process was not transparent enough, and I agree with him.

I think there should be a mechanism that gives the provinces a say in multilateral agreements like NAFTA. Would he agree? Such a mechanism might ensure that governments stop thinking of Canada's economy solely in terms of Alberta's oil and Ontario's auto industry.

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, there is no doubt that free trade agreements have an impact on provincial interests. It makes perfect sense that the provinces should be consulted, as they were to a certain extent for CETA. I think the real problem is that there is no formal process, which means that even if there are good consultations with the provinces about one agreement, there is no guarantee that will be the case for another. It is time to establish a substan-

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tive, formal process that gives Canadians and all levels of government the right to be heard.

[English]

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to ask the hon. member a question that my colleague tried to ask a little earlier, just to make sure we are clear on the nature of that question. Was there anything in the old agreement, the one currently in force, that we lost that we should have tried to preserve?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, I do not know how long the hon. member has been following the trade file in Canada, but if he had been following the debate at the time of the original NAFTA, I think he would find that on the New Democratic bench we were more concerned about what was in there that needed to be taken out than what was in there that needed to be preserved.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Madam Speaker, my friend from Quebec mentioned the issue of aluminum and that the government put forth a very green agenda in its trade missions. I think that all of us in the House can be very proud that the aluminum produced in Quebec is the greenest aluminum in the entire world.

It seems there is still some skepticism and concern about how aluminum is being treated. I would specifically like to talk to my colleague about the concern that has been brought forward in the media that perhaps there has been stockpiling of aluminum in Mexico which may be there from China, and that there could be a route coming around the back end. The issue is the quality of the aluminum, the fact that it is not produced in North America and there could be a back door.

Could my colleague please address this issue? Why was it an opportunity lost that we did not negotiate a better deal for our aluminum manufacturers considering we have the greenest aluminum in the entire world?

Mr. Daniel Blaikie: Madam Speaker, first, it absolutely has to be the priority of the Canadian government to protect the interests of Canadian producers and make sure that to the maximum degree possible Canadians are being hired to produce materials like that. Second, we need enforceable environmental provisions where we get our trade partners on board with reducing their emissions as well as our emissions so that things like green aluminum can be fought for under a trade agreement. I would love to see co-operation from my Conservative colleagues on that in the future.

• (1210)

[Translation]

Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I just want to say that I will be sharing my time with the member for Vaughan—Woodbridge.

*Government Orders**[English]*

This is a great opportunity to stand before the House to speak to the trade deal CUSMA. As members know, I am from Nova Scotia and my riding is Sackville—Preston—Chezzetcook. It is a riding on the outskirts of the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth. There are many companies in my riding, and throughout last summer and during the campaign, I had an opportunity to speak with many in the business community. They were quick to tell me how important trade deals are for Canadians, all trade deals, and they zeroed in on some of the key trade deals we signed in the last four years, in the last mandate.

I will touch on three of them, because they are extremely important to Canadians. I am talking, of course, about the final piece of CUSMA that we have before us, CETA and the CPTPP. Those were big deals because they represent 1.5 billion people. Let us think about that for a second: 1.5 billion people. These are major trade deals. I can say as a member of Parliament that there are very important conversations we should be having with our constituents right across the country, in all 338 constituencies.

When we talk about trade deals, we have to talk about the Canadian economy. In the last four years, we have seen a drastic improvement in the Canadian economy. We had over 10 years of austerity and cuts by the Conservative government. It was time to invest in Canadians, and that is exactly what we did.

By investing in Canadians, we were successful in increasing the number of jobs. There were one million more high-quality jobs, believe it or not, over a four-year period. That is extremely important. The second thing we saw was the lowest unemployment rate in 40 years. Those are big numbers.

Along with that, 800,000 Canadians were lifted out of poverty, 300,000 of them children. We lifted 20% of Canadians out of poverty. That is a good example of what we see when an economy is strong and things are moving. Canadians in all walks of life increase their opportunities to be successful when we lift 20% of them out of poverty.

Trade deals are very important because they level the playing field for those who are part of a deal. I can say with confidence, no question about it, that the business community in Canada can compete with the world when the playing field is fair. That is exactly what we have in this deal. I challenge all members of Parliament to continue to dialogue and consult with the business community and let businesses know that these important deals are now ready to go and they can take advantage of the opportunities. Our government has invested in the business community so that businesses can expand, grow, prosper and trade globally. Those things are all part and parcel of this. It is a general approach right across the board.

Now let us talk about the CETA deal. Because of the CETA deal, tariffs have been removed from 98% of all products, up from 25%. Let us think about that. Only 25% of our products were being exported with no tariffs and now we are at 98%. That is exceptional. That is why we will see more and more trade between our country and the European Union.

● (1215)

With the new CPTPP deal, half a billion people more are trading with us. Most of the tariffs have been removed by the CPTPP and 100% of the tariffs on seafood have been removed. That is very important for Canadians, especially those in Atlantic Canada and Nova Scotia. Some of those tariffs varied from 10% to 22%, so just imagine the investment potential now of the industry in Atlantic Canada and across Canada. That is extremely powerful.

The new CUSMA is so important. It is nice to say we could have had this or that, but it is a trade deal that represents \$2 billion per day. That is \$2 billion yesterday, \$2 billion today, \$2 billion tomorrow and so forth. That is big.

Some 68% of all products from Nova Scotia are traded with the Americans. That represents \$3.7 billion U.S. per year. It also represents 18,000 new direct jobs and 7,000 indirect jobs. Is Nova Scotia happy with the trade deal with the Americans? Absolutely. As the Premier of Nova Scotia said, “Our message to them, really, is that Canada and Nova Scotia is open for business.” That is what Premier McNeil of Nova Scotia shared with Nova Scotians and Canadians.

With the new CUSMA deal, we have seen, in a new piece since June, some very big improvements in certain areas. The first one is labour. Labour is extremely important for levelling the playing field. We have seen a strengthening of the standards and the enforcement. It is one thing to set standards, but do we have any enforcement? Are we going to follow through on that? Through inspections and various approaches and strategies, we are going to make sure that wages are acceptable within the fair playing field. If we trade product and someone is paying \$1, then it is much different.

There is also the new obligations for the environment. We all know that the environment is a very important aspect for all Canadians. It is a big challenge, the biggest challenge of our time, I would say. The new dispute resolution process in Chapter 20 will be powerful once again because no country will be able to block it.

I know my time is running short, but I have to share what Mr. Trump said. We have to look back to when Trump said to throw out NAFTA. When he was tweeting at three o'clock in the morning, he said that the U.S. had to do three things for sure or he would not sign anything and that there had to be a sunset clause of five years. Then he said it would be dead if it was not renegotiated. We said no. It is not in there.

On supply management, he said there would be no supply management in any NAFTA deal. Is supply management there? Yes, because we as a government made sure that it had to be there.

The third thing he said, again as he was tweeting at three or four o'clock in the morning, was about dispute resolution. He said it had to be an American tribunal, not an independent tribunal. Is it an American tribunal? No. Did he win? No. That is a good example of how our deal was negotiated.

I want to finish with a quote from the Business Council of Canada: "We applaud your government's success in negotiating a comprehensive and high-standard agreement on North American trade. That is pretty clear."

We have to understand that a negotiation is a negotiation. We are not going to win every point, but right across this country we now have a deal that will allow us to continue to grow economically.

• (1220)

[Translation]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my esteemed and energetic colleague for his stirring speech.

He spoke about job creation and the drop in the unemployment rate. That is all well and good, but I would like to point out to my esteemed colleague that a delegation from Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean came here yesterday to stand up for aluminum. They came armed with an exhaustive study and flawless methodology to explain that the aluminum provision in the new free trade agreement will jeopardize six big projects.

We are talking about huge numbers. There are 60,000 jobs at stake, with an average salary of \$60,000 a year. Those are good jobs. A total of \$6.2 billion in investments are in jeopardy because the government was unable to get the same deal for aluminum as it did for steel in the new CUSMA.

What does my colleague think of the fact that \$6.2 billion and 60,000 jobs are in jeopardy in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean and on the North Shore?

Mr. Darrell Samson: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his question and the point that he raised.

My colleague needs to recognize that, before the agreement, there was no protection for steel or aluminum. With this agreement, 70% of aluminum will come from North America. I know there is the issue of parts, but with all due respect, the group of people who came to Ottawa yesterday certainly did not stop in Quebec City. If they had, they would have heard what the Premier of Quebec, Mr. Legault, had to say. He said:

[English]

"I think that the Bloc must defend the interests of Quebeckers, and it is in the interests of Quebeckers that this agreement be adopted and ratified."

[Translation]

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Sackville—Pre-

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ston—Chezzetcook for his very spirited speech. Members of the House will see that this is just the beginning.

A significant portion of that \$2 billion in trade between the United States and Canada occurs at the Lacolle border in my riding of Châteauguay—Lacolle.

I would like my colleague to tell me whether the agreement contains measures to facilitate trade. People often talk to me about problems at the border that delay the movement of goods.

Mr. Darrell Samson: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her question.

As we know, the border has always been problematic. People who are travelling and who cross the border in their cars can be asked all kinds of questions. If someone is buying a vehicle or something, there are all kinds of criteria and rules in place.

On the other hand, if I understand correctly, when free trade exists between companies, business owners have very different systems for trading with one another. Checks still get done, as there can always be products and issues, but basically, there is a system in place that allows them to trade goods quickly.

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments on the importance of trade.

He talked about the new CPTPP. If it were that important, he would remember that two weeks after the Prime Minister was elected in 2015, his first international trip was to the APEC summit. Mr. Obama, who was the most progressive president in the history of the United States, brought his deal, the TPP, there to be ratified and signed. At that time, the Prime Minister decided it was not progressive enough so he did not sign the agreement. Our allies that were there, New Zealand, Australia and Japan, were extremely upset. Eventually the government came around and signed the TPP, so obviously it thought it was a good agreement, although it was a couple of years late and included two sidebars.

It has been five years now, and the original TPP was a renegotiation of NAFTA. Could my colleague comment on what benefit there has been for the Canadian economy to have this amount of uncertainty over four years when the agreement could have been signed exactly 14 months before Mr. Trump was even elected, two years before this became a big issue? It would have been a great template for this new North American free trade agreement. Why did the Liberals not sign it in the first place?

• (1225)

Mr. Darrell Samson: Madam Speaker, even though the trade deal is not signed today, already there are trade deals happening on the ground. It is not as if everything stops. That is what is important.

However, I want to finish with a tweet about CUSMA by Conservative Jason Kenney from Alberta:

Relieved that a renewed North American Trade Agreement has been concluded.

He is relieved. I think that is pretty powerful. He is happy.

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Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to speak on Bill C-4, an act to implement the agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States.

CUSMA, as it is commonly known, reminds me of a song by the Village People from my time working and living in New York City. It reflects over two years of negotiations by our Canadian, American and Mexican trade officials.

I first wish to commend and congratulate Canada's negotiating team and our lead trade negotiator Steve Verheul, along with our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and member of Parliament for University—Rosedale, who reached an agreement that modernizes the original NAFTA that came into effect on January 1, 1994.

I also wish to congratulate the Government of Mexico as well as the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives on ratifying the trade deal. This is an instance in the United States of bipartisan support from both Democrats and Republicans.

I have the privilege of representing a dynamic and entrepreneurial riding, Vaughan—Woodbridge. Businesses and their employees in my riding depend on trade certainty with the United States and Mexico, full stop.

My riding is home to CP Rail's busiest intermodal facility in our country, with logistics hubs for Home Depot, Costco, Sobeys, FedEx facilities, Saputo and leading exporters of products, including Martinrea's flagship auto parts facility, which supplies parts for the GM Equinox and Terrain; Vision Plastics, employing thousands in the York region and exporting over 75% of its products to the United States; and Extrudex Aluminum, with headquarters in my riding of Vaughan—Woodbridge and facilities in Ohio and Saint-Nicolas, Quebec, manufacturing high-quality aluminum extrusions for usage across North America.

This trade deal brings certainty to Canadian businesses and obviously to Canadian employees across Canada and our communities. It is very important that we move ahead with multipartisan support from all parties here in the House.

As vice-chair of the Canada-U.S. interparliamentary association, I had the opportunity to visit the United States' capital and speak with many congressmen, congresswomen and senators on trade. During those conversations, it was evident that all parties and all political representatives wanted to come to an agreement to provide certainty in trade among Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.

As we look at how we are doing in terms of inclusive growth and growth for all citizens in society, it is very important to ensure that the trade deal is a win-win-win situation for all involved and that we stop and think about how this trade deal prevents what is called the race to the lowest common denominator. In this regard, we can be very proud that this trade deal has provisions on labour and the environment and that it maintains the cultural exemption, which I know is so important for La Belle Province, Quebec.

We know that a race to the bottom creates inequality. We know that it can create resentment and create losers. We do not want that.

We want to make sure that workers in North America benefit from trade deals. We want to make sure that those workers have bright futures, that middle-class families across North America and working-class families across North America and all employees benefit from trade. We want to make sure that trade lifts all boats.

We know that since NAFTA came into effect in 1994, trade between Canada and the United States and Mexico has exponentially grown. It has grown ninefold between Canada and Mexico and more than doubled between Canada and the U.S.

The companies in my riding that I referred to have a few things in common. They continue to invest in Canada and in Canadians, which is helping to grow our economy. They need certainty in the markets they serve and they need trade certainty, and CUSMA delivers that.

I ask my colleagues across the aisle to support this deal, to come together and do what is in the best interests of all Canadians, including businesses, employees and communities.

We know that increased trade means jobs for Canadians. Since 1994, when NAFTA came into effect, it has generated economic growth and rising standards of living for the people of all three member states. In fact, total merchandise trade between Canada and the U.S. has more than doubled since 1993, as I stated earlier, and grown ninefold between Canada and Mexico.

Since our government was elected, we have pursued an aggressive trade agenda. The signing of CUSMA has followed both the completion of the Canada-Europe free trade agreement and the CPTPP. Canada is the only G7 country that has trade agreements with all other G7 countries, enjoying free trade with nearly 1.5 billion people. This gives Canadian companies unprecedented access to markets and allows for the creation of good jobs in all markets.

● (1230)

The world is much more connected and interconnected today than at any point in history. Canada is leading the way, and our government, which I am proud to be a part of, is leading the way with policies on trade, infrastructure investment and immigration to attract the best and the brightest to Canada and allow trade-oriented firms to establish themselves and continue to invest in Canada to create those jobs and, most importantly, to ensure a high standard of living for today's generations and future generations, including my children. I want to ensure that they inherit a strong economy and a strong environment that are both filled with opportunity.

The 20-year-old agreement was in need of modernization. The world has changed significantly over the last two decades, and many clarifications and technical improvements need to be made to the original NAFTA in the areas of labour, the environment, culture and many other sectors.

Our government's objectives in reaching a new revised free trade deal centred upon three objectives: defend the national interest, which we did; preserve and create jobs, which we have done; and foster economic growth. Canadians can rest assured that the government and the negotiating team were on their side from day one.

I would like to take a step back to understand how important our trading relationship is with our southern neighbours. Let us examine a few statistics.

Realistically, over two million jobs in Canada are trade-dependent on Canadian exports to the United States. Nearly nine million jobs in the United States are connected to trade with Canada. Over 400,000 individuals cross the border back and forth every day, and nearly \$2.5 billion worth of goods and services cross the border between our two countries every day. Trilateral trade among the three countries, measured by imports among the member states, totalled \$1.1 trillion, while two-way trading of goods and services between Canada and the U.S. in 2017 totalled over \$900 billion.

Those are big numbers, but behind those numbers are individuals getting up in the morning, going to work, saving for a better future and creating a better future for their families in our communities from coast to coast to coast. That is what it is about. This trade deal is about people in Canada, the United States and Mexico creating a better future for themselves and their families and ensuring a brighter future for their children.

The importance of this agreement cannot be understated. Trade certainty provides a path forward for businesses to invest in Canada. It allows businesses to remain focused on ensuring Canadians have the right skills to succeed in today's globally competitive economy and ensures that they can undertake investment decisions here in Canada and invest in Canada and Canadians to continue to grow our economy. We know growth continues in Canada. We know we have put in place the right policies. Since the deal came into effect in 1993, Canadians have created over six million new jobs.

I will focus the rest of my time on the auto sector.

CUSMA provides for revised automotive rules of origin. These rules will require higher levels of North American content in order to incentivize production and sourcing here in North America. These were ideas put forward by our Canadian team, and we will see the robust rules of origin for the auto sector keep the benefits of the agreement in North America and encourage both sourcing and resourcing here in North America.

The new agreement includes the following: an increase in the regional value content threshold for cars from 62.5% to 75%; stronger regional value content requirements for core car parts, such as engines and transmissions; a requirement for 70% North American steel and aluminum; and a new labour value content provision requiring that 40% of the value of a passenger car and 45% of the value of light trucks, including final assembly, be made up of materials, parts and labour produced or carried out by workers in plants averaging an hourly wage of \$16. This is what I refer to as "lifting all boats". We will not be going to the lowest common denominator for employees but allowing employees across North America to have a better future for themselves and their families.

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We were adamant about getting a good deal for our Canadian workers. We got the deal done with help from former members of the prior government, who approved of this deal.

It is interesting and really nice to see the premiers in western Canada saying that they need this deal signed, and I encourage them to continue adding their voices to this debate.

The enforceable provisions that protect labour are the strongest in any Canadian trade agreement to date. With the labour chapter being further strengthened by establishing a new bilateral mechanism with Mexico, Canadians can be assured that state-to-state dispute settlements and facility-specific rapid response labour mechanisms are in place to ensure that we can keep tabs on facilities to make sure that labour regulations are followed.

● (1235)

I look forward to questions and comments from my hon. colleagues.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague opposite for his speech.

Many businesses in my riding are feeling the effects of the new agreement. The agricultural sector is one of those hardest hit. Supply-managed producers, including dairy farmers, will see their market shrink by 3.6%. How will they be compensated for those losses?

We know that, in addition to this reduction for dairy farmers, another very important aspect is the need for approval from the agreement partners before new markets can be developed, following the loss of classes 6 and 7. Where is our sovereignty in this very important economic sector?

How can the government claim to have made gains for that sector?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague from Quebec for his question.

[*English*]

Our government, since its inception, has been a staunch defender of supply management. In the trade deals that have been signed, including the CPTPP, the CETA and now the CUSMA, on anything to do with our agricultural sector, we are obviously there to defend farmers' interests here in Canada, whether they are egg farmers or chicken farmers, and we will ensure that they receive the appropriate compensation.

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However, we will also ensure that they have access to new export markets. That is what we have tried to do with these trade deals.

I look forward to learning more about the agricultural sector. I have milk processors in my riding and I have visited farms in Canada. I look forward to continuing to defend supply management from coast to coast to ensure that a bright future continues for farmers and their families.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Michel Boudrias (Terrebonne, BQ): Madam Speaker, under the current occupant of the White House in Washington, trade deals are becoming increasingly protectionist. When negotiating agreements, the U.S. always cites the national security provision. Whether it is about steel or aluminum, the Americans freely invoke it in all their negotiations.

Given that Canada also has a strong presence, particularly with the Quebec aluminum industry, why does it not invoke national security when negotiating its agreements, to protect a good part of its industry from U.S. protectionism?

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his question.

[*English*]

The steel and aluminum sectors here in Canada are very integrated between ourselves and the United States. The steel that is produced here in Ontario, for example, goes into vehicles in the United States. It goes into American military equipment as well. We are a key supplier of steel to the United States.

On aluminum, many years ago I visited the smelter in Alma in the Lac-Saint-Jean region of Quebec. In my riding, I have Extrudex Aluminum, which produces and exports extrusions to the United States.

We are dependent on trade between ourselves and the United States. It creates jobs. We want to make sure we take into account our national interests, our economic interests and our security interests, and we have done so, whether it has been our government or prior governments, and we will continue to do so.

● (1240)

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to have an opportunity to put a question for a government member. I had hoped to put one for the minister this morning.

As was clear from our vote yesterday and a scrum we held, the three Green MPs are voting for ratification of the CUSMA. We think it is a massive improvement to get rid of chapter 11, the investor-state provisions, as well as the energy chapter, and there are a number of other items, although there are minuses. It is a trade agreement; we are not wild for any NAFTA, but between the old NAFTA and the new one, this is a vast improvement.

I want to ask the hon. member whether the government would consider reviewing other trade agreements to review these perverse anti-democratic investor-state provisions, which give foreign corporations power superior to domestic ones.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Francesco Sorbara: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Saanich—Gulf Islands for her question.

[*English*]

I would say that it is very important that governments around the world work in a rules-based trade system, and we know that when decisions are made by governments our international interests are taken seriously and are put at the forefront. We want to make sure we are doing right for Canadians and we want to make sure we are doing right for workers.

In terms of the investor-state dispute resolution mechanism, the mechanism that is in the agreement, from my understanding, is a vast improvement. It is a bilateral mechanism, and if I am incorrect I will correct myself afterward, and it is a vast improvement. I agree with the member that the trade deal is a very good deal and I hope all parties join—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Order. Resuming debate, the hon. member for Abbotsford.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am sharing my time with the member for Calgary Midnapore.

Here we are, debating the new NAFTA, which is sometimes called the USMCA. I know the government is calling it CUSMA. Others call it NAFTA 2.0. Others call it NAFTA 0.5. We are going to call it the new NAFTA. It does not matter what name we want to call it. A rose by any other name is still a rose, except that with this rose the bloom went off it a long time ago. This is a deeply flawed agreement that could have been so much better.

While I will be supporting this bill going forward to committee for review, this is really a story of a squandered opportunity, and I will explain that in a minute.

By the way, I have listened with amusement to my colleagues on the Liberal side claiming to now be the champions of trade. I harken back to when the original Canada-U.S. free trade agreement was being negotiated by Conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney. That agreement eventually morphed to NAFTA. During an election, the Liberals actually said they were going to vote against it. They were not going to approve this massive trade agreement between Canada and the United States. Of course, as soon as they were elected they affirmed the agreement.

That is how Liberals do it. They try to take credit for the work of others and score political points. We will not take any lessons from the Liberals on trade.

In fact, I want to highlight that basically 95% of the value of all trade agreements that Canada has signed has been negotiated under a Conservative government, starting with the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement, going all the way through to the Canada-EU trade agreement and the original TPP. Those are all Conservative accomplishments.

The reason this new NAFTA is so important is that the United States is by far the largest trading partner for Canada with \$900 billion a year of bilateral trade. Every single day there is over two billion dollars' worth of trade in goods and services that cross our common border with the United States. That is why it is important that we get this right.

Our trade levels with the United States are somewhere in the order of nine times more than our next-largest trade partner, which is China. Let us think about that. A lot of people are saying we need to diversify and we need to focus on China. I would say to them to keep their eyes on the ball. The United States will always be our largest trading partner and we had better get that relationship right before we look to diversify elsewhere in the world.

Why is this revised trade deal, the new NAFTA, a squandered opportunity? The Liberal government got completely outplayed and outfoxed by Donald Trump.

First, let us ask ourselves what standard we should use to measure this new NAFTA. What measure should determine whether this agreement is good for Canada and one that we should be supporting? Perhaps it is by the standard set by the Prime Minister himself, who said he was going to come back with a better deal than we had before. By all measures the Prime Minister failed on that account.

We remember he said he was going to deliver a win-win-win, so there would be a win for us, a win for the United States and a win for Mexico. That implies there would be a net gain for each of those parties. In fact, this agreement is all about Canada conceding to the United States with virtually no concessions in return. Let us talk about that. We know that Donald Trump is the master of the quid pro quo, so we expect that he would be involved in a back-and-forth: "You give me a concession; I will give you a concession." That is the way trade agreements are normally negotiated, except for this time.

The Prime Minister did not deliver an agreement that was better than the one we had before. We just conceded and conceded and conceded. Why on earth would the Prime Minister have embraced a negotiation with Donald Trump? He proactively reached out to Donald Trump and said he would be glad to negotiate an agreement. Why on earth would anyone volunteer to renegotiate a trade deal on preconditions set by Donald Trump?

● (1245)

John Ivison of the National Post said:

Politicians, like gamblers, need to know when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em. [The Prime Minister's] pre-emptive decision to tell one of the planet's most voracious deal-makers that Canada was willing to renegotiate NAFTA, without even being asked, was naïve.

Our national media is saying that the Prime Minister was naïve to proactively want to negotiate a new NAFTA, because at the end

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of the day, what we see is that we got a lesser deal than we had before. What is worse is that this is effectively an asymmetrical trade deal. Most of the benefits of this negotiation are going to the United States. Very few, if any, concessions are given by the United States to Canada.

Let us quickly look at what Canada gave up or failed to achieve. One of the major failings, of course, is that the new NAFTA does nothing to address the long-standing softwood lumber dispute. Canada's forest industry, especially in my home province of B.C., is in crisis mode, because the Prime Minister has failed to deliver on his promise to resolve this dispute.

Members may remember that back in March 2016 in the White House rose garden our Prime Minister and President Obama promised to resolve this dispute. Here is exactly what our Prime Minister said on that day, "I'm confident that we are on a track towards resolving this irritant in the coming weeks and months."

Here we are, almost four years later, and there is no softwood lumber resolution in sight. By all accounts that is a failure that lies at the feet of this Liberal government. The NAFTA renegotiation was a perfect opportunity to resolve this dispute, but it did not get done.

Then there are the buy America provisions. The United States has effectively said that in many of the states, if large projects and large procurement contracts are tendered, only American companies can compete or participate. Canadian companies are shut out. Those are called buy America provisions.

This trade negotiation, the new NAFTA, was a perfect opportunity to resolve that dispute. It did not get done, which is another lost opportunity, another failure.

Our Liberal friends also agreed to give major concessions on dairy, eggs and poultry, without any American concessions in return. Those concessions were big enough that, as my colleague who spoke just before me mentioned, the government had to come up with compensation to cover for those concessions. Guess who pays for that compensation. Canadian taxpayers pay for that. The Prime Minister has actually cost us money as taxpayers as a result of this negotiation.

What is worse is that, after making those concessions, the Prime Minister also agreed that he would limit the exports of value-added dairy products, like powdered milk and diafiltered milk products.

It gets worse. To add insult to injury, our fearless Liberal negotiators even agreed that if Canada ever wants to change its milk pricing and classing regime, we have to go begging, cap in hand, to the United States to ask for permission. We have effectively given away a piece of our sovereignty. Shame on the government.

There is another concession the Prime Minister made. He gave up the right to an investor-state dispute settlement, which protects Canadian companies and allows them to sue the American government if it acts discriminatingly against them. Now the remedy is they have to go to the American courts.

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Another thing the Prime Minister gave away is a veto to the United States on any trade negotiation with a non-market economy. In other words, the President of the United States can veto our ability to actually negotiate an agreement with any country that does not have a free market economy based on free market principles, like China. However, the United States itself has already negotiated a deal, placing us at a competitive disadvantage. It goes on and on and on.

• (1250)

This is a failed deal, yet we are going to support it because this relationship with the United States is so critical. We want the assurance for our Canadian businesses that they can continue to do business with the United States and with our other NAFTA partner, Mexico.

Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a question for my colleague across the way and who knows what the answer will be.

He knows very well the difficulties and challenges of negotiating trade agreements. He was certainly engaged in CETA. I am not sure if the CPTPP was an issue when he was trade minister. Nonetheless, we noted with great interest that former prime minister Stephen Harper's advice to Canada on these negotiations was to give the Americans what they want because the trade relationship with the United States is prime and so key that we cannot afford to annoy them. In fact, that is not the advice we took. Canadians understand it was the Liberal government who brought CETA, the CPTPP and this trade agreement across the finish line.

I am wondering if the former prime minister's advice to just give whatever the other side wants was something that shaped the member's negotiations when he was negotiating those trade agreements.

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, the results of the Conservative Party's negotiations over 10 years were that we negotiated free trade agreements with an additional 46 countries around the world. That reflects very clearly that we only negotiate in Canada's interest.

When we look at the new NAFTA, it is very clear that the advice to the Prime Minister and his negotiators was to just sign any deal and make sure the relationship stays intact. That is not the way we negotiated when we were in government.

I was the trade minister for four and a half years and I can say that we negotiated in a way that led other countries around the world to respect us. We had some of the toughest negotiators for our deals.

Now I compare the outcomes under the original TPP with the overall outcome of the deal the Liberals negotiated on TPP and the new NAFTA. The concessions they made are way greater than any we settled upon. The evidence and the records speak for themselves.

• (1255)

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is interesting to note that prior to the election we heard the Conservatives tell the government to hurry up and sign the deal. Now it

sounds like they are not that supportive of the deal, even though they will vote for it.

