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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, February 7, 2020

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1005)

[*English*]

### ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT

The House resumed from February 6 consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here continuing the debate on Bill C-3, a bill that the Conservatives are cautiously optimistic about, as it would provide some degree of oversight to the CBSA.

One of the pressing issues with the CBSA, and one on which I think there will be a need for a great deal of oversight, is the challenge that has grown up under the Liberal government of people crossing the border illegally. It has put a strain our system, especially as many refugees in other parts of the world have to wait a very long time.

Given that this is one of the issues raised in terms of the CBSA and oversight, I wonder if the member could give the House an update on what is actually happening in terms of that challenge.

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am extremely pleased that all members of the House, I believe, are supporting Bill C-3.

All of us in the House recognize that it is extremely important to have in place an independent review and complaint process, as we certainly want to make sure that all of our constituents are protected. That is, again, why we are extremely pleased.

The RCMP and other government departments have these types of independent review processes in place. That is why we are moving forward to put resources and the necessary investments in place to make sure that when such complaints come forward, our constituents will be afforded an opportunity to make a complaint that will be investigated by an independent body.

**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 wonder if my colleague could reflect on how important it is that we have oversight for Canada border control agents. We have other oversight boards that cover our RCMP and correctional officers. I believe having public oversight ultimately assists in building confidence in our system.

Could my colleague provide her thoughts on the importance of this, given that most people would probably be surprised to find out that we do not currently have oversight? This is a priority for the government because it is our third bill.

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor:** Madam Speaker, perhaps many in the House are not aware that prior to entering politics, I worked within the Codiac RCMP regional office in Moncton, New Brunswick. During that time, I saw the value of having an independent body that was able to conduct investigations when people felt they did not receive the proper service.

With respect to having in place an independent body, we want to make sure that all of our constituents are treated with the utmost respect and that they have the confidence to move forward and make a complaint when it is necessary. That is why we are very pleased to be moving forward with the bill in a timely fashion.

However, not only are we moving forward with the bill, but in budget 2019 more than \$24 million has been set aside to make sure that the appropriate resources are in place.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, as I have said before, as someone who came to the House asking for oversight for the CBSA, I am really excited about the enthusiasm of the other two parties, late though it may be.

Bill C-23, which was passed in the last Parliament, granted extensive powers to U.S. border agents in pre-clearance areas in Canada without any oversight whatsoever, including over their use of force or complaints about things like harassment of religious or ethnic minorities.

If my hon. colleague has an enthusiasm for independent complaint mechanisms, why do we not have any mechanism at all that would apply to the U.S. border officers operating on Canadian soil in the pre-clearance areas?

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor:** Madam Speaker, first and foremost, I want to thank my colleague for his support of the bill.

*Government Orders*

Once again, our priority is to make sure we have an independent review complaints process for the Canada Border Services Agency, as that is where we have jurisdiction. We want to make sure that our constituents have access to an independent body to which they will be able to make a complaint if necessary. I also want to highlight that we recognize that the large majority of interventions at the CBSA are very positive. However, for some extreme circumstances, we want to make sure that is available to them.

**Mr. Gagan Sikand (Mississauga—Streetsville, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to add to the debate of Bill C-3 today.

An independent review and complaints mechanism for the Canada Border Services Agency would fill an important gap for our national security agencies. This is not a new issue for parliamentarians. Members will recall that similar legislation was introduced and debated in the last session, as Bill C-98. That bill received unanimous consent just eight months ago, and since that time our government has had the benefit of considering comments made on previous legislation. With its introduction as a new bill, it is reflective of many of the comments and recommendations previously made.

CBSA oversight is not a new idea. In fact, Bill S-205, introduced by former Senator Moore in the other place a few years ago, proposed a CBSA review body. That was, in part, in response to a previous call by senators to create an oversight body through the 2015 report of the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence. Many parliamentarians, academics, experts and stakeholders have made similar calls over the years. That is largely because Canada is the only country among our closest allies not to have a dedicated review body for complaints regarding its border agency. Furthermore, the CBSA is the only organization within the public safety portfolio without such a body. Bill C-3 would change this environment.

Canadians need to be confident that their complaints are handled and addressed appropriately and independently. They deserve enhanced reporting on how border services operate, which the bill also proposes. To expand on that, under Bill C-3, the new body would be able to not only report on its finding but also make recommendations as it sees fit. Those reports would include the PCRC's findings and recommendations on everything from the CBSA's policies and procedures to its compliance with the law to the reasonableness of the use of its powers.

This is about accountability and transparency. To parse why this is so important, we must take a look at the rapidly changing context of the CBSA.

On a daily basis, CBSA officers interact with thousands of Canadians and visitors to Canada at airports, land borders, crossing ports and other locations. To put that in numbers, that is 96 million interactions per year with travellers and \$32 billion per year in duties and taxes, according to the 2017-18 statistics. That is 27.3 million cars, 34.5 million air passengers and 21.4 million commercial releases. All of that happens at 13 international airports, 117 land border crossings, 27 rail sites and beyond. This will only increase. That is why the government introduced a federal budget last year proposing investments of \$1.25 billion for the CBSA to help modernize some of our ports of entry and our border operations. After

all, we know that business at the border never stops and is growing year after year.

As hon. members know, ensuring that business continues while protecting Canadians requires CBSA officers to have the power to arrest, detain, search and seize, and the authority to use reasonable force when required. We know that Canada's over 14,000 CBSA officers are truly world class, providing consistent and fair treatment to travellers and traders.

However, as business grows along with demands for accountability, the CBSA cannot reasonably be expected to handle all the complaints on its own, nor should Canadians expect it would. Currently, complaints about conduct and the service provided by CBSA officers are handled internally. If an individual is dissatisfied with the results of an internal CBSA investigation, there is currently no mechanism for the public to request an independent review of these complaints. Bill C-3 would neatly remedy all of this. For example, such an individual would be able to ask the PCRC to review his or her complaint. At the conclusion of a PCRC investigation, the review body would be able to report on its findings and make recommendations as it sees fit. The president of the CBSA would be required to respond in writing to the PCRC's findings and recommendations.

The PCRC would also accept complaints about the conduct and service provided by CBSA employees from detainees held in CBSA facilities. These could include complaints related to treatment and conditions in detention.

● (1010)

On the rare occasion that there be a serious incident involving CBSA personnel, Bill C-3 would legislate a framework to not only handle and track such incidents, but also to publicly report on them. It would in fact create an obligation for the CBSA to notify local police and the PCRC of any serious incident involving the CBSA officers or employees. As I have noted, the legislation would also allow for the PCRC to review, on its own initiative or at least at the request of the minister, any non-national security activity of the CBSA.

National security activities would be reviewed by the new national security intelligence review committee, which is the National Security Intelligence Review Agency, or NSIRA. As colleagues know, the NSIRA is responsible for complaints and reviews relating to national security, including those relating to the RCMP and the CBSA. Members will see provisions in Bill C-3 that would facilitate information sharing and co-operation between the PCRC and NSIRA.

I would point out that the PCRC would not have the authority to review, uphold, amend or overturn enforcement, trade or national security decisions made with the CBSA, nor would it consider complaints that could be dealt with by other organizations, such as the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages or the Office of the Privacy Commission. What it would do is provide a reasonable, long-sought-after framework to build accountability in our public safety agencies and trust among Canadians.

As I close, I would like to point out that this is the latest in a line of recent measures to enhance accountability in our national security apparatus. The former Bill C-22 led to the creation of the now operational National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, which has a broad mandate to review national security and intelligence organizations.

The former Bill C-59 led to the creation of the NSIRA. NSIRA now has the authority to review any activity carried out by CSIS or the Communications Security Establishment and any national security or intelligence-related activity carried out by federal departments and agencies.

All of this amounts to unprecedented enhancements in our national security accountability, on top of the government's creation of a national security transparency commitment, which is all about integrating Canada's democratic values into our national security activities.

These measures build on the government's broad national security consultations in 2016, which sought to engage Canadians, stakeholders and subject matter experts on issues related to national security and the protection of rights and freedoms. In those consultations, four-fifths, or 81%, of online responses called for independent review mechanisms for departments and agencies that have national security responsibilities, including the CBSA.

This outline should provide some rationale for bipartisan support for Bill C-3 by parliamentarians, academics, experts and stakeholders alike and other Canadians. Our security and intelligence communities must keep pace with evolving threats to the safety and security of Canadians and with a rapidly changing border environment. They must do so in a way that safeguards our rights and freedoms, and the people's trust in how the government works. That is why I ask the House to join me in supporting Bill C-3 today.

• (1015)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for Mississauga—Streetsville for sharing his profound passion on this topic with the House and for the work he put into preparing those detailed remarks he gave to the House on Bill C-3 today.

### *Government Orders*

Further to what the member said, does he think that this oversight body might take up the issue of increased illegal border crossing, if questions come to the oversight body related to that? I did not really hear an answer from the previous member. What is the government doing about this challenge of the growing flows across our border from the United States?

**Mr. Gagan Sikand:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the kind remarks. My passion is only rivalled by his enthusiasm, and so I thank him for that.

To address your question, as a South Asian male, there have been many incidents where there has been gross misconduct—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I would ask the member to address his remarks through the Speaker please.

**Mr. Gagan Sikand:** I will address the question through you, Madam Speaker.

As a South Asian male, I have had many incidents with friends and families at border crossings where there has been gross mishandling of our entry into or departure from the country. This is not by any means indicative of the CBSA or its agents. I have a great deal of respect for those who keep our country safe.

It is important to address the fact that Canadians and others who are entering our country first have that mechanism to have complaints heard. Before we address the concerns of people who cross our border illegally, it is important to address the concerns and trust of those who are nationals of the country.

• (1020)

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am always disappointed to hear Conservatives using every opportunity to stigmatize refugees in this country.

I want to compliment the member for his speech on this topic and for recognizing that by and large Canada Border Services agents do a good job. However, having better accountability mechanisms would only increase the quality of the performance of those agents and help them establish public trust for the work that they have to do.

*Government Orders*

My question for him, because he is from Mississauga, has to do once again with pre-clearance, especially the very large numbers of people who are pre-cleared at Toronto's Pearson Airport. While we are establishing accountability for our border service officers, in the last Parliament the member's government put forward Bill C-23, the new Preclearance Act, that gives U.S. border agents the same powers as Canadian border agents and they are exercising those powers on Canadian soil. The bill even removes the right of U.S. citizens to withdraw from U.S. preclearance. There is no accountability mechanism in place for the activities of U.S. border agents in Canada.

I wonder if the hon. member has any comments on that problem.

**Mr. Gagan Sikand:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his advocacy and good work on this issue.

As I stated earlier in replying to the previous question, it is important that we address domestic concerns first and take care of our housekeeping here internally before we address any other concerns.

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as the member of Parliament for Châteauguay—Lacolle, where both the Lacolle border crossing and Roxham Road are located, I am proud of the way that our officials, in both the CBSA and the RCMP, have handled in a legal, humanitarian way the irregular entry of people crossing Roxham Road. Many residents in my riding work at the Lacolle border crossing. They have told me that they were hampered four or five years ago by cuts that were made by the Conservative government to their operations, cuts that hampered the security measures that they have to take on a daily basis.

I welcome the legislation. I would like to hear my hon. colleague's remarks on this issue.