That said, there are a couple of provisions which New Democrats support. Of course, the chapter 11 changes are good changes that we see. Particularly the changes for drug patents, something that has not been talked about in this debate, we see as positive. It sounds like the Conservatives may disagree with me on that.

Our critic had actually offered some suggestions to the government on how to improve the process for future trade deals, ensuring Canadians would have a say, and that there would be openness and transparency in terms of the process, much like in the U.K. and other jurisdictions. The New Democrats urged the Liberal government to bring forward the changes at the negotiating table, but they did not deliver.

Would the member for Abbotsford support changes to the negotiating process with the involvement and transparency that should be available for Canadians for other trade deals?

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, the member for Vancouver East speaks of transparency in our trade negotiations. It is absolutely critical. We are presuming to negotiate on behalf of all the key industries across Canada, millions of companies across Canada, including small and medium-sized enterprises. It is important that we receive the input required to negotiate a really good deal.

There are elements within a trade negotiation that have to remain confidential. We are not going to spill all of our trade secrets. Of course we are not going to spill our strategy so our adversaries can see what we are doing. The NDP would not understand that because it has never been in a position to negotiate these agreements. On top of that, if we reflect back on the history of free trade negotiations in Canada, the NDP has almost consistently voted against Canada's free trade agreements.

If the member for Vancouver East is suggesting she will support the new NAFTA, that is a change of heart, and I welcome that change of heart.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Madam Speaker, the two parties, the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party, are bickering over who is better at negotiating free trade agreements. There have been many expectations right from the start of this NAFTA renegotiation process. The Bloc Québécois and Canadians have always been critical of the secrecy surrounding these agreements.

Since yesterday, the parties have been saying that this is a fundamentally bad agreement and that we knuckled under. To the Bloc Québécois, the aluminum loophole is unacceptable because it affects good jobs and workers, not to mention the green economy. There could have been a lot more transparency on this front. All the parties could have opposed the ways and means motion so that we could study this gap in committee, but they did not.

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What proposals do you have for improving NAFTA? Yesterday, the Bloc Québécois made some suggestions. Are the parties open to improving the provisions concerning the aluminum sector for the workers, the good jobs—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that she is to address the Chair.

The hon. member for Abbotsford.

[*English*]

Hon. Ed Fast: Madam Speaker, there is one redeeming factor in this agreement, which is that it provides certainty for our business community. It is a worse deal than we had before, by any measure, but it does provide certainty in our relationship with the United States. I would like to highlight that. That is why Conservatives are in favour of sending this to committee for the thorough review it deserves.

The member asked what the improvements are. That is why we want to get it to committee, where we can dig down deep into this agreement and see what can be improved, as well as see the willingness of the Liberal government to make those improvements, including the improvements that the member suggested put Quebec at a real disadvantage when it comes to the aluminum industry.

• (1300)

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC): Madam Speaker, this situation reminds me of a story of when I was young. It was my parents' anniversary. My father came home and my little sister looked at my father and yelled, "Roses, roses."

My mother was behind me modestly smiling and my father presented my mother with a beautiful bouquet of tulips. My mother was a little disappointed as she had wanted roses, but instead received tulips. In this moment, she decided, similar to this agreement, that it was good enough.

There has been a big debate within the Conservative caucus that this is not a great deal, as the previous speaker indicated. We have lost a lot. Why is that? Let us look at it for a moment.

There was a memo written by a prime minister, as published in the National Post, which indicated three reasons. The first is the inconsistency we have seen within negotiations and taking strong stances without thinking that the President of the United States might cancel NAFTA, which certainly the opposition felt was a very real possibility, as well as all Canadians.

It was the government's decision to work almost overwhelmingly agreeably in the beginning with Mexico. I joked, *desearía estar Obrador*. I would love to be Obrador in this moment with Canada wanting to work so closely. In fact, it was quoted as, "the U.S. is both irked and mystified by the Liberals' unwavering devotion to Mexico", rather than Canada and Canadians. That is the second part.

The third, of course, is that it was a criticism of the Liberals for pursuing their progressive trade policies in these talks. Did they really think that somehow they would force the Trump administration into enacting their entire agenda on union power, climate change, aboriginal claims and gender issues? While the Canadian government was doing that, the Americans were laying down their real de-

mands, and we got outmanoeuvred and out-negotiated, as my previous colleague mentioned.

Let us look at the things we lost. My colleague also touched upon that, but I will remind members again that on aluminum, we were not afforded the same provisions as steel. On dairy, 3.6% of the Canadian market opened up to imports. The accord now dictates specific thresholds for Canadian exports of milk protein concentrates, skim milk powder and infant formula. If the export threshold is exceeded, Canada adds duties to the exports in excess to make them even more expensive. Also, within dairy, we have seen milk classes 6 and 7 eliminated.

As well, the temporary entry for business persons has not been updated to reflect the new economy. As someone who studied in the States, I certainly have an appreciation for the J-1 visa. Then, of course, there is the H-1B visa. As my colleague recognized, buy America was absolutely not addressed, another way we were outmanoeuvred.

Finally, auto rules of origin were ignored, and I will add that forestry was as well, which my colleague expanded on quite significantly. The softwood lumber dispute was not even addressed during the negotiations. The following quote says it very well, "The United States is measuring this deal by what they gained." Our Deputy Prime Minister "is measuring it by what [s]he didn't give up." That is not good enough at all.

Conservatives feel we have a duty to support this bill at second reading on behalf of Canadians. Canadians would certainly be better with it than without it, but even the commentary around it is very lukewarm. If we look at the commentary from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, it states, "The CUSMA...was an imperfect but necessary agreement to provide greater predictability in our relations with Canada's largest trading partner." That is not very enthusiastic.

In addition, my good friend and colleague Goldy Hyder with the Business Council of Canada said that the new NAFTA is, as my mother thought the tulips were, "good enough" for Canada, something that "gets us through this administration."

I will now refer to the Deputy Prime Minister's letter to Canadians. It states, "We faced a series of unprecedented trade actions from the United States. It was a protectionist barrage unlike any Canada has faced before." I wonder why that is. "This national consensus is remarkable." Yes, that this deal is okay. "That said, there is a reason why more than 75 per cent of Canadians support ratification of this agreement." I would argue that it is fear and resignation.

• (1305)

Who are the winners? As my previous colleague mentioned, President Trump. This is clearly one for the president.

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He got a legit, comprehensive deal done with two foreign countries and Democrats, who are currently trying to impeach him. He can also say he delivered on a key campaign promise: to renegotiate or “terminate” NAFTA. The deal should be a positive for the U.S. economy, another boost in an already improving economic picture for 2020. It also gives him confidence and momentum in his trade battle with China.

This, of course, is the reason we have the special committee.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi played this right. She made the decision to focus on the one issue of labour rights rather than asking for an overwhelming barrage of a number of interests. We were really outplayed there, without question.

It is said in this Washington Post article that USMCA will “create 176,000 new jobs in the United States”. Congratulations to the U.S. I wish we could say the same.

What did it say about Canada? It said, “The Canadians managed not to cave too much to Trump.” That is pretty sad. That is hardly good enough. The paper went on to explain all of the things that we lost, which is very unfortunate, because there are a lot.

Why are we pushed into a corner on deals such as this? It is because the Liberal government has no clear foreign policy strategy based on consistent values like the previous Conservative government had, and we have absolutely seen this consistently.

In 2017, the Prime Minister promised to lead Canada into a new era of international engagement. He said his foreign policies would focus on improving Canada's commitments to multilateralism, human rights, the rule of law and effective diplomacy, but when it comes to foreign policy, the Liberal government has fumbled every single step of the way. It has conducted its foreign affairs, including this trade agreement, with style over substance.

We could go on and on: the Prime Minister's disastrous trip to India, the concessions he made here and his government's inability to bring home two Canadians arbitrarily detained in China. All of this has done everything to damage Canada's reputation on the world stage and our relationship with trade partners.

Rather than following proven approaches to diplomacy, the Prime Minister has chosen to rely on social media, and this has absolutely hurt Canada.

The Deputy Prime Minister has also done this. She irresponsibly tweeted about civil society and the imprisonment of women's rights activists in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia responded by freezing all of its investments in Canada and expelling our ambassador. As a result, Canada was left with zero ability to influence Saudi Arabia on human rights.

The Prime Minister has failed to deliver the new era in Canadian international engagement that he promised. Canada's inaction and lack of strategy when it comes to major players have allowed these countries to expand their spheres of influence around the globe. Make no mistake, others are watching, including Donald Trump. Being a good ally and contributor on the world stage requires more than just talk. Strength and confidence are respected.

It is time to renew Canada's reputation globally, promote the values that we stand for and assert our sovereignty as a nation once more, which we did not do in the negotiation of this agreement.

Canadians deserve better than “good enough”. Would we have surgery by a doctor who is “good enough”? Would we fly on a plane with a pilot who is “good enough”? Canadians deserve a principled, well-thought-out foreign policy, but the Liberal government is not delivering it. We care about the Canadian people, the dairy worker, the auto worker, the rig worker and their families. That is why we are supporting this at second reading to send it to committee. Canadians deserve better than “good enough”.

• (1310)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member opposite keyed in on two things toward the end of her speech, supply management and the dairy worker. I find it very rich that members of the opposition benches talk about how important supply management is when the member for Abbotsford, who previously spoke, was the minister responsible for negotiating away major parts of our dairy sector under CETA and CPTPP.

I was at the Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia AGM last week. I reminded farmers that it was the United States that was pushing the fact it wanted to get rid of supply management and it was the Conservatives who simply gave it away under CETA and CPTPP.

Will the member opposite recognize or perhaps enlighten the House on that inconsistency, where we fought to maintain the system and the Conservatives got rid of it under no pressure?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, I think we are coming up on three years ago this May when we made a clear decision as a party to support the dairy sector. We have supported the sector in policy. I take offence to the member trying to pass the responsibilities, the negative effects in fact of his government's work on to us. This accord was negotiated by the Liberals, not by us.

We have been consistent in our principles and policies. We did not have a chance to act. Dairy farmers were counting on the Liberal government to effectively negotiate this part, in addition to the whole NAFTA agreement, and it failed.

Mr. Kevin Waugh (Saskatoon—Grasswood, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank our colleague from Calgary Midnapore for talking about the issues that Canadians from coast to coast are concerned about with respect to this trade agreement. She gave an elegant speech on softwood lumber, for which we have seen major concerns in western Canada, particularly in B.C., along with aluminum and milk.

My concern is this. We have lost our sovereignty. When we want to trade with non-market economies like China, we have to get approval from big brother, the United States. Why did this happen? Why did the government agree to this?

I would like the hon. member for Calgary Midnapore to comment on that situation.

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, it is such a good point that it speaks to a bigger problem, one which I tried to address within my speech. That is the complete lack of a strategic, coherent, foreign policy by the government, including a great power strategy, which was evidenced by our discussions today at the Canada-China committee.

Sadly, I think what my colleague is referring to is a symptom of the greater problem that exists, which is an overabundance of selfies and costumes and not enough strategic, coherent policy.

• (1315)

Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Madam Speaker, auto rules of origin were avoided in her speech. I would like to remind her that I have Toyota Motor Manufacturing in my riding. When I spoke with the organization, it mentioned this was a great deal for Canada. Many of its Toyota vehicles are exported to the United States, and we wanted to ensure we had a great deal.

With respect to exports, one of the things the United States administration was very focused on was that 50% would be U.S. content. We fought vigorously and said that at no cost would we have this and we strictly opposed the United States for it.

Also, originating content was at 62%. We bumped that up to 75%. Now auto workers, particularly in Mexico, have to make over \$16 an hour. Therefore, could she comment on how the auto rules of origin were avoided?

Mrs. Stephanie Kusie: Madam Speaker, I will just say that when you lose, you lose. I think of a great commercial I saw last Friday in the United States. It said, “stay home, save 100%”. This would apply in this situation. It is fine to look for little gains. I mentioned that this was good enough. Ultimately, it will probably raise prices for Canadian consumers for automobiles. However, again, a loss is a loss.

Ms. Lenore Zann (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Madam Speaker, for over a year, Canada has been negotiating very hard for a modernized free trade agreement with the United States and Mexico, now called CUSMA or the new NAFTA. We knew how important it was to get it right and to get a fair deal that was good for Canadian workers and good for Canadian businesses and communities. We did everything in our power to protect jobs, create more opportunity for Canadian workers and their families and to ensure the growth of our economy. I believe it has paid off.

The new NAFTA will benefit Canadians from every corner of the country and will reinforce the strong economic ties between our three countries. I hope to see support from all colleagues in the House to get the job done.

The new NAFTA also maintains our country's preferential access to the United States and Mexico, which are Canada's largest and

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third-largest trading partners respectively, while modernizing long-outdated elements of the North American Free Trade Agreement. This includes labour obligations regarding the elimination of employment discrimination based on gender.

This new NAFTA is the very first international trade deal that recognizes gender identity and sexual orientation as grounds for discrimination in its labour chapter. That is very worthy of our support. This includes our obligations regarding the elimination of discrimination based on gender. That is huge.

When it comes to supply management, the U.S. starting position was to completely dismantle Canada's supply management. The U.S. summary of objectives for NAFTA renegotiation was to eliminate the remaining Canadian tariffs on imports of U.S. dairy, poultry and egg products. Our government has defended our supply management system. This agreement will provide some market access, but most important, the future of supply management is now not in question. This is very good for our dairy farmers and for many of the farming sectors.

Our farmers and our dairy producers will be compensated and dairy farmers can start receiving their first cheques this month. In Nova Scotia, we are very pleased about that.

I forgot to say, Madam Speaker, that I will be splitting my time with the hon. member for Vancouver Centre.

Another aspect of the trade agreement, which is important to Nova Scotia, is agriculture and seafood as well. Our government has worked extremely hard to negotiate and to defend these interests of Canadians. We protected the North American agriculture and agri-food trade. We have protected the Canada-U.S. bilateral agriculture trade of \$63 billion; the Canada-Mexico bilateral agricultural trade of \$4.6 billion; and through the new NAFTA, we have also made gains for farmers. Through CETA, the CPTPP and the renegotiation of NAFTA, the biggest free trade deals in Canada's history, we have been able to preserve, protect and defend this supply management system.

When it comes to forestry, we feel that Canada's forestry industry supports really good jobs across the country, especially in Nova Scotia, which is important to me. However, we feel the U.S. duties on Canadian softwood lumber are unfair and unwanted. Work remains of this.

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Nova Scotia remains Canada's number one leader in seafood exports, with more than \$2 billion in exports or 29% of Canada's total seafood exports. The U.S. remains our closest and largest market, but China is now second, with an increase of 36% of our seafood in the last few years. We hope the new virus does not affect us too much. We have seen some effects momentarily, but we hope that it does not last.

Finally, our government will always stand up for our cultural industry, because it means protecting a \$53.8 billion industry, representing over 650,000 quality jobs for Canadians. That is 75,000 jobs in Quebec alone.

• (1320)

The new NAFTA has important benefits for Quebec, including preserving the cultural exemption. It gives Canada flexibility to adopt and maintain programs and policies that support the creation, distribution and development of Canadian artistic expression or content, including in the digital environment. This is very important to creative industries. As a former actor, writer, producer, I for one know how important that is to our bottom line.

That is why Canada stood firm to protect the cultural exemption and our economic interests during the renegotiation of the new NAFTA. We will always defend our cultural sovereignty, because that is the right thing to do for Canada.

When it comes to the environment, the new NAFTA has a new enforceable environmental chapter. This replaces the separate side agreement of before. It upholds air quality and fights marine pollution. We believe that commitments to high levels of environmental protection are an important part of trade agreements. After all, without the environment, we do not have an economy. These protect our workers and they protect our planet.

When it comes to drug prices, our government knows how proud Canadians are of our public health care system. As Canadians, this is part of our identity. We do not have to sit here arguing whether universal medicare is good; we know it is. We also know that the affordability of and access to prescription drugs remains an important issue for so many Canadians, especially our seniors.

That is why budget 2019 takes bold, concrete steps to lay the foundation for national pharmacare, like the creation of a new Canadian drug agency. This is an important issue for our government. Our government will always stand up for our public health care system, and the changes to data protection for biologic drugs may have an impact on costs. I can assure the people that we will work with the provinces and the territories on the potential impact of these changes.

We have worked hard to achieve a very good deal that will benefit all Canadians. The enforceable provisions that protect women's rights, minority rights, indigenous rights and environmental protections are the strongest in any Canadian trade agreement to date. Of that, I believe we can all be very proud.

• (1325)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to the speech given by my col-

league from Nova Scotia. I noticed that she reacted quite favourably to the idea of farmers getting cheques.

In my riding, that also means that these farmers are now dependent on subsidies. If there was one thing our farmers could say they were proud of, it was their ability to contribute to Canada's economy without relying on handouts from the government. The consequence of signing three consecutive free trade agreements with concessions is that it affects close to 10% of quotas, and therefore hinders their ability to generate income.

Is the member really happy to compensate farmers instead of ensuring they can generate their own income?

[*English*]

Ms. Lenore Zann: Madam Speaker, I feel it is a lot better than it was, especially when we start at the beginning, when the Americans did not want to allow any subsidies whatsoever. As I stated in my speech, they were dead set to try to get rid of the things we had in Canada which they did not have in America. They wanted to get rid of supply management.

When I was running in the last election as a newcomer, I definitely supported supply management. It is so important. I know it is important for the dairy farmers in Quebec. The member has many different industries in Quebec for which this is very important.

Although I always believe we can do better, this was very good negotiations on our part with America at this time.

Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC): Madam Speaker, one of the frustrations on this side of the House is that we will support the deal at the end of the day. We understand that the Canadian economy wants bankability and stability. We get it. However, people are not happy. They are plugging their noses, saying let us get bankability and stability, but it is not as good as what they had before in a lot of ways.

There are simple examples of things that could have done in this deal that would have made things more progressive right across North America, and one is the labour mobility. Why did the government not modernize that area? Why did it not take the companies from 1994 and modernize that part of the chapter to 2020? There are all the high-tech sectors and the biotech sectors. There are all these professionals in new technologies that cannot travel back and forth under that labour mobility chapter.

Why would the government not, if it were looking forward, have modernized that part of the chapter?

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Ms. Lenore Zann: Madam Speaker, I hear the member opposite, but when it comes to the 21st century and tech jobs and also IT, one can do that from anywhere. It is not necessary to be in one country or another. Many countries are working together on these types of jobs, and one can do them from a small place in Yarmouth and be in touch with somebody in the Carolinas. I think movement is a rather old-fashioned idea now. We can do things on screens. We can be talking to somebody from across the world on a screen and still be working together.

I think that, as I said, things can always be better, but given the circumstances we have now and with our trading partner to the south, we are doing extremely well. I am really pleased that we got the deal that we did.

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Madam Speaker, the hon. member talked about drug prices and about fundamentally being on Canadians' side. However, when it comes to pharmaceutical prices and transparency in trade deals, the Liberals have consistently shown that they are on the side of big corporations.

The Liberals promised an entire chapter to promote gender equality, but where is that? We see only superficial language on gender equality. They promised an entire chapter to promote indigenous rights, yet there is no mention of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

New Democrats believe in strong environmental provisions that can be fully enforceable, and in making sure that we are in line with our obligations in the Paris Agreement. We only got rid of chapter 11 investor-state provisions because of the work of Democrats in the U.S.

Why do Canadians need to rely on U.S. Democrats to stand up for them?

• (1330)

Ms. Lenore Zann: Madam Speaker, again, this is the first time we have ever had women's and gender rights expressed in a free trade deal of this sort. I think that is a huge step forward.

Personally, having lived and worked in the United States as an actor, I came home to Canada and Nova Scotia because this is a much better country to live in. I will fight for Canada. I will stand up for Canada. I feel we are much better off here. We will always fight for our rights, for indigenous rights, for first nations, for women's rights and for multicultural rights because that is just the right thing to do, and we are Canadians.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, as members well know, since August 2017 when we were told that NAFTA was going to go by the board and we would have to start thinking about how we would renegotiate, a lot of things were put out there as, "this is not going to happen anymore". Therefore, since August 2017 and until we were able to ratify this and sign on to the new CUSMA, we have done a great deal of work, and Canada did that work.

One of the things we need to talk about, because anyone could find loopholes in this deal, is that any deal or negotiation means that no one side is going to get everything it wants. There is a bit of give-and-take here in order to get this and keep this.

We had a very strong set of negotiators. I want to point out that our negotiators were not just our Minister of Foreign Affairs, our Prime Minister and our bureaucrats. We brought labour and industries to the table. We brought Canadians and farmers and people who had a vested interest in this to our table. We all began to talk about what the most important things were for us to get when we were at the table.

Having negotiated for the doctors in British Columbia on occasion, I can tell you that we have to go in and say, "We are not going to budge on this." We knew what we wanted, and we dug our heels in, and that was decided on by the team of people who were negotiating with us. We all realized what we had to give up, and we all decided what was strong.

This deal is better in many ways than the old NAFTA. That is because the team decided on what was most important. We must not forget that we have maintained privileged access to the U.S., which is our largest trading partner. We do 76% of our trade with the United States, so that was an important thing.

We have heard people talk about sovereignty. It is said that Canada's sovereignty went by the board. One of the things that is very clear, and what we dug our heels on and retained, is what is indeed sovereignty for Canada.

We managed to keep control over our key cultural sector. Canada is different culturally from the United States, and we know that. We see a huge \$54-billion cultural industry in Canada, which has created about 650,000 jobs across this country, with 75,000 of those being in Quebec alone. Because Quebec is distinct in language and culture, we have been able to maintain sovereign control over that part of who we are as Canadians, and that is important to remember.

We also kept true to some of the more important things: our values, our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Our values are very clear in terms of what we stand for as Canadians. Gender equality, LGBTQ rights and minority rights were negotiated and kept strong. We have strong and enforceable language on all of those things, which we did not have in the old NAFTA.

When people say we gave up our cultural sovereignty, etc., we did not. We kept the things that were vital to us. I want to remind everybody that those decisions were not just made by the government. They were made by a team of everyone coming together who decided that these are the things we are going to fight for and we are not going to give up on. We got most of those things.

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We have heard about the cultural sector that we have protected. In my province of British Columbia, the film industry is massive. In fact, the number one special effects globally come out of British Columbia. We were able to keep that moving and growing. This is important when we talk about jobs and the people who are benefiting.

Looking at British Columbia, we have heard a lot of talk about softwood lumber and the forestry sector, but we did something very important. We managed to keep a very strong and enforceable dispute resolution mechanism when it comes to looking at things like softwood lumber.

Supply management was something that we were promised by the United States. The U.S. said it was going to take it away from us. We have kept it, so supply management is no longer on the table for debate. How we get better deals for all our dairy products, etc., is an ongoing negotiation and we need to look at how we move forward.

In British Columbia, where 77% of our agricultural exports go to the United States, we have managed to keep that. We have managed also to allow our farmers access to Mexico, which we did not have extremely good access to. Now we have broadened our market within Canada.

• (1335)

Again, for those of you who have long memories, we used to have to go to the WTO on softwood lumber every time. We struggled for years debating it and going to the WTO, and the United States ignored us. Now, we have enforceable and strong dispute resolution mechanisms, so we do not have to spend a lot of time dealing with what we know is going to come up. Everyone is still going to try to deal with protectionism, but we have ways now of fighting that very clearly.

For me, there are a lot of important things in this agreement. One of the things that is key to being Canadian is medicare, our public health care system, which has not been touched. Our ability to maintain, change and deal with our public health care system in the way we have always done is sacrosanct, and it is still there. When we talk about sovereignty, we talk about that as being sovereign. We are bringing in pharmacare. Our government is working on this.

The ability to bring down, from 10 years to eight years, our biologics information and data and put that out for generics means we are going to get cheaper drugs, especially for expensive drugs like biologics.

There are some really important things that do not have to do only with trade but with maintaining who we are as Canadians, what we stand for and what we think is important. This agreement would enhance our ability to continue our health care, especially when health care and Obamacare have been under great threat by the United States. We know that we can keep what we have, and we see how important that is.

Again, we have enforcement language on environmental standards in forestry and our agricultural sector. We have also maintained our plastics ban and all those kinds of environmental issues that Canada has acted on. We are talking with a country that does

not believe in global warming, but we have still managed to keep intact our own ability to deal with it.

Our oceans protection plan, which protects species at risk in our oceans and which our government brought forward with \$1.5 billion, remains intact. We have an agreement to help to look at how our whales and turtles are under threat, and how we need to maintain and sustain those threatened species.

Also, we would look at fishing and compare stocks to see if overfishing is harming our ability in British Columbia to maintain ordinary stocks of fish, such as salmon. Therefore, while we have endangered species, we also have ordinary fishing species to look at and how overfishing would impact maintaining some of those stocks, which is extremely important.

When we look at labour, we have the ability to enforce the fact that there are going to be strong standards around labour. For instance, in the United States, discrimination based on sexual orientation is no longer there. In Mexico, we had seen a strong push-back against unions and labour rights. We have that in there. It is there and it is enforceable. We also have very strong dispute resolution mechanisms to deal with a country that would deny these labour rights. We have moved forward on a whole lot of things that we did not have before.

One of the important things to remember is that this agreement is very good for my province in terms of the fact that 50% of all the lumber that goes to the United States comes out of British Columbia. It is important for us, and these clear dispute resolution mechanisms are going to stop us from running back and forth as we did in the old days with the WTO.

In closing, I am sure that every one of us in the House, including me, could pick holes in this agreement. Of course there are going to be things we wish we could have had, such as everything we wanted when we went to the table. However, if members have ever negotiated before, they would know that when we go to the table, we go with 100 items, but will go to bat and dig our heels in on 50 of them, because we have to give some up to get some. This is what happened.

This is a great deal. It is a better deal than we ever had. I hope all members in the House will recognize it and think of Canadians, our economy and the jobs that will come out of it, and ratify this agreement.

• (1340)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, my colleague mentioned British Columbia and the effect of the softwood lumber disagreement. I was wondering if she could clarify her comments. I was not quite sure what she said in regard to this agreement and the softwood lumber dispute mechanism. I was wondering if she could clarify for all the people who depend on the softwood lumber industry for their jobs and the economy in British Columbia.

Is the member saying that this agreement kind of gets rid of that dispute?

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Speaker, no, it does not. We are always going to have a dispute over softwood lumber with the United States because it has softwood lumber producers as well. In British Columbia this is important to all of us, with 145,000 jobs coming out of the softwood lumber sector.

The important thing is that we are not going to have to go to the WTO every five or six years only to have the United States ignore the WTO ruling. We have won on every one of the rulings. However, if we now have a clear process, a clear dispute resolution mechanism, then as we win those they will be enforceable. We will not be tracking around for seven to 10 years trying to negotiate softwood lumber. That is important.

* * *

PRIVILEGE

PROCEDURE FOR VOTES IN THE CHAMBER

Hon. Candice Bergen (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise regarding the question of privilege that the whip brought forward yesterday, as well as the recent comments and explanation that was given by the member for Vimy. I want to take a couple of moments to comment, and I appreciate the opportunity to do so, and then we can continue with the debate on the bill.

I want to begin by thanking the member for Vimy for her explanation today. We all understand what it is like being a new member of Parliament and not always being sure of what it actually means to be in the chamber when the question is being read. I want to let the member know not to feel bad about that and that we all understand. We are glad that she now understands where she needs to be when the question is being read.

There are a couple of items I want to point to regarding two issues I know the Speaker indicated he would be looking at and making some decisions on. The first is on the issue of misleading the House. There is some precedent which I think is important we have the opportunity to hear and consider as the Speaker makes his decision.

On February 25, 2014, the House leader of the official opposition raised a question of privilege regarding statements made in the House by the member for Mississauga—Streetsville. The hon. member for Mississauga—Streetsville had deliberately misled the House during debate on Bill C-23, the Fair Elections Act, when he stated that he had witnessed evidence of voter fraud first-hand.

He further argued that the matter was not resolved by the statements made by the member for Mississauga—Streetsville on February 24 and February 25, where he admitted that, contrary to his original claim, he had not actually witnessed what he had originally claimed to have witnessed and he apologized to the House.

On March 3, the Speaker delivered his ruling, citing what Speaker Milliken was faced with in February 2002 when the then minister of national defence, Art Eggleton, provided contrary information to the House. In that case as well, the minister indicated that he did not intentionally mislead the House and he too apologized.

Privilege

Speaker Milliken went on to conclude, “In keeping with that precedent, I am prepared to accord the same courtesy to the member for Mississauga—Streetsville.”

We have two precedents where prima facie cases of privilege were found despite members indicating that they did not intend to mislead the House and apologized. There is precedent where when this House and the Speaker are misled, there still is a case of prima facie privilege and that there is a consequence that needs to be found for that action.

With respect to my whip's motion to send this matter to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, I refer the Speaker to the second edition of Maingot's *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, page 227, which states:

In the final analysis, in areas of doubt, the Speaker asks simply:

Does the act complained of appear at first sight to be a breach of privilege...or to put it shortly, has the Member an arguable point? If the Speaker feels any doubt on the question, he [or she] should...leave it to the House.

I am asking the Speaker to leave this matter to the House to decide, and if the House decides to send this issue to committee, then the committee can look at, in addition to the misleading statement, the issue my whip raised as to establishing a mechanism for the Speaker to deal with disputed votes, which is particularly important in a minority Parliament.

We need to deal with the issue of deliberately or not deliberately misleading the House and there is precedent for that. As well, we need to deal with the matter of the importance of votes. In a minority Parliament, we still have the question of how we would have dealt with it if it had been a matter of confidence and the government had lost that vote, which we all know is of grave importance.

I wanted to make sure that was presented as the Speaker continues his deliberations.

● (1345)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I thank the hon. member for her submission and will take it under advisement.

*Government Orders***CANADA-UNITED STATES-MEXICO AGREEMENT
IMPLEMENTATION ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-4, An Act to implement the Agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, we know that the American cultural industries are the most powerful and largest in the world. Their product covers the globe and they are always aggressively looking for new markets. Despite their power within the United States, as a stakeholder, we were able to achieve an agreement that has a carve-out for cultural industries.

I would like the member to speak to that in the context of the way Canada stood firm and negotiated smartly and strategically vis-à-vis the United States on this issue.

Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is a really key part when we talk about sovereignty. This is a key part of who Canada is, our identity, our sovereignty. We have strong cultural institutions that are very different from those in the United States.

The member is absolutely right. I remember in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Hollywood used to push back against any kind of film-making here, and yet everybody wanted to come here because there were excellent opportunities to have good locations that could pass for any forest, any mountain, anywhere in the world. At the same time, we had very good camera people, producers, directors and writers. That was a very important fight we took up in late 1998 that would have allowed us to get there. We had to do that while constantly facing pressure.

To put this into our negotiations on CUSMA and to know that we can keep this strong sense of Canadian identity is very important. Canadian cultural industries, as I said before, represent a \$57-billion industry in this country, and that does not even count film. I am proud that we were able to achieve that, especially because B.C. is ground zero for all the best things that are being done in film.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague talked about how proud she was to have done her duty and protected supply management with this agreement. Her colleague said that cheques have already started going out to farmers. There are three problems, however.

The first is that we know that these cheques are not sent out automatically. Farmers need to apply for them, and farmers back home are starting to worry that some of them may not apply and may miss out on the compensation they might be entitled to.

The second problem is that we know full well that the duration of this program is uncertain. There are cheques for now, but what will happen later? The future is very uncertain, so much so that it raises a third problem: What if this turns into grants for modernizing farming operations? That would be terrible.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on this subject.

[*English*]

Hon. Hedy Fry: Madam Speaker, the important thing is that this is the first cheque. Many farmers are having trouble filling out the forms and getting access. I thank the member for bringing that to our attention. We will be able to look at how we could make that process easier and how we could modify the process to make it very user friendly for farmers.

This is not one cheque and then farmers are going to be dropped into a hole in the ground. We are going to continue to reimburse our farmers and help them to sustain themselves because we have had to give up some things in the dairy sector.

Supply management per se—

• (1350)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Resuming debate, the hon. member for Dufferin—Caledon.

Mr. Kyle Seebach (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa.

It is always a great day when I get to rise in this place and defend the interests of the wonderful residents of my riding of Dufferin—Caledon.

I want to start off by saying that members on this side of the House support this agreement. It is good for business. It is good to have certainty. Those are some of the benefits of having this trade agreement resolved.

However, Conservatives have been asking for information from the government on a number of issues. In fact, we have been asking for some information not for one or two weeks, but for several months and we are not getting that information. Specifically, we have been asking when the government will release the economic impact of this agreement. I would think that is something the Liberals would have and would be willing to share.

Members on this side of the House would like to be informed before deciding how to vote on this issue. Instead of releasing this information to us and all Canadians, we get no information. In fact, what we do get is a request to please approve this agreement as quickly as possible. If we want someone to dance with us, we actually have to ask them to dance. We do not just grab them and pull them out onto the dance floor and start swinging them around. That is not the proper way to do it.

This is a very clear request that we have made, and to date, we have had no response. Effectively, we are being asked to vote in favour of a trade agreement without knowing what the economic impacts are going to be not only in our own ridings, but all across the country. Quite frankly, I think the government's request is inappropriate. The Liberals should be giving us the information that we are demanding.

My friends on the other side of the House will say that they have offered us a briefing. A briefing is not an economic impact analysis. I am wondering when the government is going to raise the curtains and give not only parliamentarians but all Canadians the economic impact of this agreement so we can all make an informed decision.

It is bad enough that we are not getting the economic impact, but what I find far more insidious and odious is the fact that there is a report on the economic impact on dairy and SM-4, and guess what: It has been kept confidential by the government.

Why would the Liberals keep an economic impact analysis on important agricultural sectors confidential? Why is it not being released? As parliamentarians, we are being asked to vote on something without information. Some information the Liberals clearly do not have. They do not have an economic impact analysis, despite years of negotiations. However, they do have a very specific economic analysis that is very important to the constituents of my riding of Dufferin—Caledon.

In Dufferin, the number one economic driver is agriculture. In agriculture, we of course have dairy and other supply-managed industries. They are nervous because they know there will be economic impacts, but the Liberals are choosing not to release that information. Therefore, people do not know the extent of the impact.

I met with dairy farmers in my riding two weeks ago. They are concerned about the agreement itself, without still knowing the economic impacts. One of the things they are concerned about is that dairy products coming in from the United States are not going to be subject to the exact same standards as Canadian dairy products are subjected to. There are hormones used in dairy production in the United States that will allow for greater production at lower cost, but they are not allowed to be used in Canada.

Not only have they negotiated a deal for further access to the supply-managed dairy market in Canada, but they have also not levelled the playing field. It is a double hit on our dairy sector. Producers do not know the economic impact and they do not know what the compensation will be.

• (1355)

We ask repeatedly what the compensation is going to be for sectors that are adversely affected. Again, like so many things we get from the Liberal government, there is no transparency; we get no answer. A great example of the lack of transparency exhibited by the government was how they opposed the Parliamentary Budget Officer looking into their infrastructure spending. This is a government that said it was transparent and “open by default”. That is not what is happening specifically with that vote; it is certainly not what is happening with this trade agreement.

All we are asking for is information. It seems like a very simple and basic request. The Liberals are saying to us that they need a partner in this chamber to pass this trade agreement, but they are not going to give us any of the information that we need in order to make a really informed decision. It is especially needed for the residents of my riding, who are going to be affected by the changes to the dairy industry.

What did the government get in return for negotiating away milk classes 6 and 7? We have asked this question; again, we do not have an answer.

What did we get in exchange for effectively giving a tariff on exports in the dairy market that go above a certain threshold? What did we get in exchange for that?

Statements by Members

What did we get in return for negotiating away our sovereignty over exports of milk protein concentrates, skim milk powder and infant formula?

These are legitimate questions that we are not getting answers to. This is becoming a pattern with this government. The Liberals do not want to answer the tough questions. I sit here like all of us during question period, when there are lots of great questions that are asked, very specific questions that can have very specific answers. Of course, we do not get very specific answers, do we? On this side of the House we know the answers are the old “Ottawa spin and twist”: spin the question around, do not really say anything and then time is up. That is what we are getting on this trade agreement. We are getting no answers. I know my friends are going to say that we were given opportunities for briefings, but that is not sufficient.

I have two final points to raise on this. Why has softwood lumber not been included in this trade agreement? We know that this is a very serious issue, not in my riding, but in ridings all across the country. Why was “Buy American” not addressed? This is a major impediment for Canadian companies that are trying to do business in the United States.

These are simple, basic questions. All it would take is someone on the other side of the House to take the time to actually answer a straight question. To date, they are not doing it. I am losing faith that it will happen. We want to approve this trade agreement. We want to vote in favour of it, because Canadian businesses and industries need certainty. We need the information. My request is that the Liberal government start providing us some answers instead of pulling down the curtains and saying to vote blind on this issue.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The member will have five minutes for questions and comments after question period.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

MARY THORNTON

Mr. James Maloney (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to honour a giant from the Canadian theatre and arts scene, Mary Thornton.

Statements by Members

Mary was an instrumental member of the magical puppet theatre company, Famous People Players, located in my riding. The entire company consists of people with developmental and physical challenges. Their work pays homage to famous people. Liberae loved them so much he brought them on tour. Since then, they have created almost 30 productions and attracted supporters such as Paul Newman and musician Phil Collins.

Mary created the signature style of the company, designing the brilliantly coloured props, costumes and life-sized characters brought to life by the performers, earning her praise from critics around the world.

Mary made a difference in the lives of many. Yesterday, we celebrated Bell Let's Talk. Today, I would like to honour someone who achieved so much and gave so much every day to provide an opportunity for success to many people who are marginalized in our society.

Mary continued to work with the company until a few months go when she died on December 11 at the age of 103.

My heartfelt thanks to Mary.

* * *

• (1400)

ÉGLISE SAINTE-MARIE

Mr. Chris d'Entremont (West Nova, CPC): Madam Speaker, the tallest wooden church in North America is in Church Point, Digby County. Standing at 185 feet high, Église Sainte-Marie boasts 41 stained glass windows and the architectural detail is stunning. I highly recommend this landmark to anyone visiting the Clare region.

While the structure of the church remains sound, the 115-year-old giant needs maintenance and repairs that come with a price tag of \$3 million.

[*Translation*]

The Société Édifice Sainte-Marie de la Pointe will be raising funds to save it until September 2021. If enough money is not raised by then, the only option will be to tear it down. That is a sad reality for the region's residents since this church is an important part of their heritage. As a proud Acadian, I am concerned about this important Acadian historic site and I understand the importance of doing everything possible to preserve it.

I want to reassure the residents of Clare and tell them that I am committed to monitoring this issue.

* * *

ANNE-MARIE VOISARD

Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.): Madam Speaker, very few people have the honour of receiving an award as prestigious as the Governor General's Literary Award. An author from my community of Châteauguay, Anne-Marie Voisard, took home the award in the non-fiction category for her book entitled *Le droit du plus fort. Nos dommages, leurs intérêts*, which was published by Écosociété. As she mentioned in an interview with the newspaper Coup d'œil, the jury made a bold decision by choosing

such a daring critique, a plea in favour of freedom of speech, including in print. Anne-Marie Voisard had the courage to call into question our ideas about what is considered acceptable because it is within the law. Her many years of hard work have paid off.

On behalf of the people of Châteauguay—Lacolle, I congratulate her on helping to build a fairer society.

* * *

MARC-ANDRÉ LACHAPELLE

Mrs. Claude DeBellefeuille (Salaberry—Suroît, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my profound admiration and extend sincere congratulations to Marc-André Lachapelle, a young 17-year-old man from Saint-Zotique whose act of bravery saved the life of Yvette Gingras. Mr. Lachapelle woke up on January 5 and went to work like any other day, only that day, he saw Ms. Gingras in distress on the side of the road. He quickly pulled over, went to her side and performed chest compressions until first responders arrived.

Mr. Lachapelle, your quick thinking, maturity and sense of duty saved Ms. Gingras' life. This event has likely helped confirm your career choice. I am confident that you will be an excellent paramedic, and I hope you will choose to remain in Salaberry—Suroît. I join the Gingras family in extending our most heartfelt thanks. I understand Ms. Gingras is doing better every day and I wish her a speedy recovery.

* * *

[*English*]

SIKH SEWA SOCIETY

Mr. Maninder Sidhu (Brampton East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to recognize the incredible work of an organization with roots in Brampton, the Sikh Sewa Society, which provides free meals for the less fortunate in our community. Weekly, it serves over 400 meals and has been doing so each and every Sunday for the past four years.

The mission of the Sikh Sewa Society is to have an open platform for citizens of all ages, races, cultures and faiths, with a simple motivation of selfless service for the whole of humanity. The Sikh Sewa Society aligns its mandate with the core teachings of Sikhism, including working hard, giving back and serving our communities. Its actions are an inspiration to many Canadians.

I would like to extend kudos to the organization's volunteers and founders, including Peel Regional Police Officer Manjit Singh Basran, Gurjeet Singh and Parmjit Singh Aujla. Their profound dedication to the betterment of our community does not go unnoticed and is much appreciated.

In this new Parliament, may all of us in the House not lose sight of the importance of our role in serving those who have allowed us to serve them.

SUNNIDALE WINTERAMA

Mr. Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand in the House today to celebrate an important community event in my riding, the Sunnidale Winterama. The event, which kicks off tonight in the town of New Lowell, is celebrating its 45th anniversary this year. Winterama is organized by a small, dedicated group of volunteers from the area who work hard to put on an exceptional weekend of activities. There is something for everyone, from kids' games and a free fireworks show to community dinners and a charitable silent auction.

Winterama is also a major showcase for small business at the crafts market and an excellent opportunity for our many talented local musicians who are playing at events throughout this weekend.

My family and I look forward to seeing many familiar faces at the spaghetti dinner tomorrow night.

I thank the many hard-working volunteers and community members who have helped make this event possible this year and the past 45 great years.

* * *

● (1405)

UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT PS752

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the downing of Ukrainian Airlines flight 752 was a national tragedy that struck very close to home. Pillars of the North Shore community were lost and families are going through a time of unimaginable grief.

In the aftermath of this heartbreaking tragedy, fellow Canadians have stepped up to support their Iranian Canadian neighbours. Nowhere was this more evident than the memorial organized by Nasreen Filsoof of the Canadian Iranian Foundation. Hundreds gathered to remember the 57 Canadians and 29 permanent residents who were on this flight.

The North Shore Jewish community posted this important event at the Har El synagogue. It is fitting that these two communities came together to support each other and that we recognize both this tragedy and the Holocaust this week.

While this event might have been surprising just about anywhere else in the world, it is another poignant example of national unity and a reason we should all be proud to be Canadian. When one community suffers, it is felt across our country. We support them so they are not alone.

* * *

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Correctional Service of Canada celebrated Citizens Advisory Committee Awareness Week. This citizen-led movement ensures that the public is involved in corrections, increasing openness and transparency.

I would like to thank the over 400 Canadians who volunteered with the citizens advisory committees across the country. I applaud their dedication in the institutions and parole offices. I am proud of

Statements by Members

the work they do in my own riding and of course those across the entire country. Please join me in thanking all the citizens advisory committee members for their tireless efforts and contributions to public safety for all Canadians.

* * *

IMPACT ASSESSMENT AGENCY OF CANADA

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on January 27, just three days ago, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada released the review panel's report on CN's proposed truck-rail hub in Milton. The panel determined that this project is likely to have a significant and adverse environmental impact on air quality and human health in the Halton region. It is now in front of the federal cabinet for a review and decision. The review panel recognized this project will have a negative environmental impact. The region of Halton has concluded this project will negatively impact the communities of Burlington, Oakville, Milton and Halton Hills. Most importantly, the people of Halton have voiced their strong opposition to this project.

I am calling on the Liberal government and Liberal members from Halton region to do the right thing, protect the environment and listen to the people of Halton region.

* * *

UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT PS752

Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians across the country are mourning the victims of flight PS752. In Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, this tragedy hit at the heart of our community with the loss of three members of the Hamidi family: Ardalan Ebnoddin-Hamidi, Niloofar Razzaghi and their son Kamyar Ebnoddin-Hamidi.

Over the past few years, I came to know the Hamidi family as engaged community supporters. In particular, Kam spent many hours volunteering with me this past fall. He was following in the footsteps of his parents, developing the same commitment to community activism.

I feel their loss deeply and offer my sincerest condolences to their friends and family.

* * *

PACIFIC SALMON

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's fisheries have declined significantly in recent years, despite Liberal promises to reverse those trends.

Statements by Members

Threats to Pacific salmon stocks grew exponentially last year with the discovery of the Big Bar slide on the Fraser River. Efforts to capture salmon and move them around the blockage benefited a few fish, but few survived the ordeal.

After six months of Liberal promises, work has finally begun to remove the blockage and hopefully avert the extinction of these salmon stocks. I thank the engineers and workers currently working to fix Big Bar, but I also join many Canadians in wondering why it took over half a year for the government to get to work on this urgent job.

All along the government has promised to resource this work, but its delays cost the loss of an essential resource: time.

This is only one of the challenges facing our fisheries, and we will be holding the government to account on the actions it takes or does not take on the file.

* * *

• (1410)

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Ms. Lianne Rood (Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, CPC): Mr. Speaker, something that is often overlooked is the impact of the carbon tax on farms and agriculture. Who is going to feed Canadians when the government continues to raise taxes and tax farmers out of business?

I am disappointed that yet again the Liberals are overlooking the struggles of millions of Canadians. Vague platitudes will not put food on the table.

The carbon tax is failing farmers and it does not reduce emissions, especially in our rural ridings: all pain, no grain.

The carbon tax makes everything more expensive. I had a farmer send me a bill. In one month he had to pay over \$7,000 in carbon tax to dry his grain. Profit margins are already so low for so many farmers and the Liberals want to tax them more, squeeze everything out of them.

As the member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, I promise to stand up for farmers and fight Trudeau's job-killing carbon tax.

The Speaker: I want to remind hon. members, when referring to someone else in the chamber, not to refer to the member by his or her name, but rather by title or riding.

The hon. member for Vancouver East.

* * *

HOUSING

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, for many Canadians, having a home people can afford that fits their needs is becoming harder and harder. For some, it is impossible. There is a problem all across the country.

Yesterday, Ottawa declared a housing and homelessness emergency. Women's shelters are having to turn away victims of domestic violence. We see people sleeping in tents out of desperation. In Vancouver East, we have had a tent city at Oppenheimer Park for more than a year.

There is no recognition of the overwhelming homeless population in urban, rural and northern indigenous communities.

For the Liberals, when something is urgent for their corporate friends, they will go to any lengths to make it happen. However, Canadians who need a place to live have to wait.

Enough is enough. We need to see a substantive increase in funding for the national housing strategy and a dedicated program led by indigenous peoples for indigenous peoples.

* * *

[Translation]

LAURENT DUVERNAY-TARDIF

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this Sunday is the Super Bowl, and like many Quebeckers, I will be glued to my TV.

All Quebeckers will be watching an exceptional doctor very closely. I am proud to say that this doctor hails from the riding of Beloeil—Chambly. Laurent Duvernay-Tardif, a guard for the Kansas City Chiefs, will be guarding his team's star quarterback all the way to victory. The quarterback is pretty remarkable himself.

The great number 76 could become the first Quebecker to wear one of those famous championship rings. He is the first football player who is also a medical doctor.

Dr. Duvernay-Tardif is the ultimate student athlete. He is proof that we can help and encourage young Quebeckers and tell them that with a little effort and perseverance they can create an unbelievable future for themselves. This is exactly what Laurent Duvernay-Tardif is looking to spark, through the foundation that bears his name and that provides scholarships to young athletes.

This Sunday, we will all be cheering, "Go, Chiefs, go!"

* * *

[English]

FINANCE

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are seeing just how out of touch with ordinary Canadians the Liberal government is, giving \$50 million to Mastercard.

If we were to create a Liberal credit card commercial, it might sound like this: Canada's deficit, \$27 billion; Canada's debt, \$800 billion; new fridges for Loblaws, \$12 million; an airport in Cape Breton for millionaires, \$18 million; Mastercard quarterly revenues, \$4.4 billion; Mastercard size by market value in the United States, bigger than Walmart; Canada's Prime Minister giving Mastercard \$50 million tax dollars, priceless.

There are some things money cannot buy, but for everything else there are the Liberals.

How can the Prime Minister justify this reckless borrowing, using the Canadian taxpayer credit card, to give Mastercard a single dime of our tax dollars?

* * *

● (1415)

NEIL PEART

Mr. Steven MacKinnon (Gatineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on January 7, Canada and music lost a virtuoso, legend and hero to millions of air drummers the world over.

Neil Peart, drummer and lyricist for Rush, succumbed to glioblastoma after a three-and-a-half-year fight and tragically only four and a half years after Rush's final concert.

[Translation]

Rush was a band that was universally loved in Quebec and across Canada. The band recorded some famous albums in Morin-Heights, in the Laurentians, and put on one of its most legendary concerts at the Montreal Forum.

[English]

A member of the Order of Canada and of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Neil Peart was generally recognized as the best rock drummer in the world and the driving force behind one of the most successful touring bands of all time.

I offer our condolences to his family and all his fans in between the bright lights and the far, unlit unknown.

I thank him for his words and his music.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday, in a hotel room in Quebec City, 22-year-old Marylène Lévesque was brutally murdered. The 51-year-old accused, who had murdered his wife 15 years prior, was on day parole and had been encouraged by his parole officer to hire Marylène for sex.

Will those Liberals, at a minimum, condemn unreservedly what the Parole Board and this parole officer did and commit to correcting this so it never happens again?

Oral Questions

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I have said previously, we extend our deepest condolences to the family. We understand and we share the concerns of Canadians about this case.

Public safety must always be our first consideration in all parole decisions. The Parole Board makes these decisions independently.

In response to the concerns that are being raised, I have asked the chair of the Parole Board and the commissioner of Correctional Service Canada to initiate a full investigation and a review to determine the circumstances that have led to this tragic case and to ensure that all established protocols were in fact followed.

* * *

FINANCE

Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is an incredibly weak answer from a so-called feminist government. Why could that minister not have stood and said, unreservedly, that the Liberals would make sure changes would happen so this would not happen again? Protocol, schmotocol, this should never have happened.

I have another question for the Liberal government. We know that Mastercard, a company with over \$16 billion in revenue last year, is getting \$50 million from the Liberals. Everyone knows that Mastercard does not need this money.

Will the minister do the right thing and reverse this terrible decision to give Mastercard \$50 million?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight. The Government of Canada has invested in a major new cybersecurity centre, which will make Canada a world leader when it comes to countering cybercrime, ensuring cybersecurity, as well as developing new technologies.

This new investment made by the government will create hundreds of jobs across the country, in particular in British Columbia.

Hon. Candice Bergen (House Leader of the Official Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Mastercard made \$16 billion last year. I think it can afford to develop its own cybersecurity. It is making this \$16 billion off Canadians who cannot afford to pay their credit card bills at the end of the month.

Mastercard did not need the \$50 million. Actually, no credit card company needs \$50 million from the Canadian Liberal government.

How can the Liberals keep defending giving millions of dollars to billion-dollar companies?

Oral Questions

• (1420)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we believe in job creation and we believe that we need to make sure we make the right investments to ensure this job creation.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Maybe someone can answer my question. How long before everyone is quiet?

We will let the hon. minister continue, please.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Mr. Speaker, not only do we believe in job creation, but the facts are clear. We were able to create a million new jobs over the past four years. That is why we are supporting the development of the tech sector in British Columbia and in western Canada.

We believe that we need to do more to create good jobs all across the country and that the growth we are seeing is shared all across the different regions.

* * *

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House passed a motion asking the Auditor General to investigate the Liberals' \$186-billion investing in Canada plan.

Last year, the Auditor General said clearly that the Liberals were not providing the appropriate funds for the office to do its work. The House asked the Auditor General to do an important job.

Could the Prime Minister assure the House that the Auditor General will have all the resources necessary?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to answer this very important question.

Investing in middle-class Canadians, investing in further economic growth and investing in our infrastructure across Canada has been a key part of our plan since 2015.

We look forward to having good conversations with all people in this government, including the Auditor General, to make sure our investments are as effective as possible.

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Mr. Speaker, they do not even know what middle class is.

[*Translation*]

Never in Canada's history has a government spent so much to accomplish so little. No other prime minister has spent more or cared less about taxpayer dollars. Meanwhile, last year, the Auditor General of Canada said he did not have enough money to do his job. Yesterday, the House tasked him with investigating the Liberals' \$186-billion infrastructure plan.

Will the Prime Minister commit today to giving the Auditor General the money he needs to do this important work?

Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for giving me the opportunity to continue in French because I was not done.

We have created a million new jobs since 2015 and lifted nearly a million Canadians out of poverty. We lead developed nations in economic growth, and, according to economists who analyze the strength and credibility of fiscal frameworks, our fiscal framework is strong.

Not only are we very proud of what we have done, but we are also even more eager to keep working hard for all Canadians.

* * *

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Teck Frontier project would sound the death knell for Canada's commitments under the Paris Agreement. The project means 260,000 barrels a day and four million tonnes of greenhouse gases. When asked about it—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet: Mr. Speaker, this is becoming intolerable.

When the Prime Minister was asked about this yesterday, I was a little surprised because he did not show the customary respect reserved for my colleagues. He said he makes decisions based on science, unlike my colleagues. However, the figure comes from—

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government will take into account a number of factors when it makes a decision on this project, including our commitments to achieve the net zero emission target by 2050, advance reconciliation, create well-paying jobs for the middle class and promote economic growth.

This is a major project that our government is weighing very carefully and, as required under the Environmental Assessment Act, a decision will be made before the end of February.

• (1425)

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I lost some speaking time because of their noise.

The head of Teck Resources is also expressing some concerns and needs a pipeline to move forward. This 40-year project will exceed by nearly 20 years the deadline by which the government wants Canada to be carbon neutral.

Is the government afraid to say no to Jason Kenney?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is a major project that the government is weighing very carefully. As required under the Environmental Assessment Act, a decision will be made before the end of February.

As with any other project, cabinet can approve it under certain conditions, reject it or extend the legislated deadline. The project is being actively considered by our government and no decision has been made.

* * *

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there is a difference between saying the right things and doing the right things. The Liberals like to use pretty words. They named a ministry, but they cannot define what the middle class is. They are putting forward a tax cut that most benefits the wealthiest 10%. Well, New Democrats have a solution.

Are the Liberals prepared to put in place a targeting of that tax cut to benefit those who need it most, and then use the money that is left over to develop a national dental care program to help Canadians who cannot afford to take care of their teeth?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we want, every day, to remind Canadians that the very first thing this new government did was put in place a tax cut for 20 million Canadians. Of course, this followed on the heels of the last Liberal government, which also put in place a tax cut for millions of Canadians.

We want Canadians to know that we are going to continue to work on their behalf. We are going to deal with the real challenges of affordability now and in the future.

[Translation]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, people do not need rhetoric, they need concrete action. The Liberals appointed a minister for the middle class, but they cannot define what the middle class is. They have proposed a tax cut that will benefit the wealthiest the most.

We have a solution: Are the Liberals prepared to target the tax cut so they can implement a dental care program to help those who cannot access dental care?

Hon. Bill Morneau (Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to hear a question about our tax approach.

The first thing our government did was cut taxes for 20 million Canadians. That is very important. We started by cutting taxes for all Canadians in our first term. We want to assure Canadians that we will continue to improve their living conditions today and in the future.

* * *

[English]

CANADIAN HERITAGE

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday a government-appointed panel enthusiastically recommended that the government should control what news coverage Canadians should be allowed to see.

Under the Liberal plan, the Liberals would be able to force all news sites to prominently link all of their coverage to Liberal gov-

Oral Questions

ernment-approved websites. This would have an instant chill effect on free speech and diversity of thought in the Canadian media ecosystem.

Does the government think that Canadians are too dumb to think for themselves?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there seems to be some confusion on the other side of the House between members of the Conservative Party. On the one hand, mere hours after the report was published, the member for Durham declared that he would throw it in the garbage.

[Translation]

On the other hand, the member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis was very open to working with us and we are pleased with that.

We believe that the Yale report will make a significant contribution to the development of a new ecosystem for the protection of Canadian cultural content.

• (1430)

[English]

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is the exact type of fake news that the Liberals want these news sites to implement.

Between the proposal yesterday, the government's "chosen one" print media bailout fund, and even the minister's mandate letter, which goes so far as to suggest that he should implement a ministry of thought police for Twitter and Facebook, this is not free speech. Free speech is something we should be standing up for.

When is the minister going to abandon his proposed ministry of truth?

[Translation]

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we thank the Yale panel for the ambitious work it took on over the past 18 months and for the report it presented yesterday. We will carefully review the 97 recommendations it made on telecommunications, broadcasting and online content. Our government is committed to supporting this sector in Canada.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Government of Quebec announced its new proposal for the long-awaited third link in Quebec City. The third link is meant to connect downtown Lévis to downtown Quebec City via a tunnel, with a focus on public transit. The Conservatives have always been in favour of a third link incorporating public transit. That is exactly what we want. However, during the election campaign, the Liberals were quite dismissive of this third link.