**Mr. Gagan Sikand:** Madam Speaker, in our previous government, we provided an unprecedented amount of funding to the CBSA for restoring its ability to address concerns at the border, such as illegal border crossings or, in my neck of the woods, the smuggling of weapons perhaps.

Our government is quite aware of the need for the CBSA to be able to do its job. In order to allow its agents to do their job effectively, we have been quite pleased to continuously support it through funding at the national level.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lévis—Lotbinière, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Calgary Shepard.

I am pleased to participate in today's debate on Bill C-3, an act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts.

The Conservative Party of Canada will always protect the integrity of our borders and ensure that the Canada Border Services Agency has the people and equipment it needs.

A public complaints commission will improve general oversight and help the Canada Border Services Agency do its job even more effectively.

I have a few questions for this government. First of all, why did it wait so long to fulfill a 2015 election promise and amend the act? This Liberal government definitely has a habit of putting commitments off until later. If it was so important in 2015, it should be urgent now that it is 2020.

This bill is a copy of Bill C-98, which died on the Order Paper at the end of the 42nd Parliament. During its study of Bill C-98, the committee heard from just seven witnesses, including the minister and five officials who reported to him. I hope that this time, the parliamentary committee will have the freedom it needs to study this bill as thoroughly as it deserves and to hear testimony from more witnesses. We are going to make sure that all stakeholders are heard during this parliamentary committee study and that we get all time we need to do our job properly.

I want to take this opportunity to commend my friend and colleague, the member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, for his tireless dedication to the issue of public safety in Canada. I admire the way he gets things done and his attendance record in the House. Our whole caucus is very proud of him, and I tip my hat to him.

Our border services are also very important for protecting our economy and the safety of the foods we import. I would like some assurance from the Liberal government that our free trade agreements with our partners and other countries are fair and equitable.

Also, does the government complete all the necessary checks at the border to ensure that we are importing foods that meet environmental and safety standards equivalent to those enforced in Canada?

With regard to aluminum, will the government allow Chinese aluminum produced with coal-fired Chinese electricity to enter the country, rather than using aluminum produced here in Quebec with hydroelectricity? This is certainly not something we would expect from a government that claims to care about the environment. It is clear the government is not walking the talk.

I want to come back to the Liberal government's consultation process. Did the government ask the opinion of front-line RCMP and CBSA officers? If so, what were their concerns and how were they taken into account?

I also think there is a need to reassure Canadians about the independence of the commission. If the past is any indication, this government has a tendency to interfere with the work of independent commissions.

*Government Orders*

Recently, we saw the Prime Minister interfere in one of the Auditor General's files, and we have not yet gotten to the bottom of that situation. We, on this side of the House, still have questions about the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner's report in that regard. We hope to have the co-operation of all members of the Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics to launch a transparent study on that.

That said, I have no doubt that the debate on Bill C-3 is necessary and has merit.

• (1025)

However, I do think that it is more urgent to tackle the increasing number of illegal firearms in Canada, the gang shootings, the overdoses, mental health issues, legal backlogs, incidents of repeat offenders attacking Canadians, and human trafficking in this country. Why is this bill the government's top priority coming into this 43rd Parliament when there are all kinds of other pressing issues that should be handled first?

The Liberal government seems to want to address issues on which there is some form of agreement to avoid important societal debates. There is so much work to do to keep our country prosperous and safe. The government has been moving at a snail's pace since it came to power. It is playing the part of the grasshopper and doing whatever it wants, instead of taking care of the urgent issues.

Here is one important issue that should be a priority in the agenda of this spineless government, as I have already mentioned in the House in a members' statement. Canada is a country rich in natural resources, such as crude oil and natural gas in the west and Newfoundland and Labrador; hydroelectricity in Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia; nuclear energy in Ontario and New Brunswick; and last, but not least, the shale oil and gas, coal, solar energy, wind energy and biomass energy used in various provinces and territories. Our country is so fortunate to have all of these resources. So many countries would love to have Canada's resources to help lift them out of poverty.

This prompts us to ask other important questions. How are all these energy resources transported within Canada, to serve all the provinces and territories, and how are they exported out of Canada, to the U.S. and other countries? Do we have adequate infrastructure? Are these methods of transportation safe and reliable enough to ensure an uninterrupted supply or, as was the case in the recent propane crisis in Quebec, are we relying on a single transporter? What about the environmental and economic impacts? Do we have energy security? Many questions deserve answers. That is why I would like to see the creation of a national commission on energy security. In my view, Canada's energy sector stakeholders should work together as part of a large-scale national consultation sponsored by the federal government. We must have the courage to get our heads out of the sand and talk about the energy sector. Unfortunately, this is a wedge issue in Canada right now, when it should be something that brings us all together from coast to coast to coast.

I strongly urge parliamentarians from all parties to initiate this discussion, which is crucial to the future of our country. This dialogue with every stakeholder in the energy sector will make it possible to develop a serious strategy for the future of Canada's energy sector by creating a national commission on energy security.

Our Canadian approach to energy will guide the economic destiny of future generations and how we position ourselves on the world stage. Let us take up our responsibilities as parliamentarians and legislators in the House, and ask the government to show leadership for the well-being of Canadians and for our economic prosperity.

• (1030)

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am going to pick up on what my colleague was saying about the transportation of goods on both sides of the border.

We are hearing from our farmers about a problem. Quite often, tanker loads of cows' milk are being passed off as tanker loads of goats' milk. This keeps the quotas a bit higher than what is actually being imported. I would like my colleague to comment on that.

Should complaints of this nature be addressed by a possible independent complaints commission?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for that important question. I talked about that a bit in my speech. The number of food inspections at the border should be increased to ensure that what is entering Canada is indeed what is being declared. If it is goats' milk that is being declared, then the border officer must ensure that it is indeed goat's milk. If it is cows' milk, then that is another story, because of supply management. It is really important that there be regular inspections at the border to ensure that the stakeholders who do business with Canada are truly honest about the cargo they are bringing here.

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. He talked about a subject that is especially important to him.

I had the opportunity to do a lot of work with him on the propane crisis in Quebec last fall. We realized at the last minute that many sectors of Quebec's economy were at risk and that many sectors in Ontario were also affected by the crisis.

He raised a very interesting point about the energy commission and I would like him to talk more about that. I believe that the House should give this option more serious consideration.

• (1035)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased that my colleague asked this question and I thank him.

I believe that Canada is now at the point where we should take the time to talk about all types of energy and about energy synergy to determine how we will manage our energy supply in future. We must look into the ways that we can use all forms of Canadian energy for the well-being of Canadians for the next two or three generations. We have the opportunity to create infrastructure that will be used for the next 100 years. We must make wise choices.

*Government Orders*

In the future, there will still be a lot of oil, but there will also be a lot of electricity. I do not understand why it is so difficult for Quebec to sell electricity to Ontario. At present, it seems easier for Quebec to sell electricity to the United States, despite the fact that Ontario and Quebec are part of the same country and are not separated by a border. I understand that we must respect provincial jurisdictions. We should launch broad consultations because it is possible to create a richer Canada, especially in the long term, with a national commission on energy security.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Madam Speaker, I am very impressed by my colleague's comment about energy synergy. What a fascinating line of thinking. Instead of bickering over the issue of energy in Canada, we should be leveraging the strengths of each region and the capacities of our natural resources, such as hydroelectricity in Quebec, oil in the west and nuclear power in certain regions. That is a very intriguing debate. We should stop squabbling and focus on energy synergies. I think the member has illuminated a clear path to national unity.

Could he give us some details about energy synergy?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

This is a pivotal moment. Right now, in 2020, all parliamentarians need to set the course for this country's next 20, 40, 50 and 100 years. It is our duty to do so. Since we are fortunate enough to be in the House, we need to seize this opportunity to steer the Canadian economy in the right direction and ensure a prosperous future for our children, our grandchildren and, if we are lucky, our great-grandchildren.

Canada is lucky to have tremendous energy resources. We are the envy of the whole world. We need to take our job to heart and work together to put Canada on the path to globally unrivalled prosperity.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Lévis—Lotbinière for sharing his time with me so I could add my comments on the bill.

[*English*]

I want to also thank my constituents for sending me here for a second term and for the trust they placed in me in the past election.

Bill C-3 was in the last Parliament. I was a member of Parliament at that time and I remember the debates on the subject. Much of the content of the legislation being proposed before us is similar. The fact that this happens to be one of the government's earliest bills, when we have so many urgent, more critical issues to deal with, just calls into question the judgment of the government in pushing this forward at this time.

I support the contents of the bill. I support making a complaints body. I support greater oversight over the civil service and in other situations as well. I spent the better part of the last Parliament on two different committees, foreign affairs and finance, calling exactly for that greater oversight. Our role as parliamentarians is to ensure the oversight of the Government of Canada's spending, but also the oversight over the civil service and what it does.

I know, Madam Speaker, that you sat on a committee in the previous Parliament, the OGGO as we call it, operations and government estimates.

Again, there are so many other things with which we could be dealing.

I often have heard members say, for example, this is good, or, for example, this legislation has this concept or, for example, these are the types of problems this legislation will solve.

This will bring me to my Yiddish proverb, one that says, "for example" is not the same as proof, proof of why we should be pursuing this legislation at this time with this expediency. There are so many other issues.

I will use, for example, there are other issues we should have brought forward and dealt with immediately. These issues are of number one concern to people in Alberta, people in my constituency and people all across Canada.

I will mention, for example, the first time home buyer incentive program. Just last week, the Government of Canada, to a question I asked on the Order Paper, gave us an answer on the \$1.25 billion of spending on a program that had helped fewer than 3,000 people. I called it an election gimmick many months ago when the program came out.

I chased down the Department of Finance officials. I chased down Evan Siddall, the CEO of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the minister and many others at different committees to get answers before the House. Now we see from the results that the program has failed. It would be much more interesting for the House to do a deep dive into this program more closely.

The Government of Canada has said that 2,700 approvals happened, but as my colleague from Calgary Rocky Ridge mentioned to me, industry standards say that only about 50% of the people actually went through with it.

We have put aside \$1.25 billion, and probably have helped 1,300 people achieve their dream of home ownership, which is an abysmal failure for a government program, a program pushed forward by the Minister of Finance and the minister for families and social development. The program was highly defended by Department of Finance officials and CMHC officials who did not like my chasing down answers on behalf of constituents. People in my riding are very worried about that.

That is a bill we could be reviewing right now, a piece of legislation to review the program and maybe eliminate it. It would save some money, time and look into why we failed as an oversight body to stop this election gimmick. That is my first example.



Originally the Government of Canada said that 100,000 people would be helped by the program. After 99 days, in the data provided in the House, we know that only about 32,000 people would be helped over a four-year time span. When I originally asked the question at committee about where the government got the number of 100,000 people, the Department of Finance officials told me that CMHC gave them the numbers and CMHC officials told me that the Department of Finance gave them the numbers. I am sure, Madam Speaker, that has been your experience in the past on different parliamentary committees, where department officials disagree about who gave whom what numbers. That would be a worthy enterprise for the House, to look into why this program so massively failed.

I know that in this next budget, potentially we could be expanding the reach of the program to \$789,000 homes. I am very worried that the expansion of this program would not meet any of its goals.

We could, for example, have looked at the approval of Teck Frontier and the legislation governing it. The Teck Frontier project is a \$20.6 billion investment in northern Alberta: 10,000 jobs, 7,500 construction and 2,500 operating jobs annually for four years. It is wholly within the territory of Alberta. It is wholly within the jurisdiction of Alberta. We control our natural resources.