Oral Questions

Now that the Quebec government has made its decision, could the Liberal government tell us whether it supports the third link in Quebec City?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the opposition member for his question.

Since no project has been submitted to us as yet, there is no decision for us to make.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister may not have gotten the project, but the people of Quebec did. They support the third link, especially because it focuses on public transit, which is a key factor in the decision. There are people in this place who oppose the project, in particular the Minister of Canadian Heritage, who has always been known as a fierce opponent of the third link.

Could the hero of the federal government tell us if he supports the third link?

Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I hope the opposition member recognizes that it is up to the Government of Quebec to submit projects to us and that we are still waiting for this one.

However, I would like to talk about what we have done in Quebec. We are investing in the Montreal metro blue line, the Quebec City tramway, the Champlain Bridge, affordable housing and many other projects. We are here for Quebec.

We are here to build our country, create jobs and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

* * *

[English]

CARBON PRICING

Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC): Mr. Speaker, last fall's harvest was incredibly challenging due to rain and snow, and now farmers are stuck paying the Liberal carbon tax to dry their grain. The Minister of Agriculture is stalling and failing to support our farmers. Even the Green Party wants to have grain drying be exempt from carbon tax for last fall's harvest.

When will the Prime Minister keep his word and stop punishing farmers who are being forced to pay the carbon tax for the grain they are drying, and when will he reimburse them for the taxes that have already been collected?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize that 2019 was a very difficult year for our farmers because of the weather and the trade disruption as well. This is why we are working so hard with the stakeholders, with the representatives of the various sectors and with my provincial counterparts.

We are working on finding real, practical solutions for them. They already have some safety nets through business risk management programs that they can rely on, but we are working to improve them.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for Canadian farmers, this has been a harvest from hell, and the Liberals are only

making it worse. They do not even understand it. Canadian farmers have had to dry their grain and heat their barns, and they are being crushed by a Liberal carbon tax.

Jeff Nielsen from Grain Growers of Canada says, "These costs are adding up and we cannot continue to pay the price for inaction." The agriculture minister has already admitted she is not even keeping data on the impact of the carbon tax on farming.

When will the Liberals exempt Canadian farmers from the carbon tax, give them back the money they have already taken and end this ridiculous field of schemes?

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we recognize that 2019 was a very difficult year for our farmers because of trade disruptions and because of weather, and we are working closely with their representatives. I am also working closely with my provincial counterparts, because we want to find practical solutions to what they are going through. It is important to make good decisions based on data, and I am working with them to work around all of this.

I am really committed to supporting them.

* * *

• (1435)

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ): Mr. Speaker, free trade agreements have a tremendous impact on Quebec. Before ratifying the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Standing Committee on International Trade heard from no less than 400 experts. For CUSMA, the number of experts who came to testify is zero. The committee did not receive a single witness. We can all agree that there is a big difference between 400 and zero.

In the case of this hastily drafted agreement, it is not surprising that Quebec's farmers and aluminum were sacrificed. Will the government acknowledge that it was in such a hurry that it cut corners and that Quebec is paying the price?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with my hon. colleague at all. The reality is that the new NAFTA includes significant benefits for Quebec. As Premier Legault and others have said, the new NAFTA preserves \$57.3 billion in exports from Quebec to the United States. It preserves the cultural exemption. I thought that was important to Quebec. We preserved supply management when the United States was calling for it to be dismantled.

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in CUSMA, the government decided to protect steel but not aluminum. Let me repeat once more that 70% of steel auto parts must be North American, and the steel must be melted and poured in North America. The aluminum in these parts, however, can come from anywhere, because there are no specifics about the source of the aluminum in the agreement. It does not take a genius to understand that. Will the government have the decency to acknowledge that aluminum is not getting the same protection as steel?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only thing needed to understand the benefits of NAFTA for Quebec is some math skills. What we have to understand is that 70% is better than 0%. Those are the facts for the aluminum sector.

One Quebec leader understands this. Premier Legault said, “The Bloc Québécois has to defend the interests of Quebecers, and it is in the interest of Quebecers for this agreement be ratified and adopted.” I agree.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, let's talk about math.

The truth is that Quebec aluminum gets 0% protection in CUSMA. By failing to protect aluminum, the government is enabling automakers to take advantage of Chinese dumping at the expense of Quebec aluminum. China produces 15 times more aluminum than we do, dirty aluminum made in coal-powered plants by underpaid workers. Let me explain it again: Mexico can buy that stuff, make auto parts out of it and call it a North American product. We have been saying that for two months, and I really hope the government members over there will get it eventually.

How could the government sign an agreement that encourages Chinese dumping, which is bad for our aluminum?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I do agree with my hon. colleague about one thing: Canadian aluminum is green aluminum, Canadians should be proud of our aluminum industry, and we should work in the interest of our aluminum industry. That is what we have done. That is what our government has done. We are working closely with the industry, and, as a result, we got the U.S. tariffs fully lifted.

[English]

HEALTH

Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has confirmed that it now has a plane that at some point is expected to bring Canadians in China back home. However, there is very little information being shared about the plan to get these individuals home. The minister has said that they will be quarantined, but her officials confirmed at yesterday's health committee meeting that they still do not know what that means.

Can the minister tell Canadians what her quarantine plan is?

• (1440)

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the record. I have said that all options are on

Oral Questions

the table to make sure that we are protecting the health and safety of Canadians here in Canada and those who are abroad.

I can confirm that 196 Canadians have registered for help to get back to Canada.

I am working closely with my partners at Global Affairs and the Public Health Agency, and we will be putting together a comprehensive plan that ensures the health and safety of all Canadians, regardless of where they are residing.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC): Mr. Speaker, at the Conservative Party's request, the Standing Committee on Health held an emergency meeting yesterday evening to discuss the latest measures taken to protect Canadians from the coronavirus. Unfortunately, many of the Conservatives' questions remained unanswered. Nobody wants to be alarmist, but Canadians want answers.

Can the Prime Minister tell us when those Canadians will be back in Canada and whether they will be quarantined?

[English]

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are working very closely with our Chinese counterparts to repatriate Canadians.

I will say that preliminary information that we are hearing from China is that patients who are ill will not be able to travel back to Canada, which raises important questions about how we can best support them while they are still in the region of Hubei.

As we speak, as I said, officials are working together to ensure the safe transfer of Canadians and support for Canadians who remain in a heavily quarantined area that is making movement and other services very difficult to acquire.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Ms. Leona Alleslev (Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Foreign Affairs said that the government is working out the logistics on how and when to bring home the Canadians in China affected by the coronavirus quarantine.

What criteria will be used to determine which individuals will board the evacuating flight? Will the evacuation include permanent residents of Canada travelling abroad, unaccompanied Canadian minors, spouses, and who else? Will the minister immediately outline the specifics of the plan to bring Canadians home?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said, it is very important that we work with our partners, both here in Canada and also internationally, to make sure that we protect the health and safety of Canadians regardless of where they are residing.

Oral Questions

I have provided information about what we know to date in terms of the Chinese government's perspective on ill passengers travelling. I will tell members right now that the process we put in place will place the utmost importance on the safety of Canadians who are here in Canada, but also the health and safety of the Canadians who are desperately seeking to be reunited with their families and communities.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in 2018, this House unanimously approved my motion to address marine plastic pollution. We all agreed that plastic pollution hurts our economy, the marine environment and all Canadians. Countries all over the world are banning single-use plastics. France has banned plastic cutlery and plates. Rwanda banned plastic bags. This is not hard, but today the minister said we need to wait another 60 days for more findings.

The government needs to stop talking and start acting. When will it move to zero-waste plastic and when will it stop shipping our plastics to developing nations? What is it waiting for?

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for his work on this issue.

The Prime Minister promised last year that we would ban harmful single-use plastics by 2021. We are very proud that today we have put forward the draft science assessment. We want to do this with Canadians, so we are inviting them to give us their feedback and be a part of the process, and 60 days from now we will start the process of moving forward with that ban.

We know it is important not just for us, but for future generations of Canadians.

* * *

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as we speak, the World Health Organization is meeting to determine if the coronavirus is an international public health emergency. We learned yesterday that Canada intends to send a plane to evacuate Canadians trapped in affected regions of China.

What the government has not answered yet is when this plane will land and what measures will be taken to quarantine passengers who may be infected. With an incubation period of 14 days, this virus can easily spread without proper planning.

Will the health minister reveal what her full plans are, and when and how the evacuation of Canadians can safely be carried out?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is really important that we remember there is a difference between quarantine and isolation. If people are sick, they need to be in isolation to prevent the spread of illness, because the spread of illness is transmitted through droplets. Quarantine is used when there are people that are asymptomatic. Right now, what we know about the virus is that it cannot be transmitted while people are asymptomatic.

The plan that we put together we will reveal to Canadians as soon as it is complete. As I have committed before, I will be fully transparent with the House and with Canadians as I have been to date.

* * *

● (1445)

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Hon. Geoff Regan (Halifax West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Public Services and Procurement recently visited a very important initiative for Nova Scotia, for my constituents and for our navy and Coast Guard. She saw Canada's burgeoning shipbuilding industry up close. The economic impact, which can be felt across the region, includes enhanced skills training and spinoff jobs.

Will the minister inform the House of the importance of the middle-class jobs being generated and the exceptional craftsmanship of the new vessels being produced at the Irving shipyard in Halifax?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I saw first-hand many Canadians hard at work building Canada's next generation of vessels. This work is contributing over \$1 billion annually to Canada's GDP and creating or maintaining over 11,000 jobs per year.

I can assure Canadians that they can take pride in these new vessels and in the workers who are equipping the navy and the Coast Guard with the ships they need to serve all Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, during the debate on Bill C-3, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada said, "The police should not be policing themselves."

It is therefore understandable that Canadians find it unacceptable to hear the Prime Minister say that the Parole Board will investigate its own members in the case of Marylène Levesque's murder. An internal investigation is not enough.

Will the government allow an external investigation?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me assure the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles and all Canadians that I and our government take very seriously this heinous crime that was committed against an innocent Canadian. We will do all that is necessary to ensure, first of all, justice for her, and also to ensure that this terrible crime is not committed again.

Oral Questions

We have asked for a very comprehensive review and investigation. First of all, the criminal investigation will be conducted independently by the Quebec police service, and we have asked the chair of the Parole Board and the commissioner of corrections to conduct an extensive review to look at all of the circumstances so that we may have the facts and respond appropriately.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, here is a good idea for the minister if he wants justice to be served for the victim's family. As members of the House know, the two Parole Board members who made the decision to release the murderer were appointed under Order in Council 2018-0802. This order in council clearly stipulates that a member can be dismissed for just cause. It is absolutely inconceivable to give permission to obtain sexual services to an offender with limited freedom who was convicted of brutally murdering his wife. Marylène Levesque did not deserve to meet such a tragic end.

When will the minister take action and dismiss the two individuals in question?

[English]

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree with the member that Madam Levesque did not deserve her tragic fate, and we are going to take steps to make sure that these circumstances are not repeated. It is precisely why we have asked the Parole Board and the Correctional Service of Canada to conduct a full investigation and review. If individuals have engaged in malfeasance or misconduct, they will be held to account.

However, we are also going to look at our policies and procedures and the training of Parole Board members so that we can ensure that Canadian safety is always protected.

Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the electronic surveillance report tabled recently in this House showed that for the first time there were zero judicial authorizations issued to keep track of returning terrorists. We know from numbers provided by CSIS that there are approximately 60 ISIS terrorists in this country.

Can the minister explain to Canadians why none of these terrorists appear to have been monitored in the last year?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear that those who leave Canada to support terrorism are utterly reprehensible, and our goal is always to arrest, charge, prosecute and convict these individuals. We have now charged, in fact, five of these extremist travellers, and we have convicted four of them for travelling abroad to engage in criminal activity.

Despite the Conservatives' concern now, during their term as government no one was charged or convicted under the Conservatives.

We condemn the acts of these individuals and we will act to ensure the safety of all Canadians.

• (1450)

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question is a simple and straightforward one for the Minister of Public Safety. Will he bring Canada into full alignment with the Palermo protocol, yes or no?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to be very clear, we are absolutely committed to fulfilling our responsibilities to our agencies and departments in protecting the health and safety of all Canadians and we will ensure adherence to all the legal requirements to do so.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, 3,900 civilian members of the RCMP are worried about what will happen when their pay moves to the Phoenix system, or should I say, the Phoenix nightmare. Last year alone, Phoenix caused problems for 74% of staff. The worst part is that employees are being threatened. They are being told that if they do not want to move to Phoenix, they have until tomorrow to take retirement without getting in trouble.

First, will the government stop threatening people and postpone the February 1 deadline? Second, will it stop loading more people onto the *Titanic* that is Phoenix?

Hon. Anita Anand (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's public service employees deserve to be paid accurately and on time for the important work they do. We have made tremendous progress towards stabilizing the pay system. Our government knows that employees and their families continue to experience stress and inconvenience due to pay issues. In the meantime, we are still offering employees flexible repayment options, in order to minimize the financial hardships and repercussions.

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister's mandate letter calls on her to replace Phoenix with a new pay system, because there is no hope it can be fixed. What a colossal disaster.

This is the perfect example of how this federal government operates. The left hand is trying to destroy Phoenix now, while the right hand is trying to bring even more people into this nightmare. What genius came up with this?

Will the government make sure that 3,900 civilian RCMP employees do not get caught up in the Phoenix nightmare?

Hon. Joyce Murray (Minister of Digital Government, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our public servants deserve to be paid properly and on time. The Conservatives botched the Phoenix pay system, causing thousands of hard-working public servants to suffer. We are working with public servants, experts, unions and service providers to find a modern, reliable system. Our public servants deserve nothing less.

*Oral Questions**[English]***PUBLIC SAFETY**

Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the previous government took concrete action, and that is to say it banned the practice of prisoners within federal penitentiaries being able to access sexually explicit material on their televisions. I would like the minister to confirm that this ban is still in place.

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I can advise the member opposite that I have not been advised that there has been any change in the established protocols of Correctional Service of Canada with regard to this matter.

Mr. Bob Saroya (Markham—Unionville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, mayors from across the GTA have called on the Liberals to keep convicted gang members behind bars longer, stop the revolving door of releasing known gang members out on bail and stop gun smuggling. These are all measures that have been rejected by the Liberals in favour of a soft-on-crime approach. That approach will cost billions of dollars and do nothing to keep us safe.

Will the Minister of Public Safety listen to the GTA mayors?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to tell the member that he is simply wrong. Our government is absolutely committed to the safety of our communities.

We have made a commitment to strengthen gun control, for example. We are going to redouble our efforts at the border to prevent these crime guns from being smuggled into our country by increasing the presence of CBSA officers, adding technology and supporting the police in their investigations. We are also preventing theft by strengthening storage requirements and preventing criminal diversion with new rules, new offences and stricter penalties.

We, unlike the previous government, have invested in policing to support guns and gangs investigations, and we will invest in communities to help our—

• (1455)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Mr. Speaker, despite being a veteran infantry officer fully trained on a number of prohibited and restricted firearms, I recently completed the Canadian firearms and restricted firearms safety courses. These courses are integral to knowing about firearms safety and ensuring that Canadians safely store and use firearms. These courses would also be incredibly valuable to any of us in the House of Commons looking to craft firearms legislation.

Could the Minister of Public Safety please confirm he has completed these courses?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to the member opposite for his successful completion of his course. I am also pleased to advise him that I carefully carried a firearm for 39 years and I have taken extensive training—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: Order. I want to remind hon. members that if they have a comment or a question, to direct it through the Chair, not directly across the floor.

The hon. member for Bourassa.

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*[Translation]***INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of International Development recently travelled to the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Can she tell the House about the objectives of this trip and how Canada is working with its partners to build a prosperous, sustainable and peaceful country?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of International Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

During my trip, I had the opportunity to see the work that Canada supports and the striking needs of the people. I saw the huge impact on 170,000 people affected by flooding that has devastated certain areas of the Congo since last September. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I announced aid for the urgent needs of survivors of sexual violence and for the fight against the second-largest Ebola epidemic on record.

Finally, I would like to commend all our partners in the region for their extraordinary work.

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*[English]***PUBLIC SAFETY**

Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in 2019, Winnipeg had the highest rates of violent crime in Canada. Robberies were up 45%. We had 44 murders, double the year prior. Almost all of this was related to the meth crisis, not from legal gun ownership.

A 27-year veteran of Winnipeg police, Constable Rob Carver, said that a handgun seizure “won’t change the threat level one iota,” and police chiefs across Canada agree.

Will the Liberals admit that their policy is completely out of step with police on the front lines and does nothing to keep Winnipeggers safe?

Oral Questions

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, actually, unlike the previous government, I consulted very extensively with police chiefs from across the country. I will tell colleagues that we know there are three ways in which criminals get guns: They are smuggled across the border, they are stolen or they are criminally diverted.

We are taking action to strengthen gun control laws to prevent those guns from being smuggled into Canada, to prevent them from being stolen from legal gun owners and to—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Speaker: I am sure the hon. minister appreciates the coaching he is getting, but I am sure he can answer all on his own. I would encourage everyone to listen to what the hon. minister has to say.

The hon. minister.

Hon. Bill Blair: Mr. Speaker, in addition to strengthening gun control laws, we have listened to the police when they said they needed additional resources to do their jobs.

We have committed \$347 million to law enforcement to enable them to conduct gun and gang investigations and to support the prosecution of people who commit these crimes. We have—

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis.

Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, instead of targeting honest citizens, the minister should be going after the 50,000 people who, according to CB-SA, are here illegally and should be deported. The Liberals have made a complete mess of the public safety file.

Where are those 50,000 people? What is the minister doing to protect Canadians rather than attack honest, law-abiding citizens?

• (1500)

[*English*]

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, just to go past a bit of the rhetoric and get to the facts, in fact, I have nothing but respect for law-abiding firearms owners in Canada. It is our reliance on their adherence and upholding of our laws that helps keep us safe, but we know that some of their guns have been stolen, for example, so we are asking them to adhere to stricter storage requirements.

There is nothing in our plan that will interfere or interrupt the legitimate lawful activities of hunters and farmers in this country, and we will continue to uphold their rights and treat them fairly. We are also not bringing back a long-gun registry.

Mr. John Brassard (Barrie—Innisfil, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Toronto police chief Mark Saunders revealed in December that 82% of handguns involved in crimes were smuggled from the U.S. The minister of public safety had previously stated half of crime guns come from domestic sources. The statistics from when the minister was the chief in Toronto and carried a gun show the same picture as today: A very small percentage of firearms are from legal

sources, while many crime guns are prohibited and from the United States.

Could the minister table the source of his information that has now been proven incorrect?

Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately my friend has some of his facts wrong. When I was the chief of police in Toronto, we had a firearms verification unit that traced the source of all handguns. During my tenure as chief for 10 years there, 70% of the crime guns that we seized, handguns, were smuggled from the United States. The other 30% were stolen or illegally diverted. The 50% number actually came from Chief Saunders in his first public statement, but he has since, as a result of some investigations they have done into smuggling, come out with another number.

I acknowledge the facts there, but the reality is guns—

[*Translation*]

The Speaker: The hon. member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle.

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SENIORS

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government has made tremendous progress in supporting seniors through many programs and initiatives.

Can the minister tell the House what our government has done to make sure that seniors have the support they need to continue to be active in their communities?

[*English*]

Hon. Deb Schulte (Minister of Seniors, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our seniors have built the Canada that we know and love, and they deserve a secure and dignified retirement.

Last week I was pleased to announce \$1.5 million in new horizons for seniors funding in support of community-based projects in Manitoba. In budget 2019, we boosted new horizons for seniors funding by \$20 million annually so we could provide even more support for healthy aging and encourage active participation among seniors.

We will have more news on the new horizons approvals in the coming weeks.

*Points of Order***HEALTH**

Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, just minutes ago, the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus an international public health emergency. This is a profound step that has only been taken a handful of times over the last decade. One of the chief reasons for this move is they are concerned that this virus will spread to countries that are not prepared to deal with it, a serious state of affairs that increases the risk for all nations.

Given this global escalation, when will the minister table her full plan for all Canadians to see? Time is wasting.

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are so fortunate to have Dr. Tam as our Chief Public Health Officer, who is an expert adviser to this very committee.

We have been following the World Health Organization recommendations since we noticed the cluster in late December. We will be closely reviewing the recommendations. I will mention, though, that some of them really do speak to the need to support weaker countries that do not have the same integrated systems that Canada has and to preventing the misinformation that is leading to racism and stigmatization of so many Chinese Canadians and other people of Chinese descent around the world.

* * *

• (1505)

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP): Mr. Speaker, the Vancouver Island Health Authority recently had to take over the administration of three seniors care facilities due to unsafe conditions. Three years ago the government approved the sale of these facilities to Anbang Insurance, which is now a Chinese state-owned corporation. Foreign corporations have no connection to our communities and should not be profiting from poor-quality seniors care.

Will the government exclude seniors care facilities from foreign ownership?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Cedar Tree Investments is bound in this arrangement. It has been reviewed and is being reviewed constantly by provincial authorities. It is supposed to adhere to a number of different standards.

The Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development is following that case closely.

* * *

[Translation]

POINTS OF ORDER

ORAL QUESTIONS

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, while our leader was addressing the government, our members clearly heard the member for Dufferin—Caledon make some comments that were completely unacceptable. We are asking him to apologize.

[English]

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not know what he is referring to. Was it during my speech on the free trade agreement? I do not know what he is referring to.

An hon. member: It is the wrong riding; it was Edmonton West.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Therrien: Mr. Speaker, the member made comments that were completely unacceptable. He needs to stand up and apologize to the House. We cannot tolerate this sort of thing.

[English]

Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my comment was in regard to the leader of the Bloc's attack on Alberta energy workers and our energy industry. I asked him if he actually walked to Ottawa today. That was my comment and I stand by that comment.

[Translation]

Mr. Alain Therrien: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I just want to point out that he called the leader of our party a hypocrite. That is unacceptable in the House, and I expect him to apologize.

The Speaker: We will look into this and come back to it if there is a case.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker—

[English]

The Speaker: Order, please. I am having a hard time hearing. Perhaps someone could check the volume on the speakers.

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

[Translation]

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise to speak. I was also very troubled by the behaviour of the member for Edmonton West. It is not so much what he said, but he did something that is against the rules of the House.

• (1510)

[English]

Our Standing Orders indicate that it is not allowed to interrupt members when they are speaking.

[Translation]

The leader of the Bloc Québécois was asking his question and the member violated the Standing Orders.

[English]

It is clear that the catcalling, “How did you get here? Did you take a plane?” is completely inappropriate and falls below the standards of this place.

The Speaker: The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands has a very good point and it is a true point. That is why we want to keep the heckling down during proceedings. We want to keep it to a minimum and non-existent would be better.

We will leave it at that. I am hoping that all members in this House will remember that as we proceed.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it being Thursday, I am sure Canadians from coast to coast to coast are tuning in for the weekly business statement. It is my pleasure to ask the government House leader what business he intends to bring before the House for the remainder of this week and into next week.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will continue with second reading debate of our first key priority, the CUSMA implementation bill.

[*Translation*]

Next Monday and Wednesday, we will resume debate on Bill C-4, an act to implement the agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States.

Tuesday will be a supply day.

Next Thursday and Friday, we will continue debate on Bill C-3 on border services.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

CANADA-UNITED STATES-MEXICO AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-4, An Act to implement the Agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Speaker: The hon. member for Dufferin—Caledon has five minutes remaining in questions and comments.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it has been a good day thus far. The minister brought forward a substantial piece of legislation, which is good news for all Canadians in all regions of our country, as it is an agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico.

What is really encouraging is that we are seeing cross-party support. We are getting support for the legislation. That really speaks volumes for the negotiators, whether it is the minister or, most importantly, the Canadian team of negotiators who have done a phenomenal job representing Canada's interests. They have demonstrated that ability not only with this agreement but with previous

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agreements. They have demonstrated that they can actually work with different ministries, different political parties to ensure that Canada gets the best deal possible.

Could my colleague provide his thoughts on that Canadian team of diplomats and civil servants who made this deal possible?

Mr. Kyle Seeback (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am flattered that I was confused with the eloquent and debonair member for Edmonton West. I thank my Bloc colleague for that confusion. It is quite a compliment.

With respect to the trade agreement, I know that we have a fantastic group of people who worked very hard on this agreement. I am still waiting for answers and I am becoming increasingly despondent that there will not be answers to the specific questions that I raised in my speech.

These are questions that not only people in my riding are asking me, but Canadians from coast to coast are asking as well. What are the economic impacts of this agreement? We have been asking for two months. I met with dairy producers in my riding. They know there has actually been a report prepared about economic impacts on the supply management sector, and the Liberals have kept it confidential.

Why will the Liberals not produce the report? What are they hiding?

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask my hon. colleague about the timing.

He is well aware that the original trans-Pacific partnership was the renegotiation of NAFTA. It was ready to be signed back in 2015, two weeks after the Prime Minister took office. It was Mr. Obama's deal, the most progressive president in the history of the United States, and our Prime Minister decided that it was not progressive enough for him. Instead, he delayed the signing of the trans-Pacific partnership.

Obviously, the Liberals did not have any problems with it because they did eventually sign it. However, there was four years of uncertainty on the NAFTA, and of course we ended up with a worse agreement.

Would the member please comment on what these four years of uncertainty have done to the business sector in Canada, and that investment that could have been brought to our country that was not available at the time because of the uncertainty of the trade agreement?

• (1515)

Mr. Kyle Seeback: Mr. Speaker, that is a great question. Uncertainty is, of course, the antithesis of good business practices. With uncertainty, businesses do not know how to plan and budget to expand.

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These delays and the amount of time it has taken has caused all kinds of damage within our business sectors. Not knowing what is going on with the economic analysis of this new trade agreement is creating further uncertainty. It is creating incredible anxiety and uncertainty in the dairy sector and other supply-managed sectors, because they do not know what the impacts of this agreement are going to be.

I do not want to continue to repeat myself, but we have been asking for these documents for over two months. I do not understand why these documents are not being produced, and why we are not being given the understanding of what the economic impacts are going to be. Effectively, what we are being asked to do is support a trade agreement without knowing the implications of the trade agreement. Quite frankly, that is wrong.

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to give my first speech, to address the 43rd Parliament on a very important agreement that would impact many Canadians not only in my riding but throughout this nation.

First, I would like to thank the constituents of Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa. It is an honour and a privilege to represent them each and every day.

In addition, I would like to recognize and thank my lovely wife Leigh and our children Hannah and Michael. Without them, standing in this House today would not be possible.

Before I begin my comments on the new NAFTA, it is important to take this opportunity to describe my constituency to the House in order to properly reflect its priorities in response to such a significant piece of legislation and its impact on Canada's international trade. Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa is a constituency slightly larger than the province of Nova Scotia. It is a region that is deeply rooted in riches of a social and natural heritage which holds a significant place in our country's history. That history is tied to the physical environment, which is defined by its majestic hills, rivers and plains.

Its bounty has been the lifeblood of our region for thousands of years, beginning with our indigenous ancestors and later the eastern European homesteaders of the early 20th century. More recently, our constituency has welcomed many newcomers from across the world, most prominently from the Philippines. Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa has become a diverse constituency made strong by the contributions of the land and its peoples. Those traditions, that history and that work ethic are what drive me as the people's representative each and every day.

As a region our economic wealth is derived from our abundant natural resources and agriculture strengths. More important, our economic wealth has been derived from our ability to export our excess production. Therefore, it is without question that my constituents would expect me to rise and address this important piece of legislation.

Let us be clear. Our party strongly supports free trade initiatives that will generate increased economic activity and job growth. After all, it was our party that negotiated the original NAFTA. With that said, it is our democratic obligation to analyze this legislation that is brought before this House, especially when that legislation is

a free trade agreement with our neighbour, a neighbour with whom we hold our most important trading relationship. Furthermore, it is my democratic responsibility to analyze this agreement, to ask the questions and to raise the concerns so we can ensure that the people of my riding are not forgotten again by the Liberal government. Our party and I will fulfill that democratic obligation.

What are the facts of the new NAFTA? First, the Liberals failed to work with the opposition parties during the negotiation and ratification process, and now we are rushing to get this deal done without proper consultation. Second, the Liberals have failed to provide documents outlining the impacts of a new trade deal, despite numerous requests from opposition members. As a farmer, as a steward of the environment and as a former representative of a farm organization, these failures were evident each and every day during the negotiation process, specifically in our dairy sector.

The agriculture and agri-food processing sectors are key drivers in my riding, providing economic growth, good jobs and social stability, linking rural and urban businesses together and supporting other sectors of our economy. The agriculture industry is the bedrock not only of my riding but also of this nation.

In my province of Manitoba, the dairy industry plays a key economic role, generating over \$250 million in farm gate revenues every year. It is a Canadian industry that proudly produces the highest quality of dairy products in the world. Our party recognizes the contribution that the dairy industry makes to family farms, allowing them to be profitable, to be financially stable and to be able to give back to their communities. This, in turn, grows and connects our rural and urban economies, yet our farm families and rural communities will bear the brunt of these changes.

● (1520)

Now let us examine a few of these impacts. First, an additional 3.6% of the Canadian dairy market has been opened up to import. Second, the new NAFTA dictates specific limits for Canadian exports of milk proteins, skim milk powder and infant formula. If the export limits are exceeded, Canada will add duties to additional exports. This will make them more expensive in countries that trade with the U.S. and limit us in helping to nourish developing nations. As a result of these changes, current and potential future investments in food processing are increasingly threatened in Manitoba and across Canada.

We have heard the concerns from across the industry. David Wiens, the chairman of the Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and vice-president of the Dairy Farmers of Canada, noted that Canada's dairy farms are losing 20% of their market share. He said locally produced milk from Canadian dairy farms is going to be pushed off the shelves to bring in dairy products from the U.S.

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The more dangerous precedent in this agreement for Canadian dairy farmers is that the new NAFTA puts limitations, through tariffs, on Canada's ability to enter foreign markets or operate in a foreign dairy market that the U.S. is already in. Mr. Wiens also said it will further limit our ability to export dairy products, noting that Canada's largest exports are products such as milk proteins and baby formula. He added, "With that tax it will be very difficult for us to compete against the U.S. dairy industry in any [foreign] market they are in".

Here we are with a new NAFTA that is threatening our domestic food supply, and the Liberal government should be informing Canadians of how they will be impacted. It is the Liberals' duty to be transparent and accountable, something I hope they learn during this Parliament. Dairy farmers and Canadians have been betrayed by the Liberal government by not providing the complete details of this new NAFTA and the real impacts it has on their livelihoods, their families and their communities.

The members opposite do not seem to recognize the realities of this new minority Parliament. They do not seem to recognize that they will be held accountable at every step of the legislative process, to ensure my constituents, Manitobans and Canadians understand the full impacts of this agreement and what it means to them.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians understand the importance of trade agreements. With this administration we have seen many trade agreements signed off. What makes this one more significant than the previous 30 trade agreements is that this one is with our greatest trading partner.

We are very much dependent on trade. There is no country more than the U.S. with which we need to get a deal finalized. It is really encouraging to see the type of support that we are getting. Yesterday when we had votes, we had the New Democrats and even the Green Party recognizing the value of this agreement.

Is there anything in the old agreement that the member across the way believes was lost by not being incorporated into the new agreement? Would he not agree that this is indeed a better agreement than the previous one?

• (1525)

Mr. Dan Mazier: Mr. Speaker, the problem with this agreement is that there are still more unknowns, especially on the standards. The types of things that we are going to be importing into Canada now, because of the new agreement, still require some standards to be figured out.

In my previous life as a farm leader, I sat on the board of the Canadian Standards Association. There, on the ag-technical committee, we looked at different standards that were required for couplings for hydraulics, but also roll bars for tractors, and the metalurgy required for a manufacturer to import those into Canada.

Interestingly enough, if a manufacturer in a warm climate manufactures a tractor and tries to import it into Canada, there are certain standards that have to be met in Canada before they can import it, or it is considered a grey market tractor. If such a tractor is unknow-

ingly brought into Canada, it becomes the Canadian owner's responsibility and a liability to that farm worker. It is totally unacceptable for the Canadian government to be standing to the side and letting that happen every day.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it was not this government but, I guess, the United States Democrats who pulled out the chapter 11 clause in the previous NAFTA from this new agreement, which is something we have been very happy to see happen. The investor-state provisions threatened our sovereignty. It is something we saw the U.S. Democrats lead on. We hope that in future trade deals the Liberal government will also make sure that the investor-state provisions are no longer something it would support.

Does my colleague support the decision, which the Liberal government is now supporting because the United States is leading on it, and would he also like to see this provision and clause be removed from future trade deals to protect Canadian sovereignty and the environment?

Mr. Dan Mazier: Mr. Speaker, I would like to see something, plain and simple. We have not seen enough details on many impacts. As the member can imagine, these agreements are very complex, and one decision impacts another. Therefore, without seeing the documents, I cannot honestly answer that question.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to have the opinion of my colleague from Manitoba, with his experience in agriculture, on the impact that this agreement will have on agriculture.

Does my colleague know of another trade deal that a Canadian government has ever signed that puts a cap on an agricultural commodity and would stifle future growth for that commodity?

This has happened in the dairy sector through the new NAFTA, which puts a cap on Canadian dairy farmers and processors to be able to expand their market when it comes to certain types of protein and skim milk powder.

Can my colleague name any other trade agreement that a Canadian government has signed that has put a cap on future growth in a Canadian agricultural commodity?

Mr. Dan Mazier: Mr. Speaker, not offhand, and I think that is the game-changer in all of this. It limits our ability to go out and develop our good quality food products to other nations. Wherever the U.S. is, we cannot go, and that is the biggest problem with this agreement.

Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I will be sharing my time with the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler.

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I represent Surrey, and Surrey Centre in particular. It is a port city and major logistics centre for goods, particularly trade, and home to some of the most amazing produce, berries, dairy and poultry in the country. I am pleased to stand today to talk about the Government of Canada's unwavering support for supply management in our dairy, egg and poultry industries in the context of the new Canada-U.S.-Mexico agreement and our other international trade deals.

These industries are pivotal. I have met many hard-working Canadians in this sector, whether it be Donia Farms, which has been continuously family-run since 1955 and produces high-quality grass-fed milk, or Gurpreet Arneja and Vineet Taneja, who had humble beginnings and launched Nanak Foods in Surrey, a large specialty dairy processor that now exports Canadian dairy products to over 15 countries around the globe. These are real people who have worked hard. As a new member on the Standing Committee on International Trade, I hope to ensure that our government prioritizes their needs.

Let me begin by stating that the future of supply management in Canada is not in question. Our supply management system is fundamental to the overall success of Canada's agriculture and agri-food industry. Our dairy, poultry and egg farmers provide high-quality, delicious and nutritious food to Canadians at an affordable price.

Combined, the sectors drive a strong economy, with almost \$34 billion in sales and tens of thousands of jobs. They are vital to the prosperity of our nation. That is why in our negotiations for the new NAFTA, the CUSMA, the government fought hard to maintain the three pillars of Canada's supply management system: production control, pricing mechanisms and import control.

The same commitment to Canada's supply-managed sector also guided Canada in negotiations for CETA and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. The new NAFTA, like Canada's other trade agreements, preserves and maintains Canada's supply management system. Canadian dairy farmers will continue to supply the vast majority of the Canadian market. As well, Canada has negotiated reciprocal access to the U.S. dairy market, including tonne-for-tonne access to most dairy products.

We are united in our goal to help the dairy sector innovate and drive the economy for future generations. Across Canada, we are helping dairy producers purchase state-of-the-art equipment to boost productivity and efficiency. Innovation is driving significant growth in chicken and egg production across Canada. Canadian egg producers like to talk about the tale of the three 50s: Over the past 50 years, they have increased their production by 50%, while reducing their environmental footprint by 50%. That is all thanks to innovation.

We continue to roll out investments to support innovation in our supply-managed sectors. Our government has clearly recognized the great value of the supply management system. Canada will continue to defend this system at home and abroad.

Our government has committed to fully and fairly supporting the supply-managed industry. This support will help chart a path forward so our supply-managed farmers can continue to innovate,

grow and remain competitive and sustainable for future generations.

In the fall of 2018, the government announced the formation of supply management working groups. These groups were tasked with looking at providing support and helping the industries adjust to recent trade agreements, including the new NAFTA and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, the CPTPP. The overall goal is to ensure Canada maintains its robust dairy, poultry and egg industries now and in the future.

Together with industry, we have one common goal and that is a strong Canadian supply management system. For our farmers and food processors, the new NAFTA will protect and secure our \$30-billion agri-food exports to the United States.

• (1530)

In addition to preserving key aspects of the original NAFTA, the new agreement helps open new market access opportunities in the U.S. market. This agreement provides Canadian exporters with new market access into the U.S. in the form of tariff rate quotas for refined sugar and products containing sugar, as well as certain dairy products, including cheese, cream, milk beverages and butter. It also eliminates U.S. tariffs for whey products and margarine, and provides a more liberal rule of origin for margarine.

As my hon. colleagues well understand, trade is vital to Canada and Canada is a trading nation. Our farmers depend on trade. They export about half the value of their production. That is why the government is seeking to expand market opportunities and promote the interests of Canadian farmers by negotiating new trade agreements and modernizing existing ones. This is why our government has big plans for agriculture trade.

Our exports hit a new record in 2018, but we are not stopping there. We set our sights on \$75 billion in agriculture exports by 2025. A 2018 report of the agri-food economic strategy table has challenged us to think even bigger, proposing a target of \$85 billion.

In addition to preserving Canada's supply management system, Canada's existing trade agreements play a key role in realizing these export goals.

CETA has provided Canadians with preferential access to the European market since September 2017. Canadian farmers and food processors are already taking advantage of access to the world's single largest market for food. From 2018-2019, Canadian agriculture exports to the European Union increased by 24%.

While it is still too early to measure the full impact of CPTPP since it came into force December 30, 2018, there are early signs of success for Canada's agriculture sector.

For example, Canada's exports of pork to Japan increased by 11% and exports of beef grew by 68% during the first 11 months of 2019, compared to the same period in 2018.

We are advancing Canadian agriculture in international markets, while preserving and protecting our supply managed systems.

I am proud of the federal government's incredible achievements in this regard. We will continue to support and defend our dairy, egg and poultry industries, while ensuring a strong and competitive future for Canada's agriculture and food sector.

With this new agreement, we will be helping Canada's farmers and food processors harvest the benefits of what the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement has to offer. I urge all hon. members to support this bill.

• (1535)

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of concern, and for good reason, around the chapter 11 provisions that were in the past NAFTA agreement. These are huge concerns, and it affects our sovereignty with respect to the protection of the environment and indigenous rights.

The New Democrats have been calling for it to be removed in any future trade deal. We were glad to see the U.S. Democrats actually pull that out in their side of the negotiations. We wish it had coming from Canada, but we do not even know what Canada put on the table.

In terms of moving forward, can we count on the member for Surrey Centre and his government to ensure that chapter 11 and those sorts of provisions that threaten our sovereignty and the environment will not be included in any future agreements that Canada does? I know Canadians have voiced concerns about that. We have been brought these concerns forward around investor-state provisions that protect corporations instead of people, communities, the environment and our sovereignty.

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, in fact, if I recall from my days in law, when I studied some of this international trade, chapter 11 has been more helpful for Canadians in most of those cases. The provisions protecting and arbitrating our trade laws between the two nations must be strengthened and protected so companies and the government are protected.

I take my colleague's point very seriously. Canada has now entered into a new arbitration agreement. There are four WTO trade mechanisms with China and others, which is now the envy of many others. The U.S. is left behind. We have been doing better and I urge our ministers to do even better going forward.

• (1540)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as I listened to my colleague's speech, I wondered how he could be so proud of this government's free trade agreements. We all know the government made concessions on supply management that resulted in compensation for the agricultural sector.

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How can he be so proud of CUSMA when, just yesterday, a delegation representing Quebec aluminum workers condemned the agreement for damning their sector to die a slow death?

[*English*]

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, I am very proud. We faced a president in the U.S. who wanted to end supply management. In fact, it was his electoral goal to eliminate supply management to appease his interests in some dairy farming sectors and states. We upheld our end to protect our own supply management systems and gained access for Canadian farmers into the U.S., allowing a very small amount of gain from them.

The alternative option of having no trade agreement and scrapping NAFTA was much worse than what we have now, which is much more robust and healthy for our industry.

As for the aluminum sector, now 70% of the aluminum for the auto sector will come from our country as opposed to what was there before, which was zero protection. Therefore, 70% is a lot more than zero, and I am very proud of our trading team for negotiating that.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for mentioning supply managed sectors in his intervention.

In the last Parliament, I was on the agriculture committee. I come from Guelph and it is a topic that has been discussed there. He talked about the working group, which also included the Dairy Farmers of Canada and the Dairy Processors Association of Canada, that collaborated with the Government of Canada to develop mitigation strategies to protect the supply-managed sector within this agreement. We also have an expert negotiating team that is internationally recognized for its world-leading efforts in negotiating what is best for Canadians.

One thing I have heard is that it is very important for Canadians to know and recognize Canadian products, such as our dairy products, so consumers can make the choice to support our industry.

Could the hon. member comment on how important it is for our industry to have protection in place so we know Canadian products are Canadian products?

Mr. Randeep Sarai: Mr. Speaker, it is very vital to have Canadian dairy produce, our own poultry and our own eggs. Our standards are stricter and our farms are better and world class. The products are eaten locally. The GHG emissions used to get that food to our tables is much less.

In fact, in my personal life, I have been advised by my doctor to drink only Canadian milk, grass-fed milk in this case, which is produced very close to home and is much better and healthier. This agreement is the only way our homegrown industries are protected. These industries are handed down from one generation to another. This protection will make it even stronger and we will have a robust industry, which will provide consumers better products and help farmers who produce them.

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Mr. Marwan Tabbara (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my constituents of Kitchener South—Hespeler for electing me to this place. I also want to thank everyone who volunteered on the campaign, everyone who worked in the constituency office and the strangers who offered me water when I was campaigning. I could not be here without them and all their hard work.

Canada is among the top automotive producing countries of the world. The motor vehicle manufacturing industry directly employs nearly 137,000 Canadians and indirectly employs nearly 420,000 people in sales and market services. The majority of the vehicles produced in Canada are exported, and over 90% of our automotive exports are sent to the United States.

Given the importance of our automotive trading relationship with the United States, a key government objective throughout the negotiations of the new NAFTA was to ensure the agreement continued to provide the industry with stability and opportunities for growth. This included maintaining duty-free access to the United States and Mexico, ensuring the rules of origins met the needs of the Canadian producers and securing an exemption from potential U.S. section 232 tariffs on automotive goods.

I want to take some time to talk a little about my riding. I am from Kitchener South—Hespeler. Toyota Motor Manufacturing is within my riding. Not too far down the 401 is another Toyota manufacturing plant, in Woodstock. Between the two plants, they employ 8,000 employees. Just a couple of years back, in 2018, there was a \$110-million investment allotted to Toyota through the strategic innovation fund. This helped to support 8,000 jobs, to create 450 new jobs, and will create another 1,000 new co-ops.

Also, in April 2019, Toyota announced it would be building the new Lexus NX and NX hybrid in Cambridge as of 2022. This is the first line of Lexus SUVs that will be built outside of Japan. It is great to see that it will be in my hometown riding of Kitchener South—Hespeler.

The rules of origin are the criteria used to determine whether a good has undergone enough production in the North American region to receive preferential tariff treatment. These rules ensure that the benefits of the agreement go to the North American workers and producers. The final outcome on rules of origin meets Canada's objective and has broad support from all segments of the automotive industry.

However, it was far from clear during the early stages of the negotiations if we would be able to achieve an acceptable outcome. Initially, a series of proposals were put forward that Canada believed would have undermined North American integration in the sector and done lasting damage to automakers and parts producers in Canada and indeed the United States and Mexico. Canada was especially opposed to the proposals that would require every Canadian vehicle exported to the United States to include 50% U.S. content. Canada's position was unequivocal on this point. There were no circumstances under which the proposal would be accepted.

In response, Canada put forward a counter-proposal designed to encourage production and sourcing in North America. These ideas were instrumental in reaching an agreement on new rules of origin,

which will incentivize the use of North American-produced materials and support the long-term competitiveness of the North American automotive industry.

In order to benefit from the preferential tariff treatment under the new agreement, automobiles must meet a number of requirements: 75% originating content for the finished automobile and core auto parts like engines, transmissions and bodies; 70% of the steel and aluminum purchased by automakers qualify as originating; and 40% labour value content.

The 70% aluminum and steel requirements did not exist under the original NAFTA. This requirement will apply to all vehicles traded among the Canada-United States-Mexico agreement when the new agreement enters into force. Certain elements of the requirements were expanded upon as a result of the December 10, 2019, amendments to the agreement. After seven years, the steel purchased will have to undergo more manufacturing in North America in order to fulfill the 70% requirement.

● (1545)

In addition, after 10 years the parties will evaluate whether the aluminum requirement needs to be further strengthened in a similar way.

The labour value content provision means that 40% of the value of the vehicle must be from a plant where the workers earn an average wage of \$16 U.S. an hour or more. Wages in automobile assembly facilities and parts production plants located in Canada exceed this threshold, which will help improve Canadian automotive manufacturing competitiveness.

Throughout the negotiations, consultations were held with Canadian producers of both vehicles and parts, industry associations and the union that represents Canadian auto workers. All of the proposals put forward by Canada were based on extensive consultations, and the final outcome has the support of Canadian stakeholders.

Regrettably, overshadowing these negotiations were threats by the United States to impose tariffs of up to 25% on automobiles and auto parts imported to the United States. These threats were real, as section 232 of the United States Trade Expansion Act, 1962, provides the means to impose restrictions on those imports that are deemed to pose a threat to U.S. national security.

The notion that Canadian autos and auto parts could pose a threat to U.S. national security was inconceivable. Canada strongly rejected this notion at all levels. As well, our negotiating team and the media mentioned that it was absurd that Canada was a national security threat to the United States.

At the same time, it was clear that the prospects of a tariff as high as 25% on Canadian automobiles and auto parts would be a significant challenge for Canada-U.S. trade relations and the Canadian economy. As a result, Canada was steadfast in its position that an exemption from section 232 measures on automobiles and auto parts was necessary as part of the negotiations. This exemption was secured through a binding side letter to the new agreement that took effect November 30, 2018.

Should the United States impose section 232 tariffs, the side letter guarantees an exemption from such tariffs for 2.6 million Canadian automobiles annually. It also guarantees an exemption of \$32.4 billion worth of Canadian auto parts exported to the United States annually. In addition, the side letter guarantees that Canadian light trucks, such as pickup trucks, are fully exempt from any section 232 tariffs and do not count against the annual exemption of 2.6 million automobiles.

These levels are significantly higher than Canada's exports of automobiles and auto parts to the United States, thereby providing significant room for growth in Canadian production and export of vehicles and parts, even in the event of U.S. section 232 tariffs on these goods.

As a part of the negotiations, Canada also secured a commitment from the United States to provide at least a 60-day exemption to Canada for any future measure under section 232, including for automobiles and auto parts. This side letter also took effect November 30, 2018.

In closing, I will reiterate the importance of Canada's automotive industry to Canada's economy. The sector is heavily integrated within a broader North American economy, and its ability to trade freely in North America is imperative to its success. This is why we worked tirelessly towards achieving outcomes in the new NAFTA in support of this sector. As a result, the future prospects of the Canadian automotive sector are very bright.

The industry is competitive and innovative, the quality of our workforce is second to none, and Canada has preferential market access to the United States, Mexico, Europe and key markets in Asia, together with 14 free trade agreements covering 51 countries that connect us to 1.5 billion consumers worldwide. Canada is the only G7 nation with trade agreements with all other G7 nations. The Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement is central to Canada's trade with the world, and the automotive sector is central to this agreement.

• (1550)

The new NAFTA maintains tariff-free trade, strengthens the rules of origin and removes the threat of new and prohibitive section 232 measures. It also provides Canadian industry with the stability and market access certainty it needs to grow and continue to provide high-quality, well-paying jobs for tens of thousands of Canadians.

I want to mention that I am very much in support of the bill and I hope other members in the chamber are supportive of it. On average, the Canadian auto sector manufactures one car every 30 seconds, supports over 500,000 jobs and contributes \$18 billion annually to our economy.

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• (1555)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

The problem is that people can make numbers say whatever they want. The 70% everyone is talking about does indeed apply to car parts, but the specifics cover rules of origin for steel. The agreement specifically covers the initial melting and mixing and continues through the coating stage and provides a seven-year compliance horizon. However, there are no specific rules of origin for aluminum used in Mexican-made parts. Clearly workers in the rest of Canada and Quebec's aluminum industry workers are not benefiting to the same degree.

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

My French is not very good. I need to practise.

[*English*]

We are protecting 70% of our steel and aluminum. That is better than zero. We were dealing with an administration that imposed section 232 tariffs, which, as I mentioned, was on the grounds that it was in the national security of the United States and that Canada was a threat to the United States. However, they tried to impose a 50% U.S. content on our automobiles. Our negotiating team, along with our government, pushed to ensure that we did not have a requirement for 50% U.S. content.

We export 90% of our vehicles to the United States. We obtained a good deal for Canada. We have a good deal for the automakers here in Canada.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, as the Green caucus, we are supporting the passage of this revised NAFTA. We see a lot of improvements over the previous NAFTA. For those who have criticisms of NAFTA, we remind people that we do not have a choice in this place between no NAFTA and some other NAFTA; we have a choice between the old one and the improved one. The old one included an energy chapter that was against Canada's interests and the chapter 11 investor-state provisions, which also worked very much against Canada's interests.

I am interested to know if my friend from Kitchener would like to see the improvements made in this CUSMA brought into all our trade agreements so that we could systematically work to remove the investor-state provisions that give foreign corporations rights superior to those granted to Canadian companies.

Government Orders

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Mr. Speaker, I believe part of the member's question was on chapter 19, which was the dispute resolution section. We ensured that we kept that dispute resolution, but in all negotiations, whether with the United States or with other G7 countries, we want to ensure that we are protecting jobs and the economy.

Our Prime Minister has always mentioned that those go hand in hand. We want to make sure that as we move forward, we are creating a greener economy and a brighter economy. Within my riding, Toyota has produced hybrid cars. It is putting more investments into research and development and is looking at ways to have more fuel-efficient vehicles.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague mentioned the importance of Toyota in his riding. I want to ask him a question about 5G.

One of the things with this agreement is it now means that we can trade equally across the border. Canadians have always done really well if we have a level playing field. Unfortunately, the Americans have been moving ahead with their 5G network. One company alone, T-Mobile, can supply up to 200 million Americans, and now the Liberal government is just dragging its feet on this issue.

To put it into perspective, the 4G network is like driving from Halifax to Vancouver, while 5G is like flying a jet there. If our automotive industries do not have that type of network here, it makes us less competitive.

I wonder if my colleague could comment on the Liberal rollout of the 5G network. The Liberals talked a lot about broadband, but they have basically done nothing about it, and if we do not have it, there will be a huge competitive disadvantage between Canada and the United States.

• (1600)

Mr. Marwan Tabbara: Mr. Speaker, we have put a significant amount of investment into broadband, as the member alluded to. We want to make sure that all rural communities have access to the Internet. There should be nowhere in Canada where we do not have access to the Internet.

In terms of 5G, I just heard in a news release that the U.K. has incorporated that technology, or some element to it. For sure, Canada needs to advance in the future, and having 5G would advance our technology and our economy. I cannot comment on it at this point, but I know our government is looking at ensuring that all sectors of our economy and our industry have access to faster networks. That is something we will be looking forward to in the near future.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to share my time with my colleague, the member for Niagara West.

I did not hesitate to vote in favour of the ways and means motion yesterday, so that I could fulfill my democratic role of debating the new NAFTA.

I am a proud regionalist, and I will fight for all the issues involving my region. I take every opportunity I can to promote the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region. I believe in my region and its proud, innovative and welcoming people. These qualities and the know-how we have built up since 1925 enable us to produce the greenest aluminum on the planet today. I will come back to that a little later.

Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean's three economic drivers are forestry, agriculture and aluminum. At my office, we fly the flag of our region, which was unveiled by Monsignor Victor Tremblay on July 4, 1938. The flag has four colours, namely green for the forest, yellow for agriculture, grey for the aluminum industry and red for all the labour of the hard-working local people.

Therefore, I think it is fitting that I am speaking up today to point out the flaws in the new agreement that affect Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean.

First, I want to point out that there is nothing in the new NAFTA to address the softwood lumber crisis. Will there ever be a solution to this problem? Second, everyone knows that the new NAFTA creates a new breach in supply management. Compensation for farmers and producers following the implementation of the last free trade agreements has been slow in coming. The compensation needs to be paid out quickly.

What is more, we are still waiting for answers regarding gains in market share and sales for the aluminum industry. The government did not conduct any studies to determine what impact the new NAFTA would have on the aluminum industry. We are still waiting.

Since one-third of Canada's aluminum is produced in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, I will use the rest of my time to talk about that subject. I am going to hammer home this message in public, in private, here in the House, in committee and to all the media outlets.

This prowess is made possible by our hydroelectricity, the know-how we have built up since 1925, and our proud, creative and innovative people.

We might think that this argument is enough to ensure the sustainability of our aluminum industry, but it is just a start.

Under the new agreement, the steel used in manufacturing has to be melted and poured in North America, but the agreement does not say that the aluminum has to be smelted and cast in North America. Since we know that there are very few aluminum smelters in the United States and none in Mexico, our workers, processors, consumers and industry are right to be concerned about the traceability of the aluminum. There is a real risk that the aluminum value chain will be outsourced to Mexico, where imports are not as robustly controlled as in Canada.

That is why the Conservative Party suggested that the government bring in an action plan and a timeline of less than a year to ensure the traceability of aluminum on the North American continent. We want the United States and Mexico to apply the same robust controls to their imports as we do here in Canada.

• (1605)

The aluminum market has evolved a great deal since the original NAFTA was implemented. New players who care little about labour standards or environmental considerations have shaken up the market.

The planet needs more Canadian aluminum. We must look beyond the North American market. We need to export more of our aluminum, which, again, is not only the greenest, but is also available in the highest-quality alloys for automotive, aerospace and construction applications.

The government needs to promote our aluminum around the globe, secure new markets and offer strong export programs for our businesses. Aluminum has a bright future. It is abundant and infinitely recyclable. It should be the focus of a federal environmental strategy, or even a supercluster.

The applied research being done at the Aluminium Research Centre at the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi is producing results. Aluminum can be used in unexpected ways.

We should be using more aluminum, steel and lumber produced in Canada.

We must consider putting in place, through bilateral agreements, a low-carbon footprint procurement policy in North America. This would result in a more secure North American market because we are the greenest by far. This national environmental strategy must also include aluminum's circular economy. It is estimated that we recycle 40% of aluminum while Sweden recycles 91%. We can do better, and there is a trend towards recycling. An increasing number of aluminum SMEs are recycling.

We are maintaining our leadership position in the aluminum sector thanks to innovation. It is not news to anyone that we must constantly redouble our efforts to remain at the top. In a competitive situation, the next step is always the hardest. We may no longer have the greenest aluminum on the planet or exclusivity for a given alloy.

Investment in research must be maintained, but that is not all. Major investment projects have still not gotten off the ground in our region, and without them we will lose our position as a world leader.

The expertise our workers have been gaining since 1925, as well as their creativity, innovation and commitment to health and safety, have allowed them to be competitive in terms of production costs. However, they cannot compete with foreign markets when it comes to construction costs and delays.

As parliamentarians, we need to have a closer look at this issue in committee and study the possibility of developing programs or easing certain standards in order to be more competitive.

Lastly, fiscal measures have been put in place to stimulate the steel industry and manufacturing sector. While I understand that \$2 billion in government assistance will not solve all the problems over the long term, I call on the government to be more transparent regarding that assistance and ensure that SMEs in the aluminum sector get their fair share.

Government Orders

Pre-budget consultations for 2020 are under way. Ultimately, budget 2020 has to respond to this worry of losing our position as a world leader in aluminum. The Conservative Party and I are proposing tangible and constructive solutions to that effect.

The first would be to maintain or increase funding for aluminum research, which benefits our regional university and allows it to thrive.

The second would be to allow accelerated depreciation of capital expenses for the aluminum industry, an effective measure to reduce the uncertainty surrounding any investment plan. I am not saying that this measure will guarantee the arrival of the desired investments that would allow us to maintain our position as world leader, but it would give the industry a serious boost and could eventually secure the status of the aluminum valley in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean. It would also protect, and even increase, the number of jobs in the aluminum sector. A private company cannot be forced to invest, but we can put in place the winning conditions for it to do so.