• (1040)

As an Albertan, I do not want a handout. The people of my constituency do not want a handout. We do not want a just transition directed from Ottawa to the people of Alberta. We simply want to be given the respect and dignity to continue creating wealth. We are fine if a portion of the equalization and transfer payments are redistributed to our friends in rest of Canada.

However, Teck Frontier would be an important issue to be debated before the House. It must be approved.

As I asked yesterday in the House, I am wondering if the Government of Canada is afraid to say “yes” to prime minister Jason Kenney— Premier Jason Kenney. I was thinking in French. It would be an interesting one to look at that.

Albertans will say that if this project is not approved, they will know they are not respected within the Confederation. That is a drastic change to how the Confederation is supposed to work. I want the Confederation of 1867, the way the Fathers of Confederation intended it to be, truly autonomous provinces, able to develop their resources, able to do the best things for the people of their province. Provincial governments are elected to do that.

I know the people of Quebec understand this and have fought for this for decades now, just like all provincial residents should do. They should be looking to the provincial governments. It would be worthy, for example, of the House to look at, to ensure the Government of Canada is making the right decisions on behalf of Canadians and on behalf of Albertans.

We could be looking at the Trans Mountain pipeline, its construction and the series of missteps, dithering and failures of the Government of Canada that led to point where a business, Kinder Morgan, opted out. Northern gateway was cancelled, energy east was cancelled, TMX was expropriated.

### *Government Orders*

As my colleague, the member for Carleton likes to say, “All our exes are in Texas.” All those companies moved their money to Texas, and are now building thousands of kilometres of pipeline in Texas for product that will compete at the Oklahoma hub with Alberta product. That situation is an absolutely travesty. For example, that would be something we could have considered instead of doing Bill C-3 immediately.

Bill C-3 could have been cobbled with other matters before the House.

• (1045)

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I get the enthusiasm of the member wanting to talk about matters dealing with the oil industry in Alberta, but I am just wondering what relevance it has to Bill C-3, which is the matter we are debating in the House today.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I am confident that the hon. member for Calgary Shepard will get to the matter of the bill. He has about a minute and a half left.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, as I was just saying, going back to Bill C-3 and the oversight propositions in the bill, and back to the Yiddish proverb, “for example” is not proof that this legislation needs to be before us at this very moment. It could have been cobbled and combined with other matters that the Government of Canada considered needed to be done to the Canada Border Services Agency.

Again, we have seen a predilection of the government to institute and include all types of things in omnibus budget bills that do not belong there. I should remind the House that in the last Parliament, the Speaker decided to exclude certain portions of previous omnibus budget bills.

When I talk to my constituents, when I ask them what is critical to their day to day, what are the most important issues to them and what touches their daily life, none of them have told me it is Bill C-3. None of them have told me it is the oversight of the CBSA. It is their jobs, their livelihoods and the prosperity of Alberta families.

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague ended his speech with a comment about no one in his constituency having asked about Bill C-3.

One of the problems we have with the bill is that no one in the government has asked the workers in CBSA about Bill C-3. Maybe what they should have asked is a follow-up on the employee survey, where 63%, almost two out of every three workers in CBSA, said senior management was not to be trusted. They could not bring issues of ethics or concerns forward to senior management without fear of reprisal.

*Government Orders*

We have seen the Liberal government go after any whistle-blower, whether it is the former justice minister or whether it is a lady complaining about the Prime Minister's blackface. They fired her, and threatened to send anyone similar to re-education camps.

Would my colleague care to comment on the fact that 63% of CBSA staff do not trust the government, do not trust their managers for any issue without fear of reprisal? Maybe that should be looked at before Liberals jam Bill C-3 through.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Edmonton West for bringing to the attention of the House the fact that so many rank and file members of CBSA do not feel comfortable going to their managers.

This is something I have consistently seen, going into my second Parliament. Often, departmental plans are ignored by the ministers responsible. They are an absolute wealth of information when it comes to the priorities that should be found in bills like this: technical pieces of legislation that are looking after oversight bodies.

Often, there are departmental plans where we find a failure of government administration and oversight to both provide services to Canadians and also provide a work environment for employees that is the expected standard.

• (1050)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague said prime minister Jason Kenney. This leadership race just keeps changing every day, and I hope the member for Calgary Shepard will consider his own future in that context after such an excellent speech in defence of things that are all so important to us.

I want to ask the member to share what he is hearing from people in Alberta. I know, for my constituents, that Teck Frontier and building pipelines are things that are top of mind. The government discussion we are seeing in the media today is talking about a rescue package. Liberals are talking about giving money to people outside of the context of being able to develop our natural resources.

What I hear from Albertans is that they do not want to become an equalization-receiving province. They want to be a building, contributing province, but the government has to get out of the way in order to allow them to develop our natural resources.

Our desire for every part of the country is that every region, every group of people within this country is able to seize the opportunities that are provided by natural resources instead of being forced into dependency on the federal government by anti-development policies. I would like to hear my colleague's comments on that.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, I will begin by saying I am officially not running for the leadership of my party. I am open to caucus chair.

[*Translation*]

I could repeat that in French if necessary, but I will not.

[*English*]

The member brings up the crux of the issue. When I was door knocking in the past election the most important matter for my con-

stituents, consistently on every street, was equalization. It did not matter if they were seniors, young people, people who were employed or unemployed. They were bringing up the issue of equalization as an issue of fairness.

Alberta has not collected equalization in any way since 1965. We have been a net contributor of over \$600 billion, and Albertans are tired of the situation where we are told we are not allowed to create the wealth that then is expected to be shared. We do not have a problem with sharing, but do not stand in the way of our ability to create the wealth in the first place.

**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, this legislation has good support on all sides of the House. Listening to my Conservative friends across the way, they seem to want to debate issues that are not necessarily relevant to the bill itself.

Would the member not agree that this something that is long overdue? We have seen a great deal of consultation that has taken place over the last number of years. We have now made it a high priority by placing it as the third bill of this House.

From the member's perspective, when would he like to see this bill sent to a standing committee where maybe we can listen to other Canadian views, particularly correctional officers and others, to provide—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** A very quick comment from the member for Calgary Shepard.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec:** Madam Speaker, I would be happy to see this bill sent to committee once all members are satisfied that they have represented their constituents in the House on the matter.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am very grateful for the opportunity to participate in the second reading debate on Bill C-3.

If passed, this bill will establish the public complaints and review commission for the Canada Border Services Agency, the CBSA. This bill will give individuals a forum to express their discontent and have their complaints heard.

The new commission will be an addition to the existing Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP. The new joint commission will receive complaints from the public concerning the conduct of CBSA and RCMP employees and the services both organizations provide, with the exception of complaints relating to national security, which are reviewed by the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency.

The CBSA is a key player in maintaining peace and security in Canada and has been for almost 16 years. Currently, Canadians rely on nearly 14,000 employees to provide fair, respectful service to the public. Those 14,000 employees are responsible for the longest international land border on the planet.

They work hard to protect our borders at 13 airports, 117 land border crossings, and ports and railway stations across this great country. Every day, they monitor the flow of goods and people crossing the border, and they do it professionally and courteously. Many MPs can attest to receiving outstanding services from CBSA employees during their travels abroad.

Over the course of the last fiscal year, CBSA employees interacted with 96 million travellers, inspected four million of them and processed over 21 million commercial releases and 46 million courier shipments. Their work involves seizing illegal goods, enforcing trade remedies, and intercepting and detaining people who pose a threat to public safety or are inadmissible.

In that context, the CBSA is also responsible for enforcing over 90 laws and regulations that ensure the country's and Canadians' security, and so I want to commend those employees for the professionalism and dedication with which they do their jobs every day.

However, I still believe that, when people feel as though their rights have been violated during an interaction with a government agency, they should have the opportunity to file a complaint against the agency in question. What is more, I am of the opinion that the complaint in question must be examined by an external and independent body. That is an important and fundamental guarantee that Canadians expect and are entitled to.

Bill C-3 seeks to offer Canadians that exact guarantee. The CBSA is currently the only agency under the Department of Public Safety that does not have its own independent review mechanism. Many proponents are calling for such a mechanism to be implemented. I would like to mention just a few.

The chief commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission said the following on the subject in 2016, and I quote:

This is why we have joined the call for independent monitoring and oversight of the Canada Border Services Agency in relation to migrants and other foreign nationals in detention.

In 2015, the hon. Senator Moore introduced Bill S-205, which proposed the creation of an inspector general to consider complaints.

• (1055)

Later the same year, this bill was followed by a report from the Standing Senate Committee on National Security and Defence that reached the same conclusion. The committee later recommended that the Canadian government create an independent public complaints review body for the CBSA.

On the national security side, our government has already created the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency. That agency has the authority to review national security and intelligence-related functions across government, including the CBSA. Bill C-3 therefore provides the final missing piece. Indeed, Bill C-3 will allow

### *Statements by Members*

for independent review of non-national security-related government activities only.

In addition, the new public complaints review commission could conduct its own investigations—

• (1100)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I have to interrupt the hon. member for Orléans and let her know that she will have four minutes after question period to finish her speech.

We will now proceed with statements by members.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, Tuesday is the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, giving us a chance to recognize the amazing Canadian women who have blazed a path for the next generation of female astronauts, doctors and engineers.

Too often young women face barriers in pursuing a career in the sciences. More needs to be done to highlight the Canadian women who are currently pushing the boundaries of human knowledge. I want to give a shout-out to Dr. Sheila Singh and Dr. Juliet Daniel at McMaster University; my colleague, the member for Etobicoke North; and Canada's medical officer of health, Dr. Theresa Tam. These exceptional students are showing our young women that no job is too big, no challenge is insurmountable and no disease is incurable if people work hard and surround themselves with a team as diverse as our country.

I thank them for inspiring the next generation of women scientists.

\* \* \*

### MEADOW LAKE LIONS CLUB

**Mr. Gary Vidal (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the Meadow Lake Lions Club was chartered in 1962 and has been very successful in raising money for the community and for aid around the world ever since. Locally, annual donations have provided everything from scooters to eyeglasses for those in need, as well as student trips to Ottawa, Australia, Europe and Africa.

*Statements by Members*

The Meadow Lake Hospital Foundation has received over \$100,000 in the past few years for much-needed hospital equipment. There have been contributions to the arena, the curling rink, the swimming pool and to schools for playground equipment. However, Lions Park has been its pride and joy since it opened in 1983. Approximately \$400,000 has been devoted to this jewel of Meadow Lake.

I recently had the privilege of presenting Lions Club member Bill Hart with a certificate for 50 years of service. This is outstanding volunteerism. I ask all members to join me in recognizing Bill Hart and the rest of the Meadow Lake Lions Club for their incredible contributions to our small community.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**CHÂTEAUGUAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, in honour of Black History Month, I wish to acknowledge the incredible work of the Association communautaire Horizon de Châteauguay. Founded in 1994 by the late businessman and philanthropist Clinton Ritchie, and now run by the illustrious Utton McLean, Horizon provides financial and personal support to students with potential from our black community.

I would like to mention by name a few recent recipients of scholarships from the Association communautaire Horizon: Kyle Briggs, physiotherapy; Ashique Hines, primary education; and Shanice Mattison, forensic medicine.

[English]

These bursaries are financed by wonderful community suppers where all are welcome. People have not tasted jerk chicken or fried plantain until they have enjoyed these delicacies as cooked up by Hazel, Patricia and the other terrific volunteers at Horizon.

\* \* \*

**HIV-AIDS SELF-TESTING**

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, in Canada we are seeing rapidly rising rates of new HIV infections in indigenous communities, racialized Canadians and young gay men. Over the last two years, the U.K. and New South Wales have managed to decrease new HIV infections by 30% to 40%, while Canada saw an 11% increase.

Science tells us that people knowing their status is the key to decreasing infection rates. On December 20, 2018, I asked the Prime Minister to expedite approval for new HIV self-tests, Canadian technology that has been in use in other countries since 2012, and more than a year later, we are still waiting.

Taking the low-cost steps of making home testing widely available, eliminating the need to see doctors to get tested and making retrovirals and PrEP readily available to high-risk populations will get us to the 90-90-90 goals of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. Having 90% of people living with HIV knowing their status, 90% in treatment and 90% with viral suppression would put Canada on the path to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic once and for all.

[Translation]

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Milton, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, in this month of February, I want to highlight the importance of Black History Month.

• (1105)

[English]

I am proud to say that the Town of Milton is officially recognizing Black History Month with a proclamation at Town Hall on Monday, February 10, at noon. The Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton has exhibits and shows across Halton throughout the month, and I encourage everyone to check the schedule.

I would like to highlight the contributions of two amazing black women from my riding.

Cheryl Hayles is a celebrated black woman from Milton who led a delegation to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York. She is one of CFUW Milton's 100 women of the past 100 years.

Kayla Alexander is Milton's hometown basketball superstar and also the author of a book for children, *The Magic of Basketball*. Yesterday she led Team Canada to victory over Belgium and went five for seven for shooting for 12 points.

I would encourage everyone in Canada to check the local schedules for Black History Month and get out to an event in February. As well, people should tune in to watch Kayla and Team Canada this weekend, because one more win and they are off to the Olympics in Tokyo.

Go, Canada, go.

\* \* \*

**SHIRLEY JUDGE**

**Mr. John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise today in the House to pay tribute to Shirley Judge, who passed away earlier this week at the age of 75.

Together with her husband Vince, Shirley was a pillar of the Listowel and North Perth community. Through her faith, music and kind encouragement, she was a loving influence on everyone she met. She was a kindergarten teacher, taught Sunday school and was a church organist for more than three decades. She sang with "The Beaton Sisters", was an honorary member of the Baptist women's association of Ontario and Quebec and was a quiet yet determined force on so many campaigns.

To her husband Vince, her children Kelly, John and Greg, and her seven grandchildren, I offer my deepest sympathies. Through sorrow and grief, we can take comfort in the memory of a life filled with love.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### FELICIDADES JOSEPH

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, in this Black History Month, and as a woman, I want to highlight the extraordinary contributions of a woman of Haitian origin who is not known to most people but is very popular in my riding of Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel. I am referring to Felicidades Joseph.

Ms. Joseph arrived from Haiti in 1971. In 1981, she founded the Association haïtiano-canado-québécoise d'aide aux démunis. This organization, which supports the less fortunate, seeks to improve the living conditions of the Haitian community, foster job creation and promote the cultural heritage of people of Haitian origin and their positive integration into Quebec and Canadian society.

Although she will celebrate her 93rd birthday on Sunday, she remains very active and provides extraordinary support to all disadvantaged communities in my riding.

Thank you very much, Ms. Joseph, and I wish you a happy birthday.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### SUDBURY SECONDARY SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS

**Mr. Paul Lefebvre (Sudbury, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, success in math depends on how much one practises and on how one is taught.

Earlier this month, Ontario's Education Quality and Accountability Office awarded Sudbury Secondary School the Dr. Bette M. Stephenson Recognition of Achievement award for student success in mathematics. The school teaches key math concepts repeatedly. It is called "spaced practice" or "spiralling". Seventy-one per cent of students say that spiralling helps them retain information.

I want to congratulate Principal Heather Downey and her devoted staff, including Crystal Gibbs, Jeanette Lankshear, Clinton Jameus and Ryan Wilson, on the impact of their efforts at Sudbury Secondary School.

[Translation]

Your efforts have been recognized.

[English]

Their student-centred approaches to teaching and learning math are making a real difference. Keep up the great work.

\* \* \*

#### LANGLEY SENIOR RESOURCES SOCIETY

**Mrs. Tamara Jansen (Cloverdale—Langley City, CPC):** Madam Speaker, seniors today face many difficult challenges, in-

#### Statements by Members

cluding housing, health care, finances, neglect and abuse. They need community and they need to remain active in order to stay healthy and feel engaged. That is why I am honoured to rise today to recognize the Langley seniors resource centre and the invaluable benefits it provides to seniors in Langley and the surrounding communities.

Since 1982, the mission of the centre has been to deliver services aimed at meeting the emotional, physical and social needs of seniors. I was recently given a wonderful tour of the facility and saw first-hand what it has to offer: recreational programs, wellness programs, tax clinics, art classes and exciting day trips.

The centre offers these activities in part through using the proceeds from its café and thrift store, as well as through the selfless efforts of many volunteers. I am grateful for this opportunity to express my appreciation for the Langley seniors resource centre and the work it does for seniors in my riding.

\* \* \*

#### WEST ISLAND COMMUNITY GROUPS

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, during this Black History Month, I would like to draw the attention of this House to two young dynamic leaders who are making a difference in Montreal's West Island: Kemba Mitchell and Akilah Newton.

As president of the West Island Black Community Association, Kemba, along with her team, including Joan Lee and Maria Durant, is leading this long-standing pillar of the West Island community groups network into a new era with new and varied activities.

Akilah Newton has channelled her passion for the arts into grassroots community action. A graduate of the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, she returned to the West Island to create Overture with the Arts, a non-profit organization that enables young people to pursue their passion for the performing arts when financial circumstances may not otherwise permit.

Through their community vision and contributions, Kemba and Akilah are strengthening our community and enriching the quality of life of West Islanders.

*Statements by Members*

• (1110)

**2020 ONTARIO CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**Mr. Eric Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, CPC):** Madam Speaker, last week at the Cornwall Civic Complex, we had the honour and privilege to welcome Ontario's premier curling event, the 2020 Ontario Curling Championships. Eighteen of the best men's and women's teams from across southern Ontario, and some of the best curling teams in the entire world, for that matter, battled for the right to represent Ontario in this year's Tim Hortons Brier and Scotties Tournament of Hearts.

The city of Cornwall and the Cornwall curling club did a fantastic job as hosts of the tournament and were able to cast a spotlight on some of the finest restaurants, hotels and shopping venues in eastern Ontario. I was fortunate to take in the women's final on Saturday night, along with hundreds of curling fans from across the province.

Big congratulations go to team Homan and team Epping on their respective wins. I wish them all the best of luck representing Ontario in the Brier and the Scotties later this month.

\* \* \*

**SINGLE GAME SPORTS BETTING**

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I rise in the House today to bring attention to an important policy matter that greatly affects my riding: single game sports betting.

In 2008, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled to legalize this activity in all 50 states. Consequently, single game sports betting has been legalized in cross-border states such as New York, Michigan and Montana. Meanwhile, this activity remains illegal in Canada. As the North American gaming and entertainment industry changes before our eyes, Canadian casinos like those in Niagara Falls are disadvantaged and struggling to compete in this new environment.

Single game sports betting is hugely popular and has the potential to generate billions for our economy through new job creation, attracting tourism and investment, and future industry growth. However, as long as it remains illegal, these opportunities will be lost to our American competition.

I look forward to working with all my colleagues in all parties in Parliament to bring attention to this issue and to advocate change by supporting efforts to legalize single game sports betting in Canada.

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**FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, on January 17 a record-breaking blizzard hit Newfoundland and Labrador. The storm shut down many communities, including in the St. John's area, where the state of emergency lasted eight days. Under state of emergency laws, businesses were legally prevented from opening and streets were closed to traffic, preventing people from working. Many low-income workers lost up to a week's income, leaving people struggling to pay for rent and utilities. Lost revenue also hurt small businesses and restaurants.

The federal disaster assistance program supports provinces dealing with large-scale natural disasters, but specifically excludes loss of income.

We need the government to act now to allocate resources to support the people and businesses suffering the consequences of this storm and to look at establishing a permanent program to address lost income. The effects of climate change could lead to many more disasters of this magnitude and worse in the years to come.

Those who can least afford to endure the loss of income should not be the ones forced to bear it. If there is no existing program—

[Translation]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Shefford.

\* \* \*

**MONIQUE LEYRAC**

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Monique Leyrac, who died this past December at the age of 91.

This amazing woman from a nearby riding chose to spend her last years in Sutton, in the Eastern Townships, because that was where she wanted to live.

As her friend François Dompierre said so well, "She lived her life as she wanted. She was a feminist in her everyday life long before it was trendy."

I also want to note that until recently, she was able to enjoy her retirement at home, admiring her garden, as we would wish for everyone.

She was one of Quebec's greatest actresses and singers of the last century, if not the greatest. She was known around the world and left her mark in illustrious concert halls. She sang the words of legendary Quebec songwriters like Vigneault, Lèveillé, Ferland, Plamondon and many others.

An exhibit in her honour will be open at the Museum of Communications and History of Sutton from June 20 to October 12, 2020.

The Bloc Québécois and I want to offer our—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Calgary Rocky Ridge.

• (1115)  
[English]

### TECK RESOURCES FRONTIER PROJECT

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, media reports say that during Wednesday's caucus meeting, the Prime Minister "heard an earful from his...caucus...passionately urging his cabinet not to approve Teck Resources'...\$20-billion...Project in Alberta." Maybe he should do what Richard Nixon did and call in a plumbers unit to plug the leaks. In the meantime, we also now know that the Liberals are planning some kind of aid package as a ridiculous plan B.

Alberta does not want aid. Alberta wants to work. Alberta wants its economy back. Alberta wants the federal government to stop making things worse.

If the Prime Minister decides to set aside the scientific, evidence-based recommendation to approve this project, which has strong local indigenous support, and instead decides to make a political decision to kill the project in order to placate his backbenchers and the separatist Bloc, who are currently propping up his government, he will provoke a national unity crisis—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie.

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### BON SOO WINTER CARNIVAL

**Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, like many communities across Canada, my riding of Sault Ste. Marie celebrates the winter season with an annual celebration.

This year, the 57th Bon Soo Winter Carnival takes place from January 31 to February 9. There are more activities added every year, and it is truly a carnival with something for everyone. Organizations from across the riding come together to offer unique experiences, such as the Bon Soo Mario Kart Super Smash Tournament, the Sault College Annual Pow Wow, snowshoeing at the Indian Friendship Centre, the Torch Light Skate and, for the truly brave, the polar bear swim, often emulated but never copied fully.

Bon Soo is a labour of love for countless volunteers, community organizations and sponsors.

Madam Speaker, I know you know the winters in northern Ontario can be a challenge in February. Saultites warm themselves up during this time of year, and I would like to invite all in this House to join us in Sault Ste. Marie at Bon Soo.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Madam Speaker, apparently the Liberals have been considering aid for Alberta as cover to reject Frontier. Albertans are not refugees or evacuees from a natural disaster. We are inventors, creators, risk-takers, entrepreneurs and innovators. We want free markets and a level play-

### Oral Questions

ing field, but Liberal government policy is turning Albertans into victims.