The new NAFTA is not perfect, especially for the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region. However, as I said to every government minister while congratulating them on their portfolios, I am open to working with the minority government not only in the national interest, but also in the interest of my constituents.

• (1610)

[*English*]

Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the hon. member's thoughtful speech. I was reviewing the challenges we faced in the negotiations of supply management in NAFTA and how difficult it was to get the supply management that the U.S. wanted to dismantle.

Would the member not agree that the new agreement, CUSMA, would protect our farmers and give them access to more diverse markets and increase our existing trade with the U.S., at \$63 billion, and Mexico, at \$4.6 billion? Are our farmers not satisfied with the supply management we have protected?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Martel: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

One thing is certain, farmers in our agricultural industry have been complaining about compensation being very slow in coming. They are really unhappy about that.

What is more, the agreements are not really fair, in my opinion. Our farmers find it very difficult to get their products across the border, while farmers on the other side of the border can easily bring their products into Canada. Our farmers will therefore not gain any advantage, and they are very disappointed. They are hoping to be compensated at some point. Once again, the compensation has been very slow in coming, and many farmers have not received any compensation.

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Let us hope that improves. The member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord will see to it and will pressure the government to make that happen.

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord on his speech.

I have to admit that I was a bit concerned yesterday. I was wondering whether he still supported the aluminum industry because, as everyone knows, a large group of protestors came here to the House of Commons yesterday. An MP from Saguenay—Lac-St-Jean was not here, and that was the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

I would therefore like to know whether he still wants to be part of the group of people from Saguenay—Lac-St-Jean who want aluminum to gain the same status as steel.

Mr. Richard Martel: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Jonquière.

I am very happy that we are working as a team for the same cause. Everyone knows that aluminum is extremely important to our ridings and our region of Saguenay—Lac-St-Jean.

My colleagues from Jonquière and Lac-Saint-Jean are new, and I am very happy that they were elected. However, they should realize that I was here first and that we have put in a lot of effort working with the government, with the minister's office, to find solutions that could help us and the industry. We put forward a number of proposals.

I am very pleased today to see that my colleagues are following my lead. Their maiden speeches sound much like ours, which really makes me happy. This team work is important.

I want to talk about our action plan. Our proposals to the government included an action plan and a timeline of less than a year to ensure that aluminum can be tracked across North America. We proposed that the United States and Mexico should implement the same strict controls on their imports as we do in Canada. My colleagues are with me on that one, which I am happy to hear. We also proposed that there should be more transparency regarding the \$2 billion in assistance used—

• (1615)

The Deputy Speaker: Time is short. We have just enough time for a third question.

The hon. member for North Island—Powell River.

[*English*]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my riding of North Island—Powell River there are multiple dairy farms. I have spent a lot of time on farms talking to farmers about their challenges. I know that one of the biggest losers in this trade agreement is supply management in the dairy sector.

Along with the concessions of CETA and the CPTPP, this latest hit means a 10% loss of market share for our Canadian producers.

Does the member's party support supply management? What concerns does he have for this industry that is so important to our communities?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Martel: Mr. Speaker, supply management is extremely important. It keeps our farmers in the market. However, we have to say that our farmers are currently very disappointed with the negotiations. They are extremely unhappy and disappointed. As I said, they believe that there are certain things in this agreement that are extremely vague. They had difficulty getting their compensation for the trans-Pacific partnership and are still wondering how this compensation will be paid out. There is no mechanism at present to provide them with any form of reassurance.

[*English*]

Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am rising today to speak on a subject that I have been involved in, especially in my previous role as the shadow minister for international trade, and also as a passionate supporter of free trade.

I am well acquainted with the benefits of trade with the United States. I represent a southern Ontario riding that is very close to the border. We have many successful companies in Niagara West that do a significant amount of business not only with the United States but also throughout the world. I met personally with those business owners and operators, and their companies are world class and full of potential. They provide communities with excellent jobs and economic development.

These business owners are asking for the certainty that free trade agreements provide. Free trade is essential to our country. One in five Canadian jobs is created as a result of free trade agreements. I also believe that members of the Conservative Party are the strongest supporters of free trade. We really are the party of free trade.

The Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with the European Union, the trans-Pacific partnership, and the Canada-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement were largely negotiated by Conservative governments.

Conservatives negotiated these deals to remove tariffs and quotas, and to eliminate non-tariff barriers to trade. Free trade agreements improve transparency, predictability, certainty and fairness to exporters. I believe all members in this chamber would agree that free trade agreements open markets for Canadian businesses, including small to medium-sized enterprises.

This is why it was so concerning when the United States announced that NAFTA would be renegotiated. The uncertainty had a ripple effect through virtually all Canadian industries that do business with American clients and purchasers. Why did the uncertainty cause so much anxiety in our business community? The short answer is that we are very dependent on one another.

Government Orders

Total merchandise trade between Canada and the United States has more than doubled since 1993, and it has grown over ninefold between Canada and Mexico. In fact, 75% of total Canadian exports go to the United States and roughly 3% go to Mexico. All told, the total trilateral merchandise trade, the total of each country's imports from one another, has reached nearly \$1.1 trillion U.S.

This is a tremendous amount of business that more than 1.9 million Canadian jobs depend on. The lack of certainty over the status of the renegotiation of NAFTA caused a reduction of business investment, which I think has been well documented, particularly in Canada. Some companies moved to the United States to offset potential losses while also directing their investments to the United States.

I saw the impact of this uncertainty when I did the “defend local jobs” tour from July to September 2018. During that time, I met with over 150 businesses, trade organizations and chambers. In Ontario, I attended round tables and meetings in London, Brantford, Kitchener, Welland, Niagara Falls, Beamsville, Orillia, Windsor and Toronto.

I went to Vancouver, where the BC Chamber of Commerce organized a round table with their members, as well as Kitimat, where I met with LNG Canada. In Alberta I met with business owners in Edmonton, Calgary and Leduc, where I saw first-hand the effects of the government's misguided policies and the anger that these policies were producing.

I did that tour to see first-hand the effects of U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs and to bring those concerns back to Parliament. I also brought back the personal accounts of business owners of how the uncertainty created by the renegotiation of NAFTA was impacting business operations. What I heard at the time was very worrisome. Stakeholders were asking for immediate support in order to prevent job losses or bankruptcy in the medium or even short term. They wanted to see improvements to Canada's business environment to reduce red tape and enhance our competitiveness. I will get back to Canada's competitiveness shortly, because I believe the government has failed terribly on competitiveness.

On the “defend local jobs” tour I learned that businesses at the time had begun to cut orders, reduce shifts and, in some cases, had even laid off workers. The key word was “uncertainty”. Businesses that had been investing in Canada saw the U.S. as a safer bet because they did not know what was going to happen here.

At the time, businesses impacted by the steel and aluminum tariffs had not yet seen any of the \$2 billion in support promised by the government, which was extremely slow to roll out. The Liberals were quick to announce relief, but very slow to roll out any support for our businesses and workers.

Since then, this Liberal government has fumbled the NAFTA file several times. It agreed to many concessions in the renegotiations. Most importantly, I have to mention the concessions the Liberals made with respect to our dairy sector that are particularly damaging.

• (1620)

By the way, there is nothing on softwood lumber, as has been mentioned by other speakers, while the forestry workers are really hurting.

I want to be clear. The Conservatives support and want free trade with the United States. It is no secret that NAFTA is the legacy of the Conservative government, but we must carefully look at the legislation first. Rushing it through would not be wise. After all, when it comes to a trade deal with Canada's largest and most important trade partner, we need to do our due diligence.

I say this because the Liberal government failed to work with us during the negotiation and ratification processes and is now rushing to get this legislation through Parliament, which is not giving us much time to do our homework on it. The government has also failed to provide documents outlining the impacts of the new trade deal despite numerous requests from opposition members. The government does not seem to recognize the realities of the new minority government and is mistaken if it believes we will simply rubber-stamp this deal.

I want to reiterate that doing our due diligence is crucial. We want to ensure there are no surprises that could hurt our businesses and our workers. Hurting businesses and workers has been something the current government knows something about, especially when it comes to competitiveness. According to the World Economic Forum, Canada is now number 14 when it comes to competitiveness. We are behind Singapore, the United States, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Japan, Germany, Sweden, the U.K., Denmark, Finland, China and South Korea. This is worrisome news.

The government has put legislation forward for the updated NAFTA, but is keeping Canadian businesses handcuffed with red tape, excessive regulations and high taxes. Just look at what it has done in the west. It has been an absolute travesty. Workers in Alberta and Saskatchewan cannot find jobs for months and some for years because the Liberals have drowned the resource sector in over-regulation, overtaxation and ridiculous amounts of red tape.

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Bill C-69 and Bill C-48 are the most famous examples of anti-energy legislation passed by the Liberal government. These two bills have done tremendous damage to the economies of our western neighbours. We need the government to finally do something about this. Yes, we need a free trade agreement with the U.S. We absolutely need it. However, if the government continues to stifle the growth of our business sector, including our world-class energy sector, how effective will this trade agreement be when Canadian businesses stall, fail or move south of the border, either to the U.S. or Mexico, because of the government's flawed domestic economic policies? The ill-conceived policies it is putting forward are just recipes for more wasteful spending, more sky-high taxes and more reckless borrowing, all while we are seeing worrying economic signs on the horizon.

The possibility of a made-in-Canada recession is becoming more real. If the government does not believe me, then perhaps it would like to listen to the Wall Street Journal, which stated:

Canadian exports and imports fell steeply in November of 2019, offering fresh evidence the country's economy has hit a rough patch.... The broad-based decline in trade from October [2019] is the latest in a string of disappointing economic indicators, among them a sizable loss of jobs in November and a decline in gross domestic product in October.... Some analysts...indicated the data were symptomatic of a stumbling economy.

What does the government do instead of lowering taxes to stimulate growth and job creation? It is thinking about hiking taxes again. It is looking at the carbon tax hike. It is almost as if it has spent the last four years making life harder and more unaffordable for Canadians.

Canadians should not be punished every time they drive their kids to school or turn up their thermostat on a cold winter day. In my riding of Niagara West, public transportation is almost non-existent. My constituents need to drive to work, drop off and pick up their kids from school, and drive them to hockey practice and all kinds of other activities.

We were very honest with Canadians in the last election. We warned them that the Liberals would raise the carbon tax. The Liberals denied it, but here we are today. They are thinking of raising it and probably will very shortly. This is not good for Canadian families, businesses or our global competitiveness. If they intend to raise the carbon tax, they will finally come clean with Canadians and tell them exactly by how much.

In order to hit our Paris targets they would need to raise it by an additional \$50 per tonne. This would increase the price of gasoline by 23¢ a litre. Let us think of what the extra costs would do to job creators, never mind the families with children who have no other option but to drive around. Virtually everything is delivered to our favourite store by truck. The cost on gas will either be absorbed by businesses in order to keep their clients, which may bankrupt some businesses, or it will be passed on to the consumer and increase the price of everything.

In closing, I would like to say that we will carefully look at this legislation. We all owe it to our constituents to do our due diligence and ensure that Canadian workers and job creators will stand to benefit from this new NAFTA.

• (1625)

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my hon. friend on his speech, which did not seem to have too much to do with the subject at hand, but was kind of a litany of every sin known to mankind. I was just wondering which of these following statements he disagrees with.

The Business Council of Canada stated, “We applaud your government’s success in negotiating a comprehensive and high-standard agreement on North American trade.”

Premier Moe of Saskatchewan said that the signed USMCA trade deal is good news for Saskatchewan and Canada.

Premier Kenney tweeted, “Relieved that a renewed North American Trade Agreement has been concluded.”

Possibly I should not mention the Canadian Labour Congress' congratulatory statement. The steel producers, the CSPA, are urging all members of the House of Commons and the Senate to support this bill and swiftly ratify it.

Which of those statements does he disagree with?

Mr. Dean Allison: Mr. Speaker, as I said, we will be supporting this. I guess the challenge I have is what I talked about in terms of competitiveness. I think that this is definitely not as good a deal as we could have had. I think everyone admits that we had to take what the U.S. offered to us. They also talk about the fact that Mexico was negotiating with the U.S. while we were not at the table.

I realize the importance of certainty. There is no question about that. We need to have certainty and that is what business organizations have told us. Even if it is a bad deal, we need to make sure that we have the opportunity to solidify what the rules are going to be because it is too unpredictable. When we look at a country like Canada, which takes investments in to make sure that we compete around the world, this certainty is definitely required in order for us to move forward.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in response to one of my questions, the Prime Minister said that 70% of aluminum was protected under the new agreement, known as CUSMA. Everyone knows that this is not the case. That statement is incorrect. The 70% refers to parts made from aluminum. This means that parts manufacturers can bring in the world's dirtiest aluminum from other countries at a lower price. For the past two months, I have been struggling to get him to see the difference between the protections for steel and the ones for aluminum.

Does my hon. colleague think that the Liberals are acting in bad faith by giving these kinds of answers, or does he think that they simply do not understand the agreement?

• (1630)

[English]

Mr. Dean Allison: Mr. Speaker, this goes back to what I originally said. We have been a taker in this agreement. This is what has been dictated to us, so to go around and say that this is a great deal is factually incorrect.

Is it the best deal we could get? I do not know. I guess time will tell.

However, I can assure colleagues of one thing that speaks to the issue I have been talking about, which is competitiveness as a nation. Regardless of the trade deals that we have, if we cannot be competitive at home, which means getting our most economically and environmentally sustainable aluminum to the rest of the world, then we are competing at an unfair disadvantage. These are the things that we need to continue to work on to be competitive at home, so that we do well here at home and around the world.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in my riding of North Island—Powell River, one of the biggest concerns folks had around NAFTA was the investor-state provisions that really left Canada in a very weakened space. We were sued again and again by investors.

When we look at these, we see they were negotiated by a Conservative government. It is hard for me to be complimentary. Actually, those who I should be most complimentary to, of course, would be the Democrats in the United States. The reality is that in this agreement the investor-state provisions are not there.

I am wondering if the hon. member could share his thoughts with us on that.

Mr. Dean Allison: Mr. Speaker, as I said before, I think one of the things that we need to continually focus on here in Canada is competitiveness. That includes a whole range of issues, as I have said.

Part of the challenge we have is that we compete in a global economy. If we are paying more for energy, if we are not mobilizing and getting the most out of our workforce, if we are not treating people, in terms of education and being able to get the jobs that they need to do, then all of these things factor into our competitiveness. Taxes play into that, as well as trade deals, and all of those other kinds of things.

I would just say that we still need to continue, even with deals like this, to work on our competitiveness domestically so that we compete globally and around the world.

The Deputy Speaker: Before we go to resuming debate, it is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable, International Trade.

Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic De-

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velopment, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Scarborough—Guildwood.

As this is the first time I am rising in the House in the 43rd Parliament, I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to thank the wonderful constituents of Long Range Mountains for re-electing me and returning me to this place to work on their behalf. The support from each and every community, of which I have well over 200, is greatly appreciated. To my many volunteers, friends, and most of all my family, my heartfelt thanks.

Congratulations, Mr. Speaker and all of my colleagues in the House, on being elected. Working together, we can accomplish so much for this magnificent country we are blessed to call home.

I am pleased today to speak about the new Canada-United States-Mexico agreement and highlight its benefits for Canada's agriculture and agri-food industries.

In my riding of Long Range Mountains, along the western coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, one will find dairy and beef cattle farms and sheep and goat farms of all sizes. All of these are found in the rural parts of my riding and they are a mixture of small family-run businesses and large enterprises.

One will find as well innovative produce and grain growers, many using hydroponic techniques and environmentally friendly practices. Of course the fishery is a traditional and vital part of my riding and my province, and both the fishers and the fish processors are excited about this new trade deal and the benefit it will have in my riding and the country.

Our farmers and food processors not only put food on our tables, they drive our economy. They contributed over \$68.6 billion to our gross domestic food product in 2018 and \$61.6 billion in agricultural exports. They contributed over \$13.4 billion to our trade balance and they supported over 550,000 jobs in agriculture and agri-food in 2018 alone. The majority of those jobs are in rural Canada.

The government's ambitious agenda for agriculture includes a strong focus on trade. Canada has always been a trading nation, and our farmers depend on trade. They export about half of the value of their production. Canadian canola and soybean growers depend on trade for 80% of their sales. Wheat growers export 70% of their product and pork producers 67%. That is why we can and must engage in international trade, and that is why our government has big plans for agricultural trade.

Our exports hit a new record in 2018, but we are not stopping there. We have set our sights on \$75 billion in agricultural exports by 2025. The report of the agri-food economic strategy table has challenged us to think even bigger, proposing a target of \$85 billion.

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To help us get there, over the last five years the government has concluded and implemented two major trade deals: the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with the European Union, CETA, and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, CPTPP. Together these gold standard agreements have opened new markets for our farmers and food processors. These agreements are part of our government's strong strategy to strengthen and diversify our trade.

CETA has been provisionally applied since September 2017. Canadian farmers and food processors are already taking advantage of access to the world's single largest market for food.

A second major milestone in trade was the one-year anniversary of the CPTPP on December 30, 2019. The CPTPP strengthens and diversifies Canada's trade and investment position with some of the world's fastest-growing economies. A wide range of Canadian agriculture and agri-food products are already benefiting from reduced tariffs, from pork to beef, blueberries to icewine, canola to pulses, and lobster to salmon.

Our government pushed hard for Canada to be among the first six nations to ratify this landmark agreement. That means Canadian farmers will be among the first to benefit from new sales in the CPTPP countries. For example, our wheat growers are now able to take advantage of Japan's Canada-specific quota for food wheat.

While it is still too early to measure the full impact of the CPTPP, early signs of success are evident. For example, Canadian exports of pork to Japan increased by 10.8% and exports of beef grew by 68% during the first 11 months of the CPTPP alone. That is an incredible increase.

While diversifying our agricultural trade, we are also securing our business with our largest trading partner through the new NAFTA. The North American trading zone is vital for our farmers and our food processors.

• (1635)

Under the 25 years of NAFTA, our nominal GDP has tripled. Meanwhile, agricultural and food trade in the North American region has risen to a value of \$100 billion U.S. That is just about \$275 million each and every day.

The new NAFTA means stability and security for our farmers and food processors when they are trading with their largest customer, and it means a strong foundation for growth in the future and growth in rural Canada. With this new agreement, we have maintained the tariff-free access to the U.S. market for Canadian exports that we enjoyed under NAFTA.

For our farmers and food processors, the new agreement will help secure \$30 billion in agricultural exports to the United States alone. The new NAFTA will modernize, stabilize and re-energize our continental trading partnership, and it will drive even further integration of our North American supply chains.

Under the new agreement, access for Canadian refined sugar into the U.S. market will almost double. That is great news for our sugar industry, especially our sugar beet producers, who are looking to expand access for their high-quality sugar, which is 100% Canadian-grown and processed.

For our world-class wines and spirits industry, the new NAFTA provides for protection of Canadian whisky as a distinct product of Canada. It also protects the definition and traditional production method of authentic icewines. As well, Canadian wineries and distilleries retain the authority to sell only their own products on site.

Our new NAFTA is forward-looking. It will ensure our farmers have access to current technologies and will also benefit from future innovations in biotechnology. The agreement will encourage both innovation and trade in North America by mandating practical and trade-friendly approaches to getting safe agricultural biotech products to market.

There is a requirement for more transparent regulations for current and future agricultural biotech products, so everyone knows what requires approval and how to obtain that approval. As well, there is a provision to drive greater co-operation on agricultural biotechnology on the global stage, as North America will lead by example.

The new NAFTA will set the stage for further growth and help our agri-food industry keep a step ahead of the competition as we get ready to feed the world.

Throughout the negotiations, our government worked extremely hard to advance the interests of Canadian farmers and food businesses. We know that they are key economic drivers for this country. We know they create well-paying jobs, particularly in our rural communities. Over two million jobs in Canada depend on trade with the United States.

The agreement provides increased market access for the U.S. into Canada for dairy, poultry and eggs, but most importantly, maintains the three pillars of the supply management system: production controls, price controls and import controls. It is important to remember that the U.S. administration was calling for the abolition of this, but we know how important supply management is to our agriculture industry. Our government has pledged to fully and fairly support our dairy, poultry and egg producers.

Furthermore, successful trade depends on successful trade routes. That is why our government invested \$10 billion in trade and transportation corridors to help get agri-food products to market. We enacted the Transportation Modernization Act. This legislation is delivering a more transparent, fair and efficient freight system that includes a number of new tools to support the grain industry. It is a long-term solution to help farmers get their products to market in a safe and timely manner.

Our government has strong and ambitious growth plans for our agriculture and food industry. Together, we will give our farmers and food processors a competitive edge in two-thirds of the global economy, and the future is bright.

I am confident hon. members will join me to support this bill.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her speech, which was lovely. I congratulate her on her election and her appointment.

I have been trying to get an answer all week, so I will try to ask a very simple question in hopes of getting a very simple answer. Thus far, the Liberals have been telling me that they thought steel and aluminum had the same protections when the agreement was signed.

Does my hon. colleague on the other side of the House think that steel and aluminum were given the same treatment when this agreement was signed?

[*English*]

Ms. Gudie Hutchings: Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome my hon. colleague from across the way to this House for great debate and discussion.

The focus of my conversation today in debate was on agriculture, but I know members heard the minister today, and we will make sure that aluminum and steel are looked after in this way forward with the new NAFTA.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my ears perked up when the member talked about Canadian whisky. Shelter Point Distillery in my riding makes some of the best whisky in the world. Recently, in Canada, they won several awards. I am really impressed with their product, and they are doing a great job. It is good to see that is going to be protected.

However, as the whole NAFTA process unfolded, we were told, “NAFTA is good; hopefully, we will not have to negotiate, and it is the best deal.” Then we had CUSMA come back to us and we were told that was the best deal we could get. The NDP was very clear: “Let’s send this back and see what can happen with the U.S. Democrats”, and they were not interested in that.

Now, here we are again. Finally it has been fixed by the U.S. Democrats, and we are here again, hearing that it is the best deal ever. I wonder at what point do we measure, and how do Canadians measure, what the best deal is, ever.

Ms. Gudie Hutchings: Mr. Speaker, in my province of Newfoundland and Labrador, we also have some incredible distilleries.

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Maybe we will have to bring up some samples sometime. As a matter of fact, we have one that is based on seaweed.

I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, that my hon. colleague has left the House, but I look forward to working with her on the new NAFTA, which has been ratified and supported by many people.

Bruce Heyman, the former U.S. ambassador to Canada said that:

Canada should be especially pleased with [the new agreement]. [It is] a really good deal....Every so often you're able to come out with what I call 'win-win-win' solutions, and this is it. We're here.

I would like to take the advice of the past U.S. ambassador and listen to Mr. Heyman.

• (1645)

Mr. Ken McDonald (Avalon, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I noticed in the member's speech that she mentioned the importance of the fishery to her riding. I would like to expand on that, as it is so important to the entire province of Newfoundland and Labrador. She said that this deal had great benefits for the fishery, which is the economic driver in just about all of our communities in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

I wonder if the member could comment further on that aspect of the agreement.

Ms. Gudie Hutchings: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and friend, the member for Avalon. We share a passion not only for the fishery but also for our province.

Some folks might not realize that Canada exports nearly \$4.3 billion worth of seafood every year to the U.S. market. That is 62% of all exports from that sector. Therefore, a stable and protectable tariff-free arrangement is critical to maintaining the growth of those exports, especially from Atlantic Canada.

This will have significant benefits in coastal and rural communities where processing facilities are situated. I know that the lobster and snow crab fishers and the processing companies are excited about the benefits and the stability that this new trade agreement will allow.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to participate in this historic debate. I want to start by congratulating the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the former leader of the official opposition, all of whom have made significant contributions to getting this agreement to the place it is now, and indeed all colleagues, particularly colleagues who were part of the Canada-U.S. parliamentary group led by the hon. member for Malpeque. Indeed, all of us were down to Congress many times in many senators' and congressmen's offices to extol the virtues of an agreement. It really was a team Canada approach, and I think all members should see themselves in this agreement as we debate it and ultimately, I hope, ratify it.

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I want to take a slightly different approach to this agreement and talk about its security benefits. It is trite but true that countries that trade together do not very often go against each other in war or any other form of conflict. If I may, I would like to take these few moments to talk about the security element that is generated by virtue of this agreement and other agreements.

We in Canada are extremely fortunate. Possibly the public and even members in the House do not realize how fortunate we are to have a European trade agreement. We also have a Pacific trade agreement and we are about to have a North American trade agreement. That is 1.4 billion customers we have access to in those markets in 41 countries. I dare say there is no other country in the world that can claim such privileged access to such a large pool of customers.

Of course, it is up to us to take advantage of not only the North American agreement but the European and Pacific agreements as well. There are 1.4 billion customers, and we should look at these customers not only as trading partners but also as allies. That gives us, without going into the business of NATO or anywhere else, 41 new allies. Those allies provide us with a level of security that we have not enjoyed for a long time.

I contrast that with, say, Russia. Who can Russia say is an ally? Maybe Belarus, Kazakhstan, Syria, or Iran. These are maybe not the A-list of allies that one would want. Then there is China. Who can say who is actually China's ally? Possibly it is North Korea. It may not be the most reliable ally that China has ever had.

We can contrast that with these three agreements taken collectively, whereby in effect we put together not just 41 trading partners but 41 allies. That is all to our collective security. The collateral benefit of this trade agreement is clearly security. In fact, the two are mutually reinforcing, because security creates trade and trade creates security. These trading alliances are huge assets to Canada.

Some would argue that trade comes first and security follows, and they point to the Auto Pact, to the first free trade agreement, to NAFTA 1.0 and now the Canada-U.S.-Mexico trade deal. I would like to suggest that actually security came before trade. I will go back 80 years, and I know as soon as I say that, someone starts to nod off, because not a lot of people appreciate history. However, I direct members' attention to a meeting between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Mackenzie King in Ogdensburg, New York, where the two leaders negotiated a security arrangement for North America known as the Permanent Joint Board on Defence.

● (1650)

From that agreement, the entire security architecture of Canada and North America was revamped. In 1941, we were in the middle of World War II. At the time the prime minister and the president were meeting with each other, the Battle of Britain was taking place, and at that point there was no assurance that Britain would emerge from the battle as the victor. In that context and at that time, there was enormous resistance by the American public, particularly led by the ambassador to Great Britain, Joe Kennedy, to engaging in any European conflict, let alone another war, yet President Roosevelt realized that North America was a vulnerable space. It was vulnerable on the Pacific side and it was vulnerable on the Atlantic side.

Prime Minister Mackenzie King was in a very delicate position because he realized that while we were going to continue to be allies of Great Britain and continue the fight, the shifting of empires was pretty obvious. We were going to be taking ourselves out from the security blanket of the British Empire and placing ourselves in the security blanket of the emergent American empire. That has been our security reality for the last 60 or 70 years.

Out of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, a number of real decisions were made which continue to this day. Gander airport, for instance, was developed as a military airport. It existed prior to the war, but it was really enhanced over the course of the war. That was a result of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence. The Alaska Highway was a result of the Americans' concern that the Japanese might come in through the west coast of Canada and separate Alaska from the continental United States.

There were quite a number of other institutions and military-to-military arrangements that were made, the most significant of which is NORAD. NORAD is clearly our most significant military treaty, and it was a direct result of the negotiations between Prime Minister Mackenzie King and President Roosevelt. Hence, we created a security environment, and that security environment, in turn, led to the Auto Pact. That, in turn, led to the first free trade agreement with the United States. That, in turn, led to the first NAFTA. That, in turn, leads to where we are today, because nations that have good security also have good trade, and those that have good trade generally have good security.

Prime Minister Mulroney used to say that job one of any prime minister is to manage the U.S. relationship. There is great truth in that statement. I want to just recognize that in very difficult circumstances, our Prime Minister has managed this relationship as well as it can be managed; hence, we are here today with an agreement that many members of this House will be able to sign onto in good conscience.

The other consequence of this agreement was that we have preferred nation status with respect to military procurement. In military procurement, we are treated as a domestic supplier. Similarly, we treat the Americans as domestic suppliers. That has relevance to the peripheral debate about aluminum and steel in particular. That is what was so silly about the section 232 tariffs. We are effectively making each other's military security more expensive. That is the difficulty with tariffs.

● (1655)

I congratulate the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister. However, in my judgment, the next most important treaty to be renegotiated is the NORAD treaty, because, as I say, good security makes for good trade and good trade makes for good security.

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Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my friend from Scarborough—Guildwood on his re-election. He is one of the senior members of this House, and his constituents obviously love him because they vote him in over and over again. It is good to see him in this Parliament. I must say that his ties are getting much better too.