Clearly, the Liberals do not get Alberta. Albertans do not want government handouts or bailouts. We just want to work.

When will the Liberals get out of the way and let Alberta do what it does best for the good of Canada and the world?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we were elected in 2015 and again in 2019 to grow the economy and protect the environment. We have processes in place for projects such as Teck, and we are moving through that process.

The process is now at the phase where cabinet will need to make a decision by the end of February. When the time comes, I look forward to them sharing that with this House and Canadians from coast to coast.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the science and evidence are already in, and the experts have already spoken. Teck Frontier is in Canada's public and national interest. It has met every condition.

The only thing left is a political decision, and now the Liberals are trying to move the goalposts again. The Liberals' double standards only ever apply to Alberta, but the actual experts say that not approving Teck will increase global emissions.

Will the Liberals approve Teck Frontier, yes or no?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we are following the process that was actually in place under the previous government. We have been working through that process. In 2016 we put in place the joint review panel, and in 2018 consultations ended on the project.

Now we are in a position where cabinet will be making a decision on all of the factors surrounding this project. They will share that with Canadians and this House by the end of February.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the only thing left is a decision by politicians. The experts have already weighed all the factors. Albertans are world leaders in oil and gas innovation for environmental protection for the benefit of all Canadians. A strong Alberta makes a strong Canada.

Albertans want all industries and all provinces to thrive, but Alberta alone is held back and put down by the Liberals. The Liberals are turning a national opportunity into a national unity crisis.

When will the Liberals approve Teck Frontier?

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague for her passion with regard to this issue.

I would like to repeat for this House once again, for those who are unaware, that cabinet has until the end of February to render that decision. It will be shared with this House and all Canadians from coast to coast to coast. We look forward to that decision being shared with all Canadians.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, only the Liberal Party and the Liberal government could say no to a \$20-billion project, no to 10,000 new jobs, no to 14 first nations who agree with the Teck project, no when everything on the checklist was done and every stage completed.

This government is the problem. It is saying no to a project that is good for Canadian unity and good for all Canadians.

When will they see reason?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for the question.

In 2015 and in 2019, Canadians chose to put a Liberal government in office on the promise of building a better economy and protecting our environment. That is what we have been doing since 2015.

We have a process to follow and we are following it. Under this process, we have until the end of February to make a decision. When the decision is made, we will announce it to all members of the House and all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the *École des hautes études commerciales* released a report a few weeks ago indicating that Quebec used 10 billion litres of gasoline last year. That is an increase.

Where did 62% of that gasoline come from? It came from the United States. If the Liberals want to support Donald Trump, that is their problem. We, the Conservatives, want to support Canada's oil and natural resources industries. The Teck project is good for Canada, is good for Quebec and is good for the economy.

Why is the government still refusing to approve a project that is good for everyone and that has the support of all Canadians?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to once again thank my hon. colleague for his question.

We are working hard to support Alberta's energy sector. We approved the Trans Mountain project and are implementing Line 3.

We are in a position where we have to make a decision on the Teck project, and we are following the process. We have until the end of February to make our decision public. When it is time to do so, we will be pleased to share that decision with all members of the House and all Canadians.

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Madam Speaker, speaking of Trans Mountain, the CEO himself just announced that the cost of building the pipeline has almost doubled, rising to nearly \$13 billion. Factoring in the purchase price, we have now had about \$18 billion stolen from us to pollute the planet.

Is this how the government intends to achieve net zero by 2050? Is that the government's plan for fighting climate change, spending \$18 billion to increase pollution?

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the Trans Mountain expansion project is an investment in Canada's future.

At a time when 99% of our energy exports go only to the United States, Canadians understand that more than ever we need to diversify our market. Construction on the project is under way with thousands of Canadians hard at work in Alberta and British Columbia.

Every dollar the federal government earns from the project will be invested in Canada's clean-energy transition funding, to support the clean energy projects that will power our homes and communities.

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Madam Speaker, the Teck Frontier project is not compatible with fighting climate change.

As the parliamentary secretary for science said, the government has made a clear commitment to achieving net zero by 2050, and both his fellow Canadians and his grandchildren expect the government to meet that target.

The Liberal member for Beaches—East York said that if the government were truly committed to net zero and to science, cabinet should have no trouble saying no to Teck Frontier—

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

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Could we have silence, please, so that the hon. member can ask her question?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Christine Normandin:** Madam Speaker, I would like to start over, please. Half the room could not hear my whole question. I would request that you let me ask it again.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I believe the question was understood because the member was just finishing it. I would therefore ask the minister to answer the question.

**Ms. Christine Normandin:** Madam Speaker, I did not ask a question.



**An hon. member:** Can she ask her question?

• (1125)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I invite the member to ask her question so the minister can answer it.

**Ms. Christine Normandin:** Madam Speaker, as I was saying, the Liberal member for Beaches—East York said that if the government were truly committed to net zero and to science, cabinet should have no trouble saying no to Teck Frontier.

I agree with the member for Beaches—East York. Does the government agree with him too?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for her question.

In both 2015 and 2019, we put forward a plan to address climate change and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. We came up with 50 different measures to achieve that, measures that will help us meet and even exceed our Paris targets. Our plan will also make Canada carbon neutral by 2050. We know we need to do this not only for ourselves, but also for our children and grandchildren. We will succeed.

[English]

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we learned this week that the government plans to hide the massive total cost of the construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline. The private sector walked away from this pipeline, and the company already admits to growing construction costs of \$13 billion.

The Liberals paid \$1 billion more than market value for TMX. Total costs are now nearly \$20 billion, making this the biggest fossil fuel subsidy in Canadian history. The government cannot be a climate leader while splurging money on pipelines.

Why is the government trying to hide the massive cost to Canadians?

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the Trans Mountain expansion project is an investment in Canada's future. At a time when 99% of our energy exports go only to the United States, Canadians understand that more than ever we need to diversify our market. Construction on the project is under way with thousands of Canadians hard at work in Alberta and British Columbia.

Every dollar the federal government earns from the project will be invested in Canada's clean energy transition funding, the clean energy projects that will power our homes, businesses and communities for years to come.

[Translation]

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the problem is that it is already a waste of money.

The Liberals are prepared to pay millions of dollars to subsidize fossil fuels instead of helping people who need pharmacare, for instance. Buying a \$4.5 billion pipeline and spending \$13 billion on

### Oral Questions

construction costs instead of creating a universal pharmacare program is completely irresponsible.

Will the government finally do the right thing and invest in a universal pharmacare program instead of throwing money at pipelines?

**Hon. Mona Fortier (Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, the Trans Mountain expansion project is an investment in Canada's future. Construction on the project is under way. Thousands of Canadians are hard at work in Alberta and British Columbia.

Every dollar the federal government earns from the project will be invested in Canada's clean energy transition funding. By moving forward with the Trans Mountain expansion project, we are protecting and creating thousands of jobs, diversifying markets and accelerating the clean energy transition, all while creating new opportunities for prosperity—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The member for Langley—Aldergrove.

\* \* \*

[English]

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Madam Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Public Safety misled the House when he said the Conservatives would do nothing about gun violence. That is not true. We would tackle the real issues.

It is gang members who are committing gun violence, not the law-abiding citizens in my riding who go to the Langley Rod and Gun Club and the Langley shooting range. These law-abiding citizens are telling us we need to put gang members behind bars, not simply duplicate laws that have been on the books for decades.

What do the Liberals not understand about that?

[Translation]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, Canadians from across the country told us that they want stricter restrictions on military-style assault weapons. I know this better than most, because we experienced the devastating consequences of these weapons in my riding. This is where the government needs to act.

It is obvious that—

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

*Oral Questions*

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Order. We need to hear the answers. [English]

The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Madam Speaker, I always find it puzzling to hear the Conservatives go on about law and order when they made cuts to border services. We know that many weapons cross the border illegally, but the Conservatives made cuts to the RCMP and correctional services. They can talk all they want. We have taken action to protect communities across this country.

• (1130)

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Madam Speaker, clearly there needs to be a debate about gun buybacks. The government wants to buy back the guns of honest citizens, people who have licences and who purchased their guns legally. The real crime is the illegal guns. Last year in Toronto, there were 500 shootings, all with illegal guns.

Why does the government not want to debate this in the House?

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, these are surprising comments coming from a member from Quebec. We know that following the Polytechnique shooting, half a million Canadians asked for a prohibition of military-style assault weapons. In Sainte-Foy, a young man with a firearms licence went to the Quebec City mosque with a VZ58, a military-style assault rifle. That is one message we heard.

We are not going after law-abiding citizens. Our objective is to make communities safer by prohibiting military-style assault weapons.

They cut \$400 million from the Border Services Agency and 1,000 full-time jobs. How does that make our border safer? They can talk all they want, but they did not take action.

**Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the events at Polytechnique and the attack on the Quebec City mosque are two very strong arguments from the Liberals. I understand that these two tragedies never should have happened. However, we are talking about more than two million law-abiding Canadians who have guns for sport shooting and hunting. The debate should not always come back to these two events. In Canada, illegal arms cause hundreds of deaths in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. That is what needs to be addressed.

The government wants to settle this by passing an order in council instead of introducing a bill that would be debated in the House; why?

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this is a promise we made during the election that was clear to Canadians. A ban on military-style assault rifles is what PolySeSouvient, groups across the country and Canadians are asking for.

This type of question from the hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, who appeared in a photo with gun lobbyists this summer, does not surprise me in the least.

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Madam Speaker, when asked about Canada's policy in the South China Sea, our ambassador to China drew a blank. When asked about a Canadian in prison in China for 15 years, he did not seem to know the basic details. He had to be corrected by the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

First impressions matter, and Canadians' first impression of the Liberal-appointed ambassador was weak at best. How many times will we have to step in and cover for the ambassador's mistakes?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am so proud to see you in the chair.

I would like to say to my hon. colleague that he will not have to do that. We are very proud of Ambassador Barton's work. He brings a wealth of experience, and he is the type of Canadian we like to attract into the public service.

He is representing Canada, bringing his wealth of experience and defending Canadian interests in China at a time when we need someone strong who understands the deep nature of the relationship we have with China. We are very proud of his work and will support him every step of the way.

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Madam Speaker, that member there had to correct the ambassador. Speaking of his deep knowledge, this is not just an ambassador who has expressed a lack of awareness, but one who begs serious questions. He ran a company that worked with Chinese state-owned enterprises and held a retreat next door to a Uighur Muslim concentration camp. He has publicly stated, and I quote, that he “drank the Kool-Aid” on China.

How can Canadians believe that someone with such strong ties to China would be looking out for our country's national interests?

**Hon. François-Philippe Champagne (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I have the utmost respect for my hon. colleague. At a time where we have a health emergency, this House should really be behind our public service and behind Ambassador Barton. We are trying to make sure we provide all the consular services to our Canadians in China who need our assistance.

We will be behind Ambassador Barton every step of the way. I would urge this House to be behind our public service at a time where we need everyone to look in the same direction.

## LABOUR

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the illegal UNIFOR blockades at Regina's Co-op Refinery and fuel terminals, and the intimidation tactics, such as paintballing people's homes, have gone too far.

It is well within the rights of Canadians to engage in labour action, but in no uncertain terms should illegal actions be condoned. Due to these illegal blockades, the Virden Co-op and many more in Manitoba and the Prairies will be out of fuel by Monday.

Will the government act to defend the rule of law and ensure these communities will be getting a reliable fuel supply by early next week?

• (1135)

**Mr. Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, let me be very clear. This dispute is a provincial issue. We are aware of the dispute at the refinery. Our government has faith in and believes in the collective bargaining process. We encourage both parties to work together to resolve the dispute. The Government of Saskatchewan announced its intention to assist the parties, but again, this is a provincial issue.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ):** Madam Speaker, yesterday, the government launched a claims process for people who experienced severe losses because of Phoenix. The system has not been working for four years. It is beyond repair, as is the harm done.

Meanwhile, the President of the Treasury Board wants to throw 3,900 RCMP employees into this hellhole.

Can he commit to not forcing more public servants into this hellhole when there are so many problems and so many victims that need to be compensated? Phoenix deserves to be tossed in the trash. People deserve better.

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is completely unacceptable for any employee of the public service of Canada to not be paid accurately and on time. That is why, out of respect for employees, we have been working very hard for months and even years to make this system work and to eventually replace it with a new system that will pay our public servants properly.

It is the same thing when it comes to the RCMP. RCMP employees will not be transferred to the new system if there is a risk that they will be negatively impacted.

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Madam Speaker, yesterday in an interview, the President of the Treasury Board spoke about compensating the victims of Phoenix who had to take money out of their RRSPs or who lost interest on their investments. However, we are not just talking about money. The damage this caused to people's personal and professional lives is troubling. We are talking about bankruptcy, divorce and suicide. We understand why RCMP employees would not want to experience that.

## Oral Questions

Can the President of the Treasury Board provide evidence that Phoenix is stable and reliable before making—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Order. The hon. President of the Treasury Board.

**Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos (President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this gives me a chance to add that these serious personal and professional setbacks have had a significant impact on workers and their families in the past few years, and this has also interfered with the operation of the public service. We have heard too many stories of people being afraid to take leave, accept promotions and grow as members of the Government of Canada's fantastic public service.

It is absolutely essential that we stabilize this system and move swiftly to a system that works properly, the next-generation system.

\* \* \*

[English]

## CBC/RADIO-CANADA

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Madam Speaker, recently a Liberal-appointed panel recommended amending the government-run CBC/Radio-Canada mandate to include indigenous content. However, the report failed to acknowledge one key point: that APTN, an indigenous-owned, indigenous-run private network, is exclusively devoted to doing just that.

Why is the government formally recommending that it can do a better job of delivering indigenous content than indigenous people?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, our government thanked the panel for the ambitious work it has undertaken and for delivering the final report. We are looking at the recommendation in this report and plan to take action as swiftly as possible.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I do not think that the minister realizes how incredibly paternalistic the comment that he just made was.

The fact is that this report failed to acknowledge an indigenous-owned and run network, and then said that the Canadian state could do a better job of delivering indigenous content. Then he said he was just going to implement this recommendation right away and sat down. It is crazy. Will he apologize?

**Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I do wonder if the member opposite has actually read the report, because one of her colleagues welcomed the report and said that he would be happy to work with us for its implementation.

My department officials would be happy to organize a briefing for any members of the Conservative Party who would like to better understand this report.

*Oral Questions*

● (1140)

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Madam Speaker, Cody Legebokoff viciously murdered Natasha Montgomery, Jill Stuchenko, Cynthia Maas and 15-year-old Loren Leslie. In 2014, he was sentenced to life with no parole.

Last January, the victims' families found out through media reports that he had been reclassified and transferred from maximum security to medium security, despite the fact that he has never admitted any guilt. He has shown no remorse and he refuses to disclose the location of Natasha Montgomery's remains.

When will the minister finally do the right thing and put this animal back where he belongs?

[Translation]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with the victim's family. This is the kind of tragedy that should never happen in this country.

In such cases, we need to trust the Parole Board and the independent work it does.

\* \* \*

[English]

**TOURISM INDUSTRY**

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Madam Speaker, we recently learned that Destination Canada spent \$550,000 on 550 stock photos. That is \$1,000 a photo. I am all for promoting travel to our great country, but this seems a little ridiculous. They say a picture is worth 1,000 words, but \$1,000?

Does the government believe that this was the taxpayers' money well spent or is it just another example of Liberal government spending waste?

**Mrs. Élisabeth Brière (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages (Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question.

[Translation]

The tourism sector has been neglected for too long. Our government believes in the two million people who work in tourism, and it believes in their potential.

That is why we have invested over \$65 million in our new federal tourism growth strategy. We are going to create 50,000 new jobs for the middle class and increase revenues by more than 25%. We are serious about tourism, and we know the future is bright for Canada's tourism workers.

\* \* \*

[English]

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister's trip across the globe to try for

a Security Council seat is likely much too little, much too late. While other countries vying for a seat have invested in people and committed to meeting international development assistance targets, the Prime Minister has the worst record in Canadian history. Even compared to Conservatives, he has driven us backwards on international aid, peacekeeping and climate change targets.

How can the Prime Minister ask for the world's support without providing support of our own?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of International Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, Canada is very proud of our role in the world. We have committed to ambitious climate change targets and ambitious climate change financing. We have committed to a feminist international assistance policy that is making real differences in the lives of women all across this world.

I was recently in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where I saw first-hand the work that we are doing when it comes to women's rights, peacekeeping and climate change. We can be very proud of the work that Canada is doing around the world, and the world recognizes it.

\* \* \*

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the Liberals propped up the Conservatives' draconian Bill C-51, which essentially included economic disruption as a form of domestic terrorism. The Prime Minister ran and was elected to amend Bill C-51 and protect Canada's civil liberties, but he broke that promise. Indigenous communities, environmentalists, workers and anybody standing up for social justice are still the target of anti-terrorism protocols.

Will the Prime Minister acknowledge that people peacefully protesting in Canada are not in fact terrorists?

[Translation]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I think that many of my colleagues, like millions of Canadians, shared the same feelings of outrage when we saw the Conservative government bring in their Bill C-51 at the time.

That is why we have added certain mechanisms, including a parliamentary committee that oversees the activities of our security and intelligence agencies. It is a given that we, on this side of the House, will always defend the right to peaceful demonstration and freedom of expression in this country.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, this year we are celebrating the 30th anniversary of International Development Week, which gives organizations across the country the opportunity to showcase their work.

Can the Minister of International Development provide some more details about this week? How can Canadians help in achieving the goals of the UN's sustainable development program?

**Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of International Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Orléans for the question and her support for international development organizations.

I also want to thank members from all parties for taking part in activities to celebrate the 30th anniversary of International Development Week. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the excellent work done by Canadians around the world to help achieve the goals of sustainable development and build a better world. I also want to encourage all parliamentarians to learn more about the work being done by international development organizations in their communities.

\* \* \*

• (1145)

[English]

## CARBON PRICING

**Mr. Jeremy Patzer (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this Liberal carbon tax is making life more expensive for rural Canadians. The carbon tax is a tax on everything: food, gas, home heating. These are not luxuries; they are basic necessities. The people of rural Canada should not have to pay more because the government does not understand where we live or the way that we live. When will the Liberals do the right thing and get rid of the carbon tax?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, in 2015 we put forward a promise to put a price on carbon pollution in this country. We know it is one of the most effective ways of reducing our GHG emissions. We put forward a promise to say that more money would be put in the pockets of families than they would have to pay in the carbon price. The PBO report just came out, showing that is indeed the case. We delivered on our promise. We are going to continue to take climate action. We know it is the best thing to do for our kids and grandkids.

**Mr. Terry Dowdall (Simcoe—Grey, CPC):** Madam Speaker, a new report shows that the Liberal carbon tax will reduce farm incomes by 8% this year and 12% by 2022. No, the little rebate cheque will not cover the cost of this tax grab. One farmer told me that since the tax has been imposed, his increase has been \$1,200 a month.

Our farmers are left with two choices: number one, take the pay cut, or number two, raise prices on Canadians who are already starting to struggle. Can the Liberals please tell the farmers which choice they prefer?

## Oral Questions

[Translation]

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we are well aware of what is going on in the agricultural sector this year.

Last year was awful, both weather-wise and on the international trade front. That is why I am working closely with our provincial colleagues and industry representatives to find the best solutions and mechanisms that will help agricultural producers across the country deal with this difficult situation.

We need to look toward the future and make the kinds of choices and investments that will ensure the sustainability of our agricultural system.

[English]

**Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Madam Speaker, in 2019, Manitoba chicken producers saw a 42% increase on their heating bills due to the carbon tax. With an escalating carbon tax, Manitoba chicken producers expect to see a 100% increase on their heating bills by 2022, resulting in millions of dollars of lost revenue and no proven benefits to our environment.

First it was the grain farmers, then it was the dairy farmers and now it is the chicken farmers. Why does the government continue to fail and neglect our farm families?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we definitely do not neglect our farmers. We care for them, and we really care for them. This is why we are working so closely to find the best solution to support them, for sustainable agriculture.

We have taken measures concerning the price on pollution because we know that the rural community and farmers do have to pay differently. We have given them exemptions on gas on farms, and Cardlock for their use of gas on farms.

We understand their special challenges and we are working to improve other programs as well.

**Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, we now know why the agriculture minister wants to stand shoulder to shoulder with our farmers. It is so that she can reach even further into their pockets and take more for a carbon tax.

Saskatchewan farmers can expect to lose over 12% of their income to the carbon tax once it hits \$50 per tonne. When will the agriculture minister stop bankrupting farm families, cancel the income-killing carbon tax and return the money that has already been taken from our producers?

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I can assure you that we are working closely with producers, their representatives and our provincial colleagues to get the right mechanisms in place so our farmers can farm sustainably.

We have already made adjustments and created exemptions to the pollution tax for fuel used by farmers on farms. We are still looking at various mechanisms, but everyone understands that we also need a long-term vision for our planet, and that is what we are developing with them. We know 2019 was an extremely difficult year for producers, and that is why we are helping them.

\* \* \*

● (1150)

**RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Madam Speaker, CN wants to close its rail traffic control centre in Montreal to centralize its operations in Alberta. This is an injustice to Quebec controllers and it will make communication in French very difficult for rail workers. It can also become a safety issue, if English-only instructions are not properly understood by train conductors and railway workers.

Will the Liberal government do something to ensure that CN reconsiders its decision?

*[English]*

**Hon. Bernadette Jordan (Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we recognize the concerns raised by the hon. member opposite. Our government remains committed to railway safety, as well as security, efficiency and environmental responsibility.

I would be happy to have the minister discuss this with him at a later time.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Mario Beaulieu (La Pointe-de-l'Île, BQ):** Madam Speaker, just as the number of rail incidents continues to increase in Quebec, CN is only making things worse. There are 60 controllers in Montreal to manage all of eastern Canada. CN wants to replace them with 35 controllers to manage the entire country. We will end up with fewer controllers, not to mention that they will not be able to communicate in French.

Will the government take this up with CN?

**Mr. Anthony Housefather (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we always share any concerns relating to Canada's official languages. The French language must be protected throughout the country for safety reasons. There is no question that the minister will review the situation as it relates to safety and language.

*[English]***HEALTH**

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Madam Speaker, yesterday in the House, in response to a question about what the government is doing to address the addictions crisis we are experiencing on our streets, the Minister of Health failed to outline a solution that would help those battling addiction.