I listened to the member's speech and I am in agreement with him that the link between these trade agreements and security is extremely important. I am also in very strong agreement that the NO-RAD treaty is very important to us. He also talked about the importance of economic collaboration in our manufacturing and defence sectors, especially in supply chains.

In business, we are seeing the importance of being connected internationally, and I want to talk about the 5G network. The Americans seem to be very far ahead of us, and we will be in a trade agreement through which there will be easy flow back and forth. I am wondering if the member could explain to the House the importance of moving forward with this 5G network, and whether he has any insight into the government's plan for implementing one here in Canada and the date that it would be functional.

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Oshawa for his kind remarks. It is probably the last time that it will happen in the House.

With respect to the 5G network and in particular a decision about Huawei, the Americans have taken a very clear position and have said that this will not happen. We, of course, are in the Five Eyes. The British have arrived at another decision. They feel they can secure critical infrastructure while still using the Huawei 5G network, while the Australians and New Zealanders have been very firm about not going to 5G.

That decision will have to be taken sooner rather than later. I hope we will all have some significant input into that decision, but I do know that it is before the minister as we speak.

• (1700)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. He talked about national security and the importance of the auto industry, but how does CUSMA protect industries that are important to Quebec, such as supply-managed agriculture and aluminum?

Other provinces may benefit, but Quebec is once again left behind in this agreement.

[*English*]

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, I would defer to the opinion of Premier Legault, which is to the effect that this agreement needs to be signed sooner rather than later. I believe he has done an analysis of all the sectors that affect Quebec. The protection of the dairy industry, in particular, is critical. The hon. member will recall the assiduousness with which the president wanted to dismantle it. The government has done a magnificent job of protecting the supply chains.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. I enjoyed his history lesson on security. My question is about another aspect of security, namely food safety.

Opening up our markets is great, but what assurances do we have that other countries will apply the same standards as we do here on our products? In the dairy industry, for example, our neighbours to the south allow the use of hormones that are banned in Canada. When it comes to food safety, I have questions, and I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about this issue.

[*English*]

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. member's raising that question, to which I do not have a specific answer. I do know that there are all kinds of chapters that go to each level of negotiation, and the inconsistencies are generally resolved between the trade negotiators. I expect that food safety will be the paramount intention of any negotiation on the part of our government.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquiere, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have addressed the House on a few occasions, but always during oral question period. Therefore, I have not yet had an opportunity to thank the people of Jonquiere for electing me. I am pleased to stand up for them here, although today's circumstances are quite unfortunate, since my riding relies mainly on aluminum. However, let me stress that I will always be there for my riding and that I intend to see this little battle over aluminum through to the end.

Before I begin, I would like to give some background on Quebec's economy, to put the free trade agreement into perspective. As we know, Canada is an oil-producing country. The Canadian economy is driven by two major sectors, namely Ontario's automotive industry and Alberta's oil industry. Members will recall that Ontario received \$10 billion in financial support in 2008 to help it overcome the financial crisis.

Alberta, meanwhile, has been struggling to make tar sands oil profitable. From the 1970s to the early 2000s, that sector received about \$70 billion, which is a huge amount of money. At the time, Jean Chretien mused that, if he had invested as much money in Quebec as in Alberta, Quebec would have elected Liberal members in every riding and would have been red all over.

Quebec has seen no economic spinoffs from the oil sands. In fact, for Quebecers, it was like an own goal, because our manufacturing industry was completely destabilized by Dutch disease, when the dollar rose because of the oil sands industry, resulting in heavy job losses.

Everyone knows that, for the past 25 years, Quebec has not been considered in Canada's economic policy. Quebec's economy depends on three sectors, and I am sure everyone knows what they are.

The first is forestry, of course, a sector that has gone through crisis after crisis and is in crisis again. The new NAFTA does nothing to support forestry.

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The second is supply management, which has been compromised repeatedly. When the Conservatives negotiated the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, they severely weakened supply management.

The third, which we are talking about today, is aluminum. If I were not such a nice guy, I would say enough already. We have had it up to here.

For 20 years now, Quebec has been the one to suffer in any negotiations involving the federal government. Canada is an oil-producing country that is moving in the opposite direction of every other country on the planet. By all accounts, even the economic indicators used in Canada, the best thing to do is to shift to renewable and transitional energy sources.

Today in Canada, we have the issue of the Teck Frontier project, which I see as completely unacceptable and frankly insane. That project would increase greenhouse gas emissions by four million tonnes a year and make it impossible for Canada to meet its Paris targets. It is going to take a major wake-up call to free Canada's economy from its dependence on these two key sectors, which, in my opinion, is paralyzing Quebec's economy.

Now that I have given a brief history of Canada's economy, I would like to come back to what has happened in the past few weeks. Before the holiday break, we learned that aluminum would be sacrificed in the new NAFTA. Oddly enough, we were told that aluminum had been protected until the end of the negotiations, but that two days before the agreement was ratified, Mexico put the pressure on. We do not know why the Canadian government decided to abandon aluminum workers. We asked many questions about this. We asked the government why it decided to give the steel industry a guarantee while abandoning the aluminum industry.

The government has not responded, so I will try to answer. The fact that 90% of Canadian aluminum is produced in Quebec may be a clue. The steel industry is concentrated in Ontario. Ninety per cent of Canada's aluminum is produced in Quebec, and 10% is produced in British Columbia. Quebec's market is the U.S., but B.C.'s market is Asia.

• (1705)

British Columbia is not affected by the agreement that the government just signed. Its aluminum industry is not affected because it will be able to continue to export its aluminum to Asia on an ongoing basis. The only ones affected are us. Again. When all these things are taken together, a man starts to get fed up, as my father used to say. Today, I get the impression that we need to re-establish the balance of power in the House so that Quebec's voice is heard. We need to make MPs aware of the situation so that cabinet listens to Quebec's concerns. I get the impression that such has not been the case for some time now.

Our situation is unique. Economically speaking, we are, to some extent, the disadvantaged of this federation. In recent weeks, we have wanted to show the government the real impacts that the new NAFTA will have on the aluminum industry. In order to do that, people from my region formed a huge coalition of municipal officials, union representatives, aluminum experts and business people. All of those people decided to come here to make MPs aware of

our situation. People from the region really rallied together. They travelled here this week. They came with the numbers that I will talk about momentarily, which are accurate and credible. The methodology of their study is ironclad. I will talk about that in a moment.

The thing no one has been talking about all week is the fact that when the first NAFTA was signed in 1994, one of the biggest aluminum producers in the world was Canada, and Canada's aluminum came from Quebec. The biggest aluminum producer was Canada and China played a marginal role. Today, China produces 15 times as much aluminum as Canada. China has no problem inundating the North American market via Mexico, completely burying every effort we have made in the past 20 years to maintain this aluminum cluster in my region. It is easy for China because they are getting help from the Canadian government, it seems to me. All we ever wanted is for the government to admit that aluminum was not getting the same treatment as steel. We asked about that again in question period today. We get the same answer every time, that 70% of auto parts manufactured in North America will have to be produced in North America. If that is satisfactory to the government, then I fail to understand why it gave steel special status. Why does this special status not apply to aluminum?

My colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean had the wonderful idea of explaining the difference between parts made of steel and parts made of aluminum to his eight-year-old daughter, Simone. With the wisdom and insight of her eight years, Simone came to understand the difference. Maybe the government should have a discussion with Simone in the next few weeks. Maybe it will come to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I want to come back to this unprecedented mobilization. We must understand that, in Quebec, six major projects to expand aluminum smelters are currently on ice. As soon as Rio Tinto Alcan found out what was in the agreement, they announced that, in their opinion, market conditions were not good enough to go ahead. We wanted to know what the impact of scrapping these six major projects would be. To me, the numbers are quite astounding. For the construction phase alone, we are talking about \$6.242 billion. To this amount, we must add the 10-year period during which the aluminum smelters will be operating. That comes to a staggering \$16.242 billion. This means that, for the period from 2020 to 2029, Quebec will have to miss out on \$16.242 billion.

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• (1710)

Why is Quebec going to miss out on that money? Because the federal government did not want to fight for aluminum. It is déjà vu all over again. The government wanted to save Ontario's steel industry and the auto industry. Now it is moving surprisingly quickly to save Alberta's oil industry by buying a pipeline that is not viable. When it is our turn, all we get is crickets because everyone has left the building.

Sixteen billion, two hundred and forty-two million dollars over the next 10 years is going to make a significant dent. It is going to put 60,000 jobs in jeopardy.

Today, one of the members opposite was bragging about how his government created wealth for the middle class, reduced unemployment and raised the standard of living. The government may have done that for the rest of Canada, but it is definitely not doing that for Quebec. Even with 60,000 jobs at stake, the government does not seem to care.

The government said in the throne speech that it was open to dialogue with the opposition. We are open to discussion. Unlike what some members claim, we are not against free trade. Far from it. We want to ensure respect for the economic sectors that make Quebec strong. In recent years, this respect has unfortunately been lacking. Any negotiation should start with consideration for Quebec's economic sectors.

I mentioned the staggering figures of \$16 billion and 60,000 jobs. As members can see, without access to a guaranteed market, Quebec's economy will experience a slump over the long term, and the aluminum industry will slowly collapse, or even disappear, in the face of China's massive output.

The government also said in its throne speech that the environment was a priority. If the environment is one of the government's priorities, it has no choice but to support the aluminum industry. The Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region of Quebec produces the greenest aluminum in the world. Elysis has developed technology to produce carbon-neutral aluminum.

On one hand, we are talking about carbon neutral aluminum with Elysis in Quebec and, on the other, we are talking about 4 million tonnes of GHG emissions with the Teck Resources Frontier project. Even if an alien arrived in Canada and was presented with these statistics, the choice would be easy.

We need access to the aluminum market. That seems essential, but the new NAFTA does not allow for that because it allows China to dump its aluminum.

The United States recognized that China is dumping its aluminum through Mexico. Canada recognized that China is dumping its aluminum through Mexico. We are not making this up. It is a proven fact.

How can we address this situation? Quebec aluminum needs to be granted the same coverage as Ontario steel.

Expanding an aluminum plant is not something that happens without big investments. In order for those big investments to happen, the main producers are always saying that they need a certain

amount of predictability in the market. Unfortunately, we are not seeing that predictability. What we have been saying to date is that we unfortunately had to vote against the government's ways and means motion. It was unacceptable to us because it did not recognize aluminum.

• (1715)

We in the Bloc Québécois are not just looking for confrontation, but also co-operation. We want to find solutions with the government. However, for us to work together, we must speak the same language. That means recognizing the wrongs. To date the government has refused, at least in question period, to acknowledge that it has sacrificed aluminum and that aluminum does not have the same status as steel. Perhaps a good starting point for discussion would be this acknowledgement on the part of the government. It is sometimes said that it takes two to tango. We are open to discussion. I hope the government will be as well.

[English]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, while my hon. colleague was talking, I was thinking about the beautiful Saguenay region and the Alcan Rio Tinto plants being up there because of the hydroelectricity. The hydroelectricity is there because of the beautiful rivers and the nature that surrounds that region.

I am thinking of the aluminum coming from Quebec to Ontario to the auto manufacturers and the agreement that was presented to us by the negotiators a few nights ago. All parties were able to be at a meeting where they told us that the regional value content threshold of cars has gone from 62% to 75%. This means the content of the goods and services going into the cars has to come from the North American region.

The stronger regional content is going to protect jobs in Quebec. Seventy per cent of the aluminum and 70% of the steel have to come from within our region. Where else is one going to get aluminum in North America, other than Quebec? One could go to British Columbia, but that is a long way from Ontario. The partnerships we have in place have only been strengthened because of this agreement.

The new labour content would require a minimum of \$16 per hour, and there are safety provisions for the plants where the labour is carried out.

I think we are protecting Canadian jobs. We are protecting jobs in Quebec. The hon. member is not realizing that the change from 62% to 75% includes components from Quebec. Could the hon. member comment on that? Was he at the briefing the other night?

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• (1720)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, it is important to understand that repeating a lie does not make it true.

The aluminum sector has not been protected. Let me point out again that it seems to me that the 70% of auto parts was mentioned because the idea is to protect the automotive industry, not the aluminum industry. Those parts may be made from aluminum that comes from Mexico, which is already the case. If my colleague wishes, I will provide him with a nice chart from Radio-Canada showing the surge in imports of aluminum auto parts from Mexico over the past two or three years.

I would also like to tell my colleague that in Alma, in my region, a project for a billet plant was proposed and the groundwork was already done. However, everything was left unfinished. The proponents changed their minds, and the investments were cancelled. The reason the proponents changed their minds midstream was that the market is not in our favour right now because China is being allowed to dump aluminum.

[*English*]

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to share some of the thoughts that I have about the agreement.

We need trade agreements that have enforceable protections for workers, the environment, the rights of indigenous peoples and women. We need trade agreements and processes in Canada that make government more accountable and allow all parliamentarians to play a greater role in this—

The Deputy Speaker: I will just interrupt the hon. member, as I am not too sure if she is posing a question or a comment for the hon. member for Jonquière. Is that the intention?

Ms. Leah Gazan: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Good. I just was not sure whether she was starting into some remarks pertaining to the question that is before the House. I will let her go ahead and finish her comments, and then we will go back to the hon. member for Jonquière.

The hon. member for Winnipeg Centre.

Ms. Leah Gazan: Mr. Speaker, during the agreement, the Liberals have over-promised and under-delivered in terms of holding consultations and working with all parliamentarians in a meaningful, comprehensive and public way.

Even though I would agree that there have been some positive amendments with the new NAFTA, there continues to be this disturbing trend in trade agreements of giving more rights or favouring the privilege of corporations rather than real people, the environment, the rights of indigenous peoples and women.

Trade agreements should always guarantee—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The time is limited. We have about a 10-minute period for questions and comments, which we open up to other members.

I will say that certainly members can pose comments or questions to the hon. member. We will take what the hon. member for Winnipeg Centre has said as a comment.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Jonquière can now respond to the comments.

• (1725)

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

I also care about indigenous communities. Canada is made up of three nations, namely the Canadian nation, the Quebec nation and the indigenous nation. Unfortunately, the indigenous and Quebec nations are often left out of multilateral agreements.

I agree with her that indigenous nations deserve better care, especially considering completely insane projects like Teck Resources' Frontier project, which indigenous communities oppose, though they are going unheeded.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was listening very closely to what the member for Jonquière was saying. I take a different approach in the sense that on this side of the House, Liberal members of Parliament advocate for all regions of the country. We see the benefits of this trade agreement universally applied to all regions of the country. At no point in time would this government ever consider taking an area and writing it off in any fashion whatsoever.

The Premier of Quebec is encouraging members from the Bloc to support this agreement, recognizing the value of this agreement to Canada and particularly the province of Quebec.

Is the Premier of Quebec wrong in advocating that we pass this legislation?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, I find it astounding to hear the member opposite refer to the Premier of Quebec, because it is probably the first time he has ever listened to him. My colleague has selective hearing. He only hears what the Premier of Quebec says when it suits him.

I could also point out that the Premier of Quebec is asking for a single tax return. In addition, he is asking for an increase in health care funding, which is something the government has been refusing to do for years, and it is a disaster in Canada. This is what we call fiscal imbalance.

The federal government has a much broader tax base than the provinces, it does not spend as much, and it constantly balances its budget by reducing transfer payments to the provinces.

That would be a good start. If the government does that, I might consider voting for the project.

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[*English*]

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Mr. Speaker, there is a section on indigenous peoples that was presented to us a few nights ago by the panel that was negotiating on behalf of all Canadians, including indigenous peoples.

This agreement does have government procurement protections for indigenous-owned businesses and enterprises, outcomes around the environment, protecting the role of indigenous peoples and protecting our environment. The sections are in there, and I really wish that the hon. member across the way could refer to those sections when he is speaking in the House.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mario Simard: Mr. Speaker, I find the hon. member's point of view very interesting.

I have taken a closer look at the sections he mentioned and I even think that some could be added. We do not have to just look at the first nations in the negotiations. We could also look at the Quebec nation, and perhaps add certain provisions that would respect Quebec's cultural distinctiveness and Quebec's unique economic sectors. My colleague makes a good suggestion. I thank him for that.

Mr. William Amos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry (Science), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to discuss the benefits of the Canada-United States-Mexico agreement for all Canadians, and particularly the benefits for the province of Quebec. I am happy to be sharing my time with the member for Saint-Laurent.

For over a year, Canada fought hard while negotiating a free trade agreement with the United States and Mexico. I would actually like to congratulate the negotiators. All of Canada's negotiators are incredible. They successfully managed an extremely complex file and all kinds of political surprises. We knew how important it was to get an agreement that is good, not only for Canadian workers but also for Canadian businesses and our communities, both rural and urban. We did everything in our power to protect jobs, create more opportunities for Canadian workers and their families, and ensure economic growth. We wanted a progressive agreement in terms of the environment and labour.

This paid off for the farmers of the Pontiac and the Gatineau Valley, the forestry workers in Maniwaki and the entrepreneurs in Gatineau, Shawville and Val-des-Monts. The new agreement will benefit not only the people of the Pontiac, but also Quebeckers and Canadians across the country.

In the agriculture sector, Canadian exports will continue to benefit from duty-free access for nearly 89% of U.S. agriculture tariff lines and 91% of Mexican tariff lines, which is extremely important to Canadian exporters, especially those in Quebec and, of course, the Pontiac.

In 2018, Quebec's farmers and food processors exported \$5.6 billion worth of goods to the U.S. Quebec exporters will have access to new markets for refined sugar and goods containing sugar, margarine and whey. The government will continue to work with all supply-managed sectors to mitigate any future repercussions of the new NAFTA.

Let us now talk about culture. In the new agreement, Canada has successfully maintained the general exemption for its cultural industries, a key provision that seeks to preserve Canada's cultural sovereignty, which was an important aspect of NAFTA. The cultural exemption fully preserves the latitude Canada has to adopt and maintain programs and policies that support the creation, distribution and development of Canadian artistic expressions or artistic content, including in the digital environment, which is the future of many cultural industries. This result is very important, especially for Quebec. The dynamic information and culture industries account for more than 73,000 jobs in Quebec and nearly 340,000 jobs across the country, which pumped nearly \$63 million into the Canadian economy in 2018.

The new agreement preserves the mechanism for dispute settlement by a binational panel that was included in the original NAFTA. This mechanism allows Canada to use an independent and impartial process for challenging American or Mexican anti-dumping and countervailing duties. The mechanism is especially important for Quebec's softwood lumber industry and, of course, for my riding, because exports to the United States reached \$1.3 billion in 2018.

The original NAFTA's temporary entry provisions were maintained, providing Canadians with preferential access to the United States for the purposes of providing services or after-sales service or monitoring their investments on the ground. These investments are especially important in advanced manufacturing, such as Quebec's aerospace sector, because it is essential that engineers and other experts be able to travel freely within North America to provide their services.

The agreement also seeks to modernize the disciplines to adapt them to the digital economy, thereby enabling businesses to conduct business across borders electronically, while still maintaining the government's ability to regulate and protect Canadians' personal information.

● (1730)

This modernization is important for the video game industry, which is booming in the Montreal area. It is also important for the region's position as a burgeoning leader in tech innovation and a top destination for investment in artificial intelligence and life sciences. The information, culture and recreational sector in Montreal supports more than 56,000 jobs. The city is becoming a top international hub in this field.

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Because the riding of Pontiac has a large number of small and medium-sized enterprises, I also want to point out that this agreement includes a new chapter on SMEs. This chapter will allow for greater co-operation between the three countries, which will open up new markets and increase investment opportunities for small businesses. The new chapter will also ensure that SMEs have access to the information they need on how the agreement works and what obligations it imposes. This chapter is of particular importance to Quebec, where SMEs accounted for 99.7% of all businesses in 2019.

We must not forget that a progressive approach was taken in negotiations for the new NAFTA. We were sometimes ridiculed by the opposition for that. We always wanted the agreement to be progressive on environmental and labour matters.

I would now like to highlight these matters. The labour chapter is robust and fully subject to the dispute settlement provisions of the agreement. It aims to improve labour standards and working conditions in each of the three countries, based on internationally recognized labour principles and rights.

For example, the labour chapter includes new provisions prohibiting the importation of goods produced by forced labour, imposes obligations related to discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, combats violence against workers who are exercising their trade union rights, and ensures that migrant workers are protected under labour laws. To ensure a timely response to cases of labour rights violations related to collective bargaining and freedom of association, the agreement also includes an innovative rapid response mechanism between Canada and Mexico.

On the environmental front, the agreement strengthens and modernizes the environmental provisions by incorporating them into an environment chapter that is ambitious, comprehensive and enforceable. This chapter sets out a mandatory, enforceable dispute resolution process for all compliance issues. When the countries cannot agree on the method of consultation and co-operation, it provides for recourse to the agreement's more general dispute resolution mechanism. The agreement also includes new obligations to address global environmental challenges, including the following important obligations: combatting the illegal wildlife trade, illegal logging and illegal fishing; promoting sustainable forest and fisheries management, in particular through a commitment to prohibiting subsidies that negatively affect fish stocks; preserving species at risk; implementing relevant multilateral environmental agreements; and taking measures to protect the ozone layer and prevent marine pollution.

I would also like to mention that the much-criticized chapter 11 on investor-state dispute settlement was scrapped for Canada. In addition, the chapter on investment includes a provision on corporate social responsibility.

We can see that this new agreement is full of progressive elements. I could have mentioned the aspects related to trade and indigenous peoples. I hope I will get questions about that. I could also have talked about trade and gender. Those are some very interesting aspects.

In closing, I am very pleased that our officials and our negotiators were able to negotiate the best possible agreement. This agreement will be good for Canada, for our economy, for the environment, for our workers and for our SMEs.

• (1735)

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, I heard a colleague opposite bragging about the three free trade agreements, but if there is one thing that the successive federal governments have in common, whether blue or red, it is that they signed those agreements at Quebec's expense. We need look no further than the forestry industry, aluminum, cheese producers and supply management. It is true. These parties are like two peas in a pod. Whether the Conservatives or the Liberals are in power, they both do the same thing when signing free trade agreements. They sign them at Quebec's expense.

We need to speak the same language if we want to find a solution. My colleagues opposite have been saying over and over that 70% of aluminum is protected. I have just one simple question: Does the member know that Mexico does not produce aluminum and that the anti-dumping provisions apply only to producers, that is, to Canada and the United States? This means that China could provide Mexico with aluminum that can be resold as parts. Is he aware of that? Will they stop saying that 70% of aluminum is protected when that is not the case? Nothing is protected when it comes to aluminum production.

• (1740)

Mr. William Amos: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. We know we will hear a lot of sovereigntist and nationalist rhetoric from the Bloc Québécois. We expect this type of criticism, but it is untrue that the new agreement is not good for Quebec. Quebec's SMEs, business councils, companies and elected officials all tell us the same thing. They want us to sign this agreement. They want us to pass legislation that secures a place for Quebec and Canada in the North American economy.

As for aluminum, our government has made it clear time and time again that this agreement protects and benefits the aluminum sector. That is why Jean Simard, the president and CEO of the Aluminum Association of Canada, said that we absolutely must move forward and sign this agreement.

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Madam Speaker, I appreciated my colleague's speech. He spoke a lot about innovation and technology, which was very interesting. I think it is important and worthwhile for SMEs to have access to new technologies.

You mentioned that SMEs are very important. They are important in your riding, in my riding and in many ridings across Quebec and Canada.

Does the new NAFTA give our SMEs, especially those in the regions, an opportunity to access all of these new technologies?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the member for Beauce that he must address the Chair and not speak directly to the parliamentary secretary or the member who gave the speech.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. William Amos: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Beauce and congratulate him on winning his seat. I am always happy to see new faces here in the House of Commons.

Pontiac is indeed full of SMEs. In Pontiac, Vallée-de-la-Gatineau and Collines-de-l'Outaouais, SMEs are the backbone of our economy. As I said in my speech, that is why we are so pleased with the negotiations. SMEs were foremost in our minds during negotiations. That is why there is a new chapter on SMEs.

Our SMEs will definitely be able to seek advice from government departments such as Global Affairs if they want help exporting more of their products to the United States and Mexico.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to Bill C-4, an act to implement the agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States.

[*English*]

When negotiations began over a year ago, I remember how much uncertainty there was about what would happen if we did not manage to sign a deal. People were afraid for our economy's future, because there were too many unknown or unpredictable factors going into these negotiations.

I represent the federal riding of Saint-Laurent, one of the most industrial ridings in the country. There are technically more jobs in my riding than there are people. I had countless meetings with companies that told me that they relied on a good NAFTA deal to continue to thrive and, in some cases, for their company to even survive.

During these meetings, I told them about the confidence I had in our then foreign affairs minister, the member for University—Rosedale, to get a good deal for Canada. Many of them asked me why it was taking so long and had doubts that we would succeed in getting a good deal. I explained that we were not going to fold until the deal was a good one for all Canadians, that we had a strong team of skilled negotiators hard at work who were going to hold off on signing until it was an excellent deal for Canadians.

Lo and behold, we have done just that. We have managed to get an excellent trade deal that will support well-paying middle-class jobs in many different industries for Canadians across the country.

In addition to ensuring that our jobs are protected, this new deal also has a new enforceable environment chapter that will uphold air quality and fight marine pollution. Furthermore, we have worked hard to protect women's rights, minority rights and indigenous rights. In fact, this deal has the strongest protection for these groups as well as for the environment of any Canadian trade agreement to date.

It is through our trade deals that we are able to hold other countries accountable when it comes to the environment and gender equality.

• (1745)

[*Translation*]

This new Canada-United States-Mexico agreement, which we refer to as the new NAFTA, is an excellent agreement that will allow

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us to solidify economic ties and support good, well-paying jobs for middle-class Canadians. It took us quite some time to sign this agreement because we felt it was important that it benefit all Canadians.

As my colleagues have certainly heard, the Americans wanted nothing to do with the cultural exemption at the beginning of the negotiations, an exemption that we know is critical for Quebec. We fought very hard to keep it and we clearly indicated to the Americans that we would not sign any agreement without this cultural exemption.

Our government will always stand up for our cultural industries because that means protecting a \$53.8-billion industry representing more than 650,000 good jobs for middle-class Canadians. For Quebec, it represents 75,000 jobs.

Yesterday, I was surprised to see the Bloc Québécois vote against this agreement. I was surprised because I know that Quebeckers, who the Bloc generally tries to represent well, want us to sign this agreement. Quebeckers need this agreement, which, in many ways, is even better than the old NAFTA.

The Bloc Québécois argues that this agreement does not offer aluminum the same protections as steel. Let us not forget that the old NAFTA did not protect aluminum at all. Before, when a car was manufactured, 100% of the material could come from China, while under this new agreement 70% of the material has to come from North America.

We hope the Bloc Québécois will vote in favour of this agreement at the next opportunity.

[*English*]

This new NAFTA will also help the manufacturing industry. We have modernized the process at the border in order to cut red tape and to make it easier for small and medium-sized businesses to export and import with the United States.

We have also ensured that the deal is a good one for Canadian workers. The enforceable provisions that protect labour are the strongest ones yet.

It is a great deal for Canada's car sector. The new auto rules of origin will directly secure the future for auto workers in cities such as Windsor and Oshawa.

It is time for Canada to join the United States and Mexico by ratifying this new and improved deal. It is in the national interest to move quickly to get this signed, as the Deputy Prime Minister has stressed time and time again, as signing it will bring our country economic and political certainty.

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I think back to the conversations I have had with my constituents in Saint-Laurent, as well as with the many businesses in my riding for whom this deal is a great source of comfort, and I know that not signing it is simply not an option. We have worked hard to ensure this new deal is one that will benefit Canadians and Canadian businesses across the country, and it is time to secure what our top negotiators have fought so hard for.

• (1750)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, the member mentioned auto workers in Oshawa. I am just wondering if she is aware that our plant closed down. Within a few days after the details of this agreement were announced, GM announced that it was not allocating new product to five plants. One of them was Oshawa. Since the American plants did recover, it did have some product allocated to it. Overall, I think the auto industry is happy with this agreement.

The member did not mention the fact that the uncertainty, by dithering to get an agreement, really caused problems. The government could have signed the TPP, the original one, four years ago. It was Mr. Obama's deal, the most progressive deal out there. However, a lot of uncertainty caused problems.

The TPP was eventually signed. If trade was so important, why did the Liberal government not sign the original TPP when it was available four years ago?

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize that it was obviously not a great moment when the plant in Oshawa closed, which was before the agreement was signed.