The minister continues to prioritize harm reduction strategies without mentioning treatment or recovery. People battling addiction deserve the opportunity to enter treatment immediately, when they need it.

When will the government start making treatment and recovery a priority to help people with addiction?

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question.

*[English]*

The opioid crisis is the most significant public health issue in Canada's recent history, and our hearts are with those who have lost a loved one. We have responded by investing over \$425 million in emergency responses, restoring harm reduction, approving over 40 supervised consumption sites, cutting red tape and removing barriers to treatments.

We will continue to tackle this health care crisis.

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**TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC):** Madam Speaker, people in Parry Sound—Muskoka, like so many in northern Ontario, are frustrated with the high price and low quality of Internet and cellphone services.

We keep hearing the promises to fix it, but areas like Port Loring, Kearney and Whitestone are still dramatically underserved. It is bad for residents, it hurts the economy and it even puts personal safety at risk.

No more talk. No more promises. Will the minister accept my invitation to come to Parry Sound—Muskoka to experience first-hand what rural Canadians are experiencing every single day?

**Ms. Gudie Hutchings (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am also from a rural community and understand the challenge of broadband. Our government is focused on improving the quality, coverage and price of telecom services to Canadians from coast to coast to coast. We know we need the services for health, business, tourism and, of course, education.

Our previous program is finishing up. I look forward to working with the member opposite at any time if he has ideas on how we can advance the broadband file further.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC):** Madam Speaker, many households and businesses in my riding live with an Internet connection or cellular service that is spotty or non-existent. I am one of those people.

In some countries, people struggle to feed themselves, but their Internet and cell service is decent. Here, the Liberal government promised to connect all Canadians by 2030, and we call ourselves a developed country.

Why is the government not working faster to connect taxpayers so they too can enter the 21st century?

• (1155)

[*English*]

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry (Innovation and Industry), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I can assure my hon. colleague that our government is focused on ensuring that our laws keep pace with Canada's rapidly evolving telecommunications landscape and that Canadians can continue to receive world-class services. We thank the panel for all the work it has done. We are focused on this challenge and we will have some decisions in the coming months.

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#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, people in my riding of Whitby are concerned about climate change and the environment. It was one of the top concerns I heard at the doors last fall. My constituents and many others along the shores of the Great Lakes have experienced, and are experiencing, unprecedented flooding over the last several years. This has caused shoreline erosion and property damage. Climate change is here and presents real challenges for communities across Canada.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change inform the House of the government's progress on tackling climate change and protecting our environment?

**Mr. Peter Schiefke (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Whitby for his dedication to a clean environment and to taking climate action. Both on the doorsteps and at the polls, it was clear that a majority of Canadians voted for immediate and ambitious climate action. That is exactly what our government is delivering on.

Together, we will set a target to achieve net zero by 2050, help make energy-efficient homes more affordable, introduce measures to have clean, efficient and affordable communities, and make it easier for people to buy electric vehicles.

Canadians expect parliamentarians to work together to deliver on these promises, and that is exactly what we are going to do.

#### Oral Questions

#### HEALTH

**Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, siblings Callum and Aislinn Stepaniuk of St. Albert, ages seven and 12, have cystic fibrosis carrying the R117H mutation. Due to a lack of approvals, they are unable to receive the life-extending drug Kalydeco. Every day that they cannot access this drug shortens their life expectancy.

Why should Callum and Aislinn have to wait, given that the U.S. FDA has approved this drug for children with this mutation who are six years and older?

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, we know the importance of patient access to new therapies for serious or life-threatening conditions. It is the manufacturer's decision to apply to market a product in Canada.

For serious or life-threatening conditions such as cystic fibrosis, physicians may request access to a drug through the special access program. To help Canadians get better access to effective treatments, we are working with provinces, territories and other partners to develop a national strategy for high-cost drugs for rare diseases.

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#### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the wine industry in Windsor-Essex and across Canada is facing an uncertain future because of Australia's trade challenge that claims Canada's federal excise duty exemption on 100% Canadian-made wines is discriminatory.

We are about seven weeks away from the World Trade Organization's interim report. Canadians who work in the wine industry are worried.

When will the Liberals pick up the phone and get a settlement with the Australians?

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I can assure the House that our government recognizes the enormous value of the wine industry and its contribution to Canada's reputation as a world-class agricultural producer.

We will continue to stand up for Canadian workers and the industry. We have explored ways to resolve this dispute with Australia and we will continue to work closely with the provinces to protect workers in this Canadian industry.

*Oral Questions***EMPLOYMENT**

**Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the labour shortage is a huge problem, and the unemployment rate is evidence of that. I implemented a pilot project to create a co-operative for foreign workers with six businesses in Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier. No money is required, and this is a solution to help our regions and our businesses. The former Liberal minister did not get it. I am asking for a meeting with the new Minister of Labour.

Is it possible that this minority Liberal government will agree to work with me to find a solution for Canadian business owners?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, of course, I will meet with my colleague.

We know that workers are needed across Canada. There are a lot of jobs here.

I am very happy, because today we announced that 34,000 new jobs were created in January 2020. That brings the total to 1.1 million jobs created by the Liberal government.

\* \* \*

• (1200)

[English]

**AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD**

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the agriculture sector in Canada contributes over \$100 billion annually to our GDP and is responsible for one in eight Canadian jobs.

Our farmers, ranchers and producers from across the country proudly feed Canadians and the world with their incredible products. On February 11, we will be celebrating Canada's Agriculture Day to highlight their contributions and thank them for their hard work.

Could my hon. colleague the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food inform the House of the government's work to ensure the growth and prosperity of Canada's agricultural sector?

**Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, farmers deserve our greatest appreciation. They care for our environment. They care for their animals. They are a source of inspiration.

Our government has ambitious plans for agriculture, such as reaching \$75 billion in exports by 2025, finalizing compensation for supply management, improving business risk management programs and empowering women and youth in agriculture.

[Translation]

I invite all Canadians to celebrate Canada's Agriculture Day on Tuesday, February 11.

\* \* \*

[English]

**EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the recent snowstorm that hit Newfoundland and Labrador shut down

entire communities. Small business owners lost revenue and many workers, especially hourly and low-wage earners, lost a week's pay. The Liberals campaigned on a promise to help with lost income in case of disaster but we have not seen any action yet. Workers in my province need help now. Climate change will lead to more disasters like this.

Will the Liberals deliver on their promise and help those who need it right now?

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the stories of neighbours helping one another, and our brave first responders working tirelessly to clear the snow and support those who lost power, exemplify the spirit and resilience of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Our government took immediate action by mobilizing the Canadian Forces to areas affected by the storm. In addition, we have extended Service Canada hours. I have spoken personally with the minister. We are there. Our government reduced the wait time for EI to one week.

I can assure everyone in the House that we are there for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

[Translation]

**Ms. Christine Normandin:** Madam Speaker, I would ask you to consult Standing Order 10 and note 51 on page 319 of *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, which allows the Chair to call not only a member but also the entire House to order.

When I asked my question, you allowed me to finish, but no formal call to order was made. I would like you to make one so that if there should be any more questions that are irritants to the official opposition over the coming weeks, we will not have a repeat of the situation.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I thank the hon. member for her intervention. I had asked her to finish asking her question and not repeat it in its entirety. This was a misunderstanding between us and I believe the matter is now closed.

[English]

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order to offer a clarification stemming from question period on Wednesday on the relationship between the RCMP and the Wet'suwet'en people.



It is true that the Government of British Columbia has contracted services to the RCMP, similar to many other jurisdictions; however, neither the Government of British Columbia nor the other jurisdictions direct RCMP operations. The RCMP always operate independently, in this case as well as any other.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I thank the minister for the clarification.

The hon. member for Louis-Saint-Laurent.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Madam Speaker, earlier, during question period, I cited a study. I am confident that you will find unanimous consent for the tabling of this study entitled “The State of Energy in Quebec 2020”, published by the HEC Montréal Chair in Energy Sector Management.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to table the document?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Mr. Peter Julian:** Madam Speaker, as a follow-up to the member for Saint-Jean's intervention, I want to say that every member has the right to speak in the House. We must be able to have an honest, sincere debate during which everyone can hear what is being said.

You have several tools at your disposal, Madam Speaker. You can name members who act in contempt of Parliament. You can also take away question slots from any party that shouts at other members.

I hope you will make use of those tools, because we need real debates in the House of Commons.

• (1205)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I thank the member for his point of order. I will take this opportunity to remind all members of the importance of maintaining a certain level of decorum and listening so that we can hear the questions and answers.

There is another member rising on a point of order. The member for Edmonton West.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Madam Speaker, with the House's permission of course, I would like to table documents from public accounts that actually show that the Liberal government slashed \$300 million from CBSA, unlike what the parliamentary secretary said, further showing that it cut 400 full-time equivalents from CBSA.

At the same time, I invite the member for Louis-Hébert to perhaps learn his file.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I remind the member that the documents from public accounts are already tabled in the House.

Do we have the unanimous consent of the House to table the documents?

*Routine Proceedings*

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

### JUDGES ACT

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to see you in the chair.

Pursuant to Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, a charter statement for Bill C-5, an act to amend the Judges Act and the Criminal Code.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, 1999

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-204, An Act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 (final disposal of plastic waste).

He said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to introduce an act to amend the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, concerning the final disposal of plastic waste. I would like to thank my good friend, the hon. member for Barrie—Springwater—Orillia, for seconding the bill.

This legislation would prohibit the export of non-recyclable plastic waste from Canada to foreign countries. For too long, Canada has been treating the rest of the world as its dumping ground. We are exporting our problems for other countries to deal with. While the United Kingdom and Australia have shown leadership on this issue, Canada has fallen behind.

In 2018 alone, Canada shipped more than 44,000 tonnes of plastic waste to other countries, despite our leading waste disposal capabilities. This is affecting our environment, it is affecting our oceans and it is threatening our future. We can and must do better.

I call on all members of the House to work together to support this ban on exporting non-recyclable plastic waste.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

*Government Orders***PETITIONS**

## HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be tabling a petition in support of Bill S-204. It says Bill S-240 because that was the number in the previous Parliament. The same bill has been tabled again under Bill S-204. It deals with the terrible problem of forced organ harvesting and trafficking that happens in certain countries around the world.

The bill would make it a criminal offence for a Canadian to go abroad to receive an organ for which there has not been consent. It would also seek to make inadmissible to Canada or create the provisions by which people could be made inadmissible to Canada, if they have been involved in forced organ harvesting and trafficking.

• (1210)

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to present a petition on Motion No. 1, a green new deal, on behalf of dozens of residents from parts of Canada. They are joining their voices to thousands of Canadians who have signed petitions thus far, all of them calling on the Government of Canada to address this climate emergency with the ambition and urgency required on behalf of present and future generations.

The petitioners call on the Government of Canada to support Motion No. 1, a made-in-Canada green new deal, which calls on Canada to take bold and rapid action to tackle the climate emergency, to address the worsening socio-economic and racial inequalities at the same time and to support workers impacted by the transition in the shift to a clean and renewable energy economy.

**Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in the House to present a petition from several dozen Canadians living on Vancouver Island, Cowichan and north of Cowichan to Malahat, all calling on the government to support the green new deal legislation, Motion No. 1.

As we all know, we are in the midst of a climate emergency. What that requires is for Canada to make the kinds of investments and the kinds of shifts that bring us to a clean-energy economy and at the same time tackle our growing inequalities, both socio-economic and racial in nature. We need to ensure that the workers who are impacted by this transition to clean energy are also supported at this time.