Uncertainty does not help. We wanted to make sure that this deal was as good as it could be for Canadians. We were not going to sign just any deal. We wanted to make sure that Canadians across the country were going to benefit from this deal. Uncertainty never helps. However, signing this deal is going to help us move forward in a positive way and it is going to help our auto sector.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Andr anne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for her speech.

I am pleased to know that she listened to the people of her riding. We are also listening to the people in various ridings in Quebec. A delegation of people from Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean came here yesterday to express their concerns regarding this agreement.

It is possible to improve the implementation of this agreement without having to renegotiate it. It would not be an exceptional procedure. In the spirit of co-operation, we proposed including standards that would offer certain guarantees for aluminum. That way, the Bloc Qu b cois could reconsider its voting position.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Madam Speaker, as I mentioned in my speech, this new negotiation includes some good news for Quebec's aluminum sector. The old agreement had no protections for that sector, but now, in the new agreement, 70% of all materials must come from North America. This will really help Quebec.

I think the Bloc Qu b cois should have another look at the deal to be sure how it wants to vote. This is a very good deal for Quebec.

[*English*]

Ms. Lindsay Mathysen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, the government continually goes on and on about how indigenous relations are the most important relationship, that nation-to-nation building. That is admirable, except that there was absolutely no mention of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in this document.

I am wondering if the member knows if the government intends to get free, prior and informed consent on this agreement before moving forward.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Madam Speaker, the agreement talks about the indigenous population and how to protect them. That was already included. I mentioned it in my speech.

Mr. Gerald Soroka (Yellowhead, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to split my time with the member for M gantic—L' rable.

I want to make it clear that we Conservatives are strongly in favour of free trade. The removal of barriers to trade results in lower costs for consumers and expanded production for our exporters. That is why a Conservative prime minister signed the original NAFTA.

The Liberal government claims that CUSMA is a victory, calling it an updated NAFTA. In effect, what it is doing is attempting to claim victory for striking a deal almost as good as the one that Conservatives struck nearly a quarter-century ago.

Some of the areas in which this agreement falls short of the original include concessions on dairy, the non-market country FTA, which gives the U.S. oversight of Canada's trade negotiations with other countries, and the sunset clause requiring a formal review of the agreement every six years, to name a few.

Dairy Farmers of Ontario stated:

CUSMA will have three main impacts on the Canadian dairy sector:

- (1) The United States is given market access through tariff-rate quotas on dairy;
- (2) Milk classes 6 and 7 are eliminated;
- (3) The setting of global export thresholds for the following three products: milk protein concentrate, infant formula and skim milk powder, above which export charges will be added on any additional exports at the global level.

Dairy Farmers of Ontario awaits ratification of the agreement to know how and when CUSMA will come into force, and the more specific impact it will have on the sector.

Pierre Lampron, president of Dairy Farmers of Canada, said the following:

The signing of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) is a sad chapter in Canada's dairy industry and for Canadian exporters. The access to our country's dairy market given to the U.S. represents a significant loss, the equivalent of the combined dairy production of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Market access is only the tip of the iceberg. Concessions include an oversight clause that gives the U.S. the ability to intervene in the administration of our domestic system. The concessions also give the U.S. the ability to impose the equivalent of a cap on global dairy exports, which will limit Canada's ability to export dairy products. Would the U.S. ever accept such terms?

The Liberals failed to work with opposition parties during the negotiation and ratification process and are now rushing to push this deal through the House. The Deputy Prime Minister has stated over and over again in the House that the requirement for North American aluminum in autos will go from zero to 70% under the new NAFTA. Each time she avoids mentioning the fact that Mexico can import aluminum from China, process it and then have it qualify for preferential treatment. This was prevented in the case of steel by requiring it to be melted and poured in North America.

Why has this back door been left open for aluminum? Why did the government fail to include a definition for aluminum rules of origin for autos, requiring it to be poured and melted in North America?

Premier Legault and the Aluminum Association of Canada expressed their disappointment that such a definition is absent from the new NAFTA. What is this government's plan to protect Canada's aluminum workers from this problem?

The government has said it will monitor Mexico's imports of aluminum from China. What will it do if those imports are high? How long will it take for these actions to come into effect? What will be the net result to our aluminum industry? These questions and many more are all left unanswered.

Even under the best-case scenario where Mexico does not import large quantities of aluminum from China, which is wishful thinking to say the least, the failure of this agreement to stipulate it creates uncertainty. Uncertainty, as many know, always discourages investment and inevitably hurts the aluminum industry and negatively affects the lives of individuals who depend on it. As many as 60,000 jobs are at stake. These are not just numbers. They represent real people with families who depend on them.

● (1755)

What about the softwood lumber industry? The new NAFTA neglects communities that depend on this industry as well. The closure and restriction on softwood lumber mills have devastated communities from British Columbia to New Brunswick. The Canadian press went as far as to describe the situation as the "forest industry carnage". Canada's sustainable forest industry has long been a key component of our economy, contributing over \$24 billion to our GDP in 2017 and directly employing over 200,000 people. Roughly 29% of our forest export products are softwood lumber.

Since 2017, Canadian lumber entering the U.S. has been hit with a 20% tariff, whereas European softwood enters the American market tariff-free. Why? The government claims victory on the North American Free Trade Agreement, even with softwood lumber notably absent.

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As I stated earlier, our Conservative Party is the party of free trade and there are certainly many aspects of this agreement we agree with. Almost all these provisions were part of the original NAFTA, which the Liberal government was so quick to open up and negotiate. However, they are still important provisions.

Here are some quotes from stakeholders that are particularly insightful.

The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance said, "We look forward to receiving confirmation that the changes don't negatively impact our members."

Goldy Hyder, president and CEO of the Business Council of Canada, has said the signed new NAFTA is "good enough" for Canada, something that "gets us through this administration."

It says a lot, however, that the only praise being levied on the new NAFTA is that it has managed to maintain several important parts of the original agreement.

It is the democratic obligation of all members of Parliament to analyze legislation that is brought before the House. This is especially true when it comes to a trade deal with Canada's largest and most important trade partner.

The Liberals have failed to provide documents outlining the impacts of the new trade deal despite numerous attempts from opposition members. It has been 49 days since we asked the government to provide an economic impact assessment on the new agreement. To date, it has not been made available to any members of the House.

Tuesday night I even attended a briefing by Global Affairs Canada in order to get some information on the specifics of this agreement. When questions were asked, the answers we received were very political, such as, "it hasn't really changed that much", "very similar to the original", "basically the same", etc. I left the briefing with more questions than answers. Here we are debating the bill and still waiting for concrete answers.

The Liberals do not yet seem to recognize the realities of the new Parliament and are mistaken if they believe we will rubber-stamp the deal. That is why we need to have this debate, to finally get questions answered.

Let us be thankful that we had a Conservative government to negotiate the original NAFTA. I would hate to have seen what deal the Liberal government would have negotiated if it did not have the original to work from.

● (1800)

Mr. Francesco Sorbara (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Madam Speaker, will the Conservatives be voting for or against the revised NAFTA deal?

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Also, the Premiers of Saskatchewan and Alberta have come out in favour of it. Today, the Premier of Ontario also asked for a speedy approval of CUSMA to bring business certainty to the province of Ontario, where I live and have the privilege of representing one of the ridings.

As we have all the provincial premiers, from the member's vantage point, asking for immediate passage so we can give businesses, the communities, the employees and Canadians from coast to coast certainty, will you be voting yes or no for this deal?

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

The hon. member for Yellowhead.

Mr. Gerald Soroka: Madam Speaker, that is the question at hand. We are here tonight to get some answers to some of the questions I have brought forward.

Everyone knows that we understand it is an important agreement and that we have had free trade with the United States for many years. This is why everyone wants that certainty. We are not necessarily going to vote against it, but we definitely need to question many parts of it.

As for many of the premiers speaking in favour of it, that is simply because we need to get this ratified as soon as possible.

• (1805)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have a couple of comments, and the member can feel free to engage as he sees fit.

First of all, the member mentioned that the opposition parties were not involved. I would like to remind the member that the former interim leader of the Conservative Party was involved the entire time with the deputy prime minister. In fact, she remarked that it was the best deal that could have been made at the time.

The member opposite also talked about the dairy industry. While I appreciate that its market access is unfortunate, he needs to understand that every second word from the President of the United States was about dairy. We fought to maintain that access.

I also want to remind the member opposite, because I believe he is a new member, that it was the Conservatives, under CETA and CPTPP, who negotiated that deal away freely, without the same pressure that was faced by this government.

Finally, as it relates to the text, the agreement is right here. It can be read. All that information is available, so to suggest that somehow this government is hiding the agenda is unfortunate.

I would like to hear the member's thoughts on those comments.

Mr. Gerald Soroka: Madam Speaker, I will try to address as much as I possibly can.

You are right; I am a new member—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I would remind the member to address the Speaker and not the individual member.

Mr. Gerald Soroka: Madam Speaker, there are several aspects to this; that is correct. However, the TPP, for instance, had more quota reductions than what is being proposed now. This is one area where the Liberals gave up more than what was previously agreed upon. It is one challenge I have with the new agreement.

I forget the other parts of the member's question, but one thing I do know is that we were not as involved as we would have liked. This agreement affects all parties across Canada, and we should have been better addressed throughout the whole process, even in the last 48 days.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

I would like to hear his thoughts on the fact that our colleagues opposite are claiming that we absolutely must sign this agreement as quickly as possible, even though when the U.S. Congress was studying the matter, the Democrats changed a number of things pertaining to the steel sector.

What does he think of the political position taken by our colleagues opposite?

[*English*]

Mr. Gerald Soroka: Madam Speaker, I believe everyone is trying to get through this process as quickly as possible because of the uncertainty that has been going on for so many months already. I know that the election interfered with the process somewhat, but it has still taken quite a lot of time.

Unfortunately, every decision we make is quite political, and that is going to be a challenge in everything we do in the House.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-4, an act to implement the agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States.

I listened carefully to the exchanges between my colleagues and the members opposite on this matter. My Liberal colleague mentioned that our interim leader, Rona Ambrose, who was a member of the negotiating team, said that the free trade agreement negotiated was the best possible outcome under the circumstances. I just wanted to mention that our former leader is a very intelligent woman who was able to see the limitations of the Liberal government, the Prime Minister and the former minister of foreign affairs.

If we consider the players in the negotiations, it really is the best agreement that could be reached by the Liberals. That is the reality. Therefore, we must pay attention to the context in which statements were made. When we know the limitations of the team leading the negotiations and its weakness vis-à-vis the U.S. government and we know that we are the last ones to reach an agreement, we can understand that our former leader was right when she said that it was the best agreement under the circumstances.

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The legislation to implement the Canada-United States-Mexico agreement builds on the first NAFTA signed by the Conservatives. We on this side of the House like to say that this is free trade agreement 0.5, not free trade agreement 2.0, the new North American Free Trade Agreement or the new Canada-United States-Mexico agreement. It really is a weakened free trade agreement.

Indeed, many sectors were shortchanged because this government is incapable of negotiating correctly and achieving the gains it should have. I am not the one saying so, but rather the chair of the U.S. house ways and means committee. Some of the power of what he said is lost in translation, but in English, he was very clear.

• (1810)

[*English*]

“[The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister] conceded to just about every point that we asked for because of the following: enforceability, enforceability, enforceability.” What concessions did we agree to in order to elicit such a reaction?

[*Translation*]

What were the concessions that prompted the chairman of the U.S. Congress's most important committee to state that the former foreign affairs minister and the Prime Minister conceded to just about every point that was asked for during the negotiations? The answer is simple. It is that their party is not the party of free trade. The party of free trade is the Conservative Party. I would like to congratulate all the former Conservative ministers who negotiated free trade agreements.

All the Liberals did was come close to jeopardizing CETA and the TPP. Members may recall that the Prime Minister did not even show up for a TPP signing ceremony. The leaders of all the other TPP countries were there, but he was not. Where was the Prime Minister? People looked for him, but he was not there. He was absent. An agreement of tremendous importance to the entire Canadian economy almost fell through because the Prime Minister did not show up. Maybe it was because the photo op was not at the right time, or he was not happy with his outfit. I have no idea. It took even more work and more discussion to finalize the agreement.

That is where the problem lies. The Liberals agreed at the last minute. We used to be the United States' main partner. Now it would seem that Mexico has more influence than Canada, even though the Americans have been our neighbours and partners forever. This is due to the fact that the agreement was first reached between the United States and Mexico. Then they told Canada that it would have to hurry up and sign if it wanted to be part of the agreement. That is where the Liberals' ability to reach a consensus and sign good agreements for Canadians gets us. That is the reality.

One of the major concessions has to do with the aluminum industry. In that regard, I really want to mention the excellent work of my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, who has repeatedly spoken out against the last-minute concessions that the Liberal government made concerning the aluminum industry.

The members opposite are bragging about how this agreement protects 70% of Quebec's aluminum, Canada's aluminum. They are saying that there was no protection before. This percentage applies

only to parts. If parts are cast using aluminum from China or any other country, aluminum that was made using energy from coal or all sorts of things that we no longer want to see here, it would be considered a North American part that meets the 70% requirement. It is an insult to people's intelligence to say that this agreement protects Quebec's industry. That is completely unacceptable.

I know that my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is working very hard with his colleagues from the Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean region. I would like them to say that they are working hard with the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord. Just because he was not at yesterday's meeting with the stakeholders does not mean he is not collaborating. He met with the stakeholders. He met with Ms. Néron, the mayor of Saguenay, Patrick Bérubé, the executive director of Promotion Saguenay, Christian Fillion, the general manager of Aluminium Valley Society, and the union leaders. He met with all of them. He did not meet with all of them at the same time, but that does not matter. The goal is to work together to do something for workers and for Quebec's aluminum industry.

My colleague has some good solutions to propose. He will not oppose the free trade agreement, because we need it. At least 80% of the businesses in my riding deal with the United States every day. That is our country's economy. That is why the Conservatives decided to negotiate a free trade agreement. We knew all the benefits it could have for our country. However, something can be done. The member is opening the door for the government. He has concrete proposals to present, such as an action plan and a timeline for ensuring the traceability of aluminum in North America. We could identify the origin of the aluminum used for the parts that make up the 70% we keep hearing about. If we do not do this, one thing I can guarantee is that, given the current price of aluminum in Canada, more and more Chinese aluminum will be used in our cars.

The hon. member is also proposing that there be more transparency over the assistance that was provided. There were tariffs on aluminum. There is money lying dormant somewhere in the government coffers. We do not know what is being done with that money or what will be done with that money. Can there be more transparency so we can find out what is happening with that money? There could also be a low-carbon footprint procurement policy on steel and aluminum. Why are we unable to agree with the United States and Mexico on having North America use aluminum with a very low-carbon footprint? That would help us get results in lowering our greenhouse gases. It would also help us preserve Quebec's aluminum industry, and that would help thousands of workers in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, Portneuf and every other region with aluminum smelters to keep their jobs. This would help us ensure that Quebec remains a leader in the aluminum industry.

Government Orders

There are solutions. We will vote in favour of the bill. Obviously, we would have preferred not to be in this situation. We hope the government, which has offered to work with us from the start, will listen to the recommendations made by my colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord to protect the aluminum industry.

I used to be the agriculture critic. I will not talk about compensation in the dairy sector. I will not talk about it because there is none. Nothing has been announced. The government made some major concessions affecting the dairy industry. Unfortunately, the Liberals were unable to tell us how much this would cost, what kind of sacrifices they made, why they put a limit on powdered milk exports to other countries and why they gave the United States oversight over how we manage our fee structure. This was part of the last-minute agreement they negotiated. They were unable to ensure that Quebeckers and Canadians would benefit.

I will probably support the bill, but I hope that the government, which wants our co-operation, will give us some answers before the final vote.

• (1815)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, my friend across the way is attempting to rewrite history. I want to give the former Harper government some credit as it did begin negotiations on a number of agreements. That is a good thing and I recognize that.

We did sign off on the Ukraine trade deal, but we did not have to modify it.

To assume credit for the European Union or the TPP is really stretching it. However, we do not mind sharing some of the glory that both the Conservative and Liberal governments have recognized the true value of trade in the world, particularly trade with the U.S. and Mexico. The U.S. is our single greatest trading partner, which emphasizes just how important this agreement is.

I listened to many Conservatives speak, and if I were in opposition, I would probably be saying that we could do better. However, if we look at the agreement itself, from my perspective, it is a good deal. We have provinces of all political stripes recognizing the value of it and wanting to see it passed.

Would my friend not agree that this is a good deal?

• (1820)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I just want to remind members that there are only five minutes of questions and comments, and to please put their questions through the Speaker right away so that we can get to other questions and comments from those who also want to participate.

The hon. member for Mégantic—L'Érable.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, we will not rewrite history. It is true that the member's party almost jeopardized both the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with the European

Union and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

My colleague said that if he were in opposition he would probably be saying that improvements could be made. However, my response to him is that I am in opposition and we certainly would not have done any worse than the Liberals did.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for that great speech.

I am pleased to see that the Conservatives recognize the importance of protecting aluminum. That makes me very happy, and I thank them for that. All parties need to work together.

In fact, we invited the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord to join us when we all got going on this in December. He agreed to join us then and got to meet with Ms. Néron and the other participants. We were the ones who invited them, organized their press conference, and let them meet here in the House of Commons. We invited the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord to that too, but he did not come, unfortunately.

My question for my hon. colleague is this: Are there partisan reasons why the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is no longer interested in joining us? If not, can we count on him to help us protect our workers?

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, not only can Quebeckers and the people of Saguenay—Lac-St-Jean and Chicoutimi count on the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord to stand up for them, but they can also count on him to play a leadership role with the co-operation of the Bloc Québécois, of course.

The member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is a strong supporter of the aluminum industry. He has been talking about this from the beginning. I would only urge my colleague from Lac-Saint-Jean to ask the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord the question directly, rather than asking me.

The only answer I can give him is that the member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord is a strong supporter of aluminum and that we can be proud of his work.

[English]

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am the representative for North Island—Powell River, and we have multiple dairy farms in our communities. One of the challenges for small, rural, remote communities is when industries are attacked through trade agreements, and we see a huge decline of resources to those communities. One of the things I love about supply management is that it protects these family-owned businesses and it protects those communities.

Government Orders

I would like to hear the member's opinion on supply management and how much more our dairy farmers can take with trade agreements like this one.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, the government should not touch supply management in any upcoming free trade agreements. No new concessions should be made. That is the reality. Supply management protects all the small farms in my riding. I am obviously a proud supporter of supply management.

[*English*]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Before I recognize the next speaker, I want to advise members that we are now at the time when we are transferring over to 10-minute speeches as opposed to 20-minute speeches. Unfortunately, at some point I will have to interrupt the member because we are going to run out of time. He will be able to continue his speech tomorrow if this matter is before the House.

Resuming debate, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion.

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House today for my first speech and to speak to the Canada-United States-Mexico agreement. Some people call it CUSMA. In my home riding of Windsor—Tecumseh, we simply call it the new NAFTA. Either way, this trade agreement spells certainty and job security for the 40,000 manufacturing workers and 8,000 agriculture workers in our region, whose companies rely on open and reliable access to the U.S. market.

Two billion dollars in trade crosses the U.S.-Canada border each day, and one-quarter of that trade crosses the Windsor-Detroit border. More than just market access, the new NAFTA means every car made in North America will have 25% more local content. That means more production, more jobs and greater prosperity for our region.

Members should not just take my word for it; the president of the Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association said that the new NAFTA is “the single biggest boost to the fortunes of the Canadian auto supply sector in our history.” That is why I urge my colleagues in the House to move swiftly and resolutely on ratifying this important trade deal.

I also want to talk about another key aspect of the new NAFTA that would help tilt the playing field even further in favour of Canadian workers like those in Windsor—Tecumseh, and that is the new labour chapter.

Through the new labour chapter, the agreement seeks to improve working conditions and living standards across North America and to protect and enhance basic workers' rights. Trade and labour protections are mutually supportive, and Canada strives to demonstrate internationally that a competitive economy includes safe, healthy and co-operative workplaces. The labour chapter in this new agreement aims to raise and improve labour standards and working con-

ditions in all three countries by building on international labour principles and rights.

The original NAFTA includes a side agreement on labour called the North American Agreement on Labour Cooperation. This new labour chapter is a significant improvement over the original side agreement and is fully incorporated into the new NAFTA. The new labour chapter includes commitments to protect and promote internationally recognized labour principles and rights, including the International Labour Organization's 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Most importantly, these commitments are all subject to dispute settlement.

The chapter also includes commitments to ensure that national laws and policies provide protection of the fundamental principles and rights at work, including the right to freedom of association and to collective bargaining. The chapter also includes a non-derogation clause that prevents parties from deviating from their domestic labour laws in order to encourage trade or investment.

Importantly, the new labour chapter has a number of key provisions that support the advancement of fair and inclusive trade. For instance, it includes enforceable obligations to address issues related to migrant workers, forced or compulsory labour, and violence against union members. To address labour rights violations in Mexico, it also includes an annex with specific requirements on worker representation in collective bargaining.

I mentioned the issue of forced or compulsory labour, an odious practice that still exists in many countries. The Canada-United States-Mexico agreement is the very first agreement to include an obligation that would commit Canada as well as the United States and Mexico to prohibit the importation of goods produced by forced labour. This is a milestone provision that could have an important impact on workers around the globe.

Let me give some context.

The ILO estimates that in 2016, approximately 25 million people worldwide were subjected to forced labour, and a disproportionate number were women and young girls. For this reason, our government has committed to addressing forced labour within the labour chapter of the agreement.

While these inclusive trade provisions would largely help workers outside of Canada, the modernized agreement would also help workers here at home. “How, exactly?” one may ask. North American free trade has been an enormous benefit to Canadian businesses, workers and the overall economy. It means more good-quality jobs here at home and more affordable goods and services. The agreement would ensure that trade does not come at the expense of workers' labour rights.

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Ultimately, trade is about people. It is about creating the best possible conditions for growth, for jobs and for the prosperity of individuals and working families in their communities.

Let me give an example of how the CUSMA would protect Canadian interests and help to curb the outflow of jobs.

• (1825)

The rules of origin chapter addresses automotive manufacturing wages in North America by including a labour value content requirement. Basically, this means that 40% of the value of a vehicle must be from a plant where the workers earn an average of \$16 U.S. per hour or more in order for the vehicle to be considered as originating from a CUSMA country.

This provision, together with the labour chapter provisions on collective bargaining rights, may create upward pressures on wages in Mexico and help to level the playing field for Canadian workers and businesses.

It is important to note that the labour chapter is subject to the dispute settlement chapter in cases of non-compliance to ensure that all obligations are respected. The agreement provides an opportunity for governments to take the necessary actions and measures if prior attempts to resolve the matter through consultations prove ineffective.

The labour chapter allows for complaints from members of the public, including businesses and unions, in cases of non-compliance.

When Canada, the United States and Mexico agreed to further strengthen the labour chapter of the agreement on December 10, 2019, Canada established a new bilateral rapid response mechanism with Mexico that allows Canada to request an investigation into certain labour rights violations by an independent panel of labour experts. This mechanism will ultimately hold covered facilities accountable for the commitments on workers' rights.

The labour chapter is a significant improvement on the original NAFTA side agreement on labour. This robust and comprehensive chapter will bolster existing protections for workers. Workers at home and around the world will benefit from the Canada-United States-Mexico agreement and enjoy better labour standards for years to come.

Let us get this deal ratified.

• (1830)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The hon. member will have three minutes and 20 seconds the next time this matter is before the House should he choose to finish his speech and take questions and comments.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*Translation*]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am here today to raise an issue of great concern to me.

Yesterday in the House, a majority of parliamentarians adopted a motion calling on the Auditor General to conduct an investigation into the \$186.7-billion investing in Canada plan presented by the Liberal government in 2016. This plan was slammed by the Parliamentary Budget Officer many times for its lack of information for Canadians and for the government's inability to keep track of the millions and billions of dollars in investments it promised to make in various projects.

To us, this is absolutely important. Members will recall that, when the Liberal government was first elected in 2015, it promised to invest in infrastructure to get Canadians back to work and to grow the economy and our GDP. Unfortunately, that did not happen and these investments in infrastructure were being made with borrowed money.

In 2015, they announced small deficits of \$10 billion, \$10 billion, \$6 billion, a little less than \$3 billion, and then a return to a balanced budget. Today, we are at \$26 billion in deficit spending for this year alone.

What is more, the Parliamentary Budget Officer says there is no infrastructure plan. How can anyone tell if a plan is good when there is no plan? That is why we asked the Auditor General to do this analysis and look into the plan.

Last year, the Auditor General announced that he did not have enough money to handle all the necessary audits and oversight. We are concerned that the Auditor General might not have all the resources he needs to carry out this new mandate from the House of Commons. That is why we are asking the government for assurances that he will get the resources he needs. The Auditor General says he is several million dollars short of being able to complete all of his performance audits.

We want the government to make the money available. Maybe the government could get some of the money from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The government pledged tens of millions of dollars to the bank so it would look good on the world stage. The government is still sending tens of millions of dollars to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank even though China has closed its borders to canola, pork and beef imports from Canada.

Here in Canada, the Auditor General is complaining that he does not have enough money to provide oversight for all government activities. Given that Canada does not have good relations with China, we believe that it is perfectly reasonable to take the money that is supposed to be invested in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and give it to the Auditor General so that he can investigate how infrastructure money is spent and invested right here in Canada.

• (1835)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, the member was quite focused on the Auditor General and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. My colleague and I thought maybe it would be more appropriate if I attempted to provide an answer, because it was not necessarily about canola.

Having said that, there is a difference on this side of the House, with the new government, since 2015. There is a much deeper respect for those independent parliamentary offices, such as the Auditor General of Canada. We all know that there is a process in which the Auditor General goes before standing committees and comes before Parliament in different ways, putting in requests and also making suggestions. Reports come out. There is a great deal of discussion and ongoing debate.

Even when I was an MLA, I always respected the independence of the auditor, whether at the national level or at the provincial level. They do a lot of fine work. I am sure that even with the resources they have today, they are able to meet their requirements.

I suspect if members were to check with any of our independent offices of the Parliament of Canada, or even those independent offices at the provincial level, they would find there is always a need for additional resources. I am sure if more money was offered, something that Stephen Harper never did to the best of my knowledge, it would at least facilitate some discussion.

With regard to infrastructure, I have noticed that many of the Conservatives like to talk about the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. However, I can recall one of the incidents in the past where it actually invested in flood proofing for the Philippines. I believe that saved a great deal of material and provided financial help for a country that was really in need of some flood proofing.

To try to say that the Asian Development Bank is nothing but a disaster does it a disservice. At the end of the day, it was a wise investment from the Government of Canada.

There are many different ways we can provide assistance. Every year, whether it was a Conservative government of the past or the current government, we spend money internationally to support communities. We have done that. It is part of our obligations. All western countries, including the U.S., European countries and Australia, contribute to the bigger picture and try to make the world a better place to live. I suspect that, at least indirectly if not directly, the commitment to the Asian Development Bank assists in doing that.

The member made a brief comment on canola, and I can tell him that the government has long been a very strong advocate for our

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canola farmers on the prairies. In fact, shortly after getting into government, we had an issue with canola in Russia. We were able to resolve that. We continuously look at other potential markets around the world where canola trade could be expanded upon.

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Berthold: Madam Speaker, it was only once the current government became a minority government that it agreed to talk about canola in a special committee on Canada-China relations. The Liberal government is going to send \$256 million of taxpayers' money to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The Auditor General is asking for much less than that to be able to do his job and audit the government.

The Auditor General needs more money because the current government is spending like no other government in Canadian history. This Prime Minister is the highest-spending prime minister in Canadian history. It makes sense that the Auditor General needs more money to sort through all of the spending and programs. Infrastructure Canada's funding programs include more than 50 programs and involve 32 departments.

If we want the Auditor General to do his job, we need to give him the means to do so. Since we are at odds with China, on canola in particular, I think we should use the money that we were to send to the Canada Infrastructure Bank to adequately fund the Auditor General of Canada.

• (1840)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, my friend makes reference to the record amounts of money the government spends. I am sure he would also acknowledge that every year, as the country continues to grow and there is more prosperity, albeit more under Liberal regimes than Conservative regimes, we are going to see increases in expenditures.

We need to respect the fact that we have an independent office. It is a parliamentary office. There are opportunities for the type of dialogue that the member is suggesting we have. I would really encourage the member to get involved with committees, such as the procedure and House affairs committee, or maybe raising, through his House leader, the issue at the Board of Internal Economy. There are other ways to talk about it, but I do not think we need to politicize the Office of the Auditor General.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6:41 p.m.)

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