These constituents are joining their voices to thousands of others in the movement across the country to adopt Motion No. 1, the green new deal, in Canadian Parliament.

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to also present a petition from Canadians who are concerned about climate change and who call on the government to support Motion No. 1, a made-in-Canada green new deal, which calls on Canada to take bold and rapid action to tackle the climate emergency, address the worsening socio-economic and racial inequalities at the same time and to support workers impacted by the transition in the shift to a clean and renewable energy economy.

This crisis is real and it is approaching. We need to have a plan that will work and, at the same time, ensure that people who will be affected by climate change are supported in the transition to a green economy.

\* \* \*

**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.):** Madam Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

**Hon. Deb Schulte (Minister of Seniors, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to inform the House that Tuesday, February 18, shall be an allotted day.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[*Translation*]

**ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-3, An Act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Orléans, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am proud to resume this morning's debate. As I was saying, Bill C-3 completes the circle. It will allow for the independent review of government activities other than those affecting national security. It is therefore important to point out that the new public complaints and review commission could conduct its own investigations at its own initiative and produce an annual report on the results of its investigations. This function would be secondary to its role of reviewing public complaints. I want to say that people have been calling for these necessary measures for a long time. As mentioned earlier, I do not see how the opposition could be against this bill.

In closing, the bill fills a gap in the independent review process regarding complaints against the CBSA. It sets out independent redress for all immigrants detained by the CBSA. It grants an independent body the power to investigate the CBSA, which will improve the agency's operations. It clarifies the CBSA's response protocol for serious incidents. It enhances accountability and transparency while increasing the public's confidence in its institutions. It aligns Canada's internal mechanism with similar mechanisms in other G5 countries.

*Government Orders*

Our government is therefore invested in establishing accountable and transparent public institutions. These are important issues for business communities, tourism, the CBSA itself and all Canadians.

Bill C-3 will offer protection to the millions of people who interact with the CBSA each year. This is a comprehensive and effective bill that deals with a major current issue. I encourage all members of the House to support Bill C-3 so that it can move through all the stages of our wonderful legislative system as quickly as possible.

I thank my hon. colleagues for their attention.

• (1215)

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. The opposition is not going to dwell on this bill because we intend to support it.

However, we have a lot of questions about the government's decision to move so fast. Why is it in such a rush to adopt this bill when there are so many other issues of greater concern to Canadians right now? I would like my colleague to explain why passing this bill is as urgent as she said it was in her speech.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my opposition colleague for his question.

As I said in my speech, Bill C-3 is important. We have talked about this many times, but this organization is the only one that does not have an independent complaints review system. This bill will create that.

We have always said that our government wants to be more transparent and accountable. This measure will support the organization, and many committees have asked for it.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Mr. Speaker, I want to jump on the opportunity that I was just given, since my colleague mentioned openness and transparency.

This government likes to say how transparent it is every chance it gets. I would therefore like to know why my colleague's party voted against my motion calling on the Auditor General to review the federal infrastructure plan. That is important.

It is a question of transparency and oversight. Bill C-3 aims to increase oversight of an organization. The Liberals, despite being so transparent, refused to support my motion calling on the Auditor General to take a closer look at a plan worth \$186 billion. That is a lot of money.

We are a little baffled by the Liberals' doublespeak about transparency. On the one hand, they want to rush this bill through, but on the other hand, they voted against my motion.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, since my colleague has given me the opportunity, I would like to take a moment to thank the 14,000 employees who work at CBSA. I would also like to point out that this bill has strong support. We hope the House understands the importance of this bill, which will enhance accountability and transparency within the CBSA.

• (1220)

[*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, when we think of the CBSA, we often think about that long border between Canada and the United States, where many of our fine civil servants do fantastic work 24 hours a day, seven days a week. However, we also have other border control officers, such as those at our airports. We have 12 or 13 international airports in Canada. Winnipeg is home to one of those.

We get, on average, about 2,500 complaints a year, which is significant. We want to treat them seriously, and this is why it is important to have an oversight committee.

Can my friend and colleague provide her thoughts on the fine work that our border control agents do, whether they are on the border or at our international airports?

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Mr. Speaker, as I was saying I am so proud, and we should all be very proud, of the enormous work that our CBSA employees, over 14,000 of them, do.

We talked about 14 airports and 117 bridges. We have the largest aspect in the world of protecting our borders, and we have to say thank you, because in Canada we all want Canadians to be safe. That is what we are striving to do. I thank those employees for all of the exceptional work that they are doing every day.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Dan Albas (Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is always an honour to participate in a debate in this chamber.

[*English*]

Also on many occasions, as we have come to expect in this place, it is not uncommon for members of the official opposition to debate in opposition to a government bill.

[*Translation*]

I am afraid that will not be the case today. I am participating in the debate on Bill C-3, an act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts. I will support this measure.

I have been asked why, as a member of the opposition, I would participate in a debate on a bill that I support.

[*English*]

It is a fair question. The answer, from my perspective, is why I am here today to take part in this debate.

[*Translation*]

For my first term of office I was elected in a riding that is very close to the U.S. border. Some parts of the riding I currently represent are a very short car ride to the Canada-U.S. border.

*Government Orders**[English]*

As other members of this place will know, when one's riding is either very near or includes a Canada-U.S. border crossing, one will deal with some significant and challenging border issues.

*[Translation]*

I want to share one of these challenging border issues with the House.

Not long after I was first elected, the provincial MLA in my region contacted me, a newly minted MP. The priest at a temple in the area, who legally lives in Canada, had gone on a weekend jaunt to the United States.

*[English]*

Upon return to Canada, at the Canadian border, the priest was detained for a period of time before ultimately being released with a seven-day deportation order.

*[Translation]*

The reason given by the Canada Border Services Agency for the deportation order was that the priest was not legally living in Canada. There was a problem, however. For whatever reason, the officers dealing with the priest that day wanted nothing of it. The MLA who had first been alerted to the situation tried to intervene on behalf of the priest.

- (1225)

*[English]*

To put it bluntly, that member of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia was blown off. When the issue hit my desk, there were just four days before the deportation. From reviewing the paperwork, it was very clear an injustice had occurred, but what was the recourse? Where was the accountability?

It was, from my perspective, an alarming situation.

*[Translation]*

Because his paperwork had not been reviewed, because he had been issued a deportation order without a valid reason, and because I find it very troubling that power was being exercised with no oversight, I ended up sharing my concerns directly with the minister at the time.

*[English]*

From my experience, I have come to know that there are those ministers who run their departments, and there are also those ministers who are run by their departments. Fortunately, the minister at the time knew that department inside out and had the courage to tell the department they had made an error.

*[Translation]*

An injustice was remedied and the deportation order was cancelled. I am proud to announce that the priest is still in Canada and that he is now serving the city of Merritt. His family is proud of his new country. I am not here to take the credit. If anyone should get the credit it is the provincial MLA who reached out to me and is now retired.

*[English]*

Of course I will fully credit the minister for not hiding behind the department, as some ministers are prone to do.

While ultimately this was a quiet, good-news story at the time, there was one further bit of troubling information for me.

*[Translation]*

I learned that the CBSA officers involved in this case were able to change the facts afterwards. In other words, the facts were changed after the incident. They were changed in such a way that the reasons for the deportation order were completely different than the reasons given initially. Although I am pleased with the outcome for the priest, the matter is engraved on my memory. I often wonder about this situation.

What would have happened if this man was not a fairly well-known priest who called his MLA for help?

What would have happened had the MLA refused to help him and said that it was a federal jurisdiction?

What would have happened if the MLA was a member of the opposition party?

*[English]*

At that time, I was on the same side of the House as the government. What if the minister in question was one who hid behind the department, as some like to do?

*[Translation]*

We could make many other assumptions, but practically none would result in a situation where justice is served.

*[English]*

I think we all know that there never really has been serious accountability at the border crossing, and this applies to both sides. Will this bill be the answer?

*[Translation]*

It is difficult to say. We shall see.

*[English]*

We all know that if the bill passes, the public complaints review commission would be created and would incorporate the existing Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, the review agency for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. This would be a large oversight body with two different mandates between the RCMP and CBSA.

Given the challenges in the very complex review process of the RCMP, it remains to be seen how adding CBSA into the fold would work. However, this process deserves the opportunity to attempt to succeed.

There is no question in my mind, and from what I have heard today from many in this room, that more accountability is needed at border crossings. While I do not mean to belittle us as members of Parliament, we cannot always hope that a member of Parliament is the solution for incorrect events that occur at the border.

For these reasons, I am prepared to support this legislation. I believe the legislation is a reasonable and needed effort to provide more accountability for what occurs at our border crossings.

I appreciate your presence today, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate all the members of this great House, and I would like to thank them for listening to me so intently. I look forward to hearing both their questions and comments, and hopefully we can share something to the benefit of the Canadian public.

● (1230)

**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 suspect there are members who could reflect on files we have seen over the last number of years and find someone who has had a very unfortunate encounter, some far more serious than others, at one of our border control areas or with one of our border control agents. That is in good part why it is important we do this, and I do not think anyone is objecting to it.

We already have it in place for our RCMP, our correctional service officers and CSIS. Would the member agree that having these public oversight review groups assists in restoring public confidence in the system?

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Mr. Speaker, absolutely, it is the job of every member of Parliament, particular those in the executive, to build confidence in all of our institutions. Canada is made greater when our public, our citizens, believe that the authority that has been entrusted through Parliament to these agencies is handled with trust and care.

I am assuming most of us have gone across the border into, for example, the United States. I must admit that my heart rate begins to go a little faster at the border, not because I have done anything wrong, but because I am subject to a process that is beyond my control.

If we can merge two processes into one, creating efficiencies and gaining public confidence that there is civilian oversight, then I think it is an idea worth supporting.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by congratulating my colleague from Central Okanagan—Similkameen—Nicola for the excellent French he used in his speech. I think we can applaud him.

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

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** We know that it is intimidating to speak in a language other than one's mother tongue in the House. I find that my colleague makes a great effort to speak French outside the House.

I would like to know why it is important to him to speak French and to use that language to communicate with Canadians.

**Mr. Dan Albas:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member from Quebec for his question.

It is important to me to speak confidently with other members of the House. I believe that the experience of other members is impor-

### *Government Orders*

tant. We share our ideas with one another in a respectful manner. That is important to me.

My father grew up in Alberta. He was a Franco-Albertan. It is a part of my family history. I appreciate the congratulations from the hon. member, and I will endeavour to keep speaking French.

● (1235)

[*English*]

**Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful today to have the opportunity to debate Bill C-3, which would create an independent oversight body, the public review and complaints commission, to review CBSA officers' conduct and conditions and handle specific complaints. This body would be a welcome addition to the strong accountability and oversight bodies already in place.

As I have seen, the bill has broad support in the House. I welcome the previous speaker's support and also that of the hon. member for Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner. He said:

Public servants across the country must be held to the standards expected of Canadians, which is to uphold the integrity of people who are visiting or passing through our country, while ensuring our laws and international laws are upheld.

He went on to add, "This bill will align well with the values of many Canadians" and the values of his party's team.

I also welcome the comments from the member for Rivière-du-Nord, who expressed his gratitude for the bill being introduced. Likewise, the member for St. John's East provided supportive words, noting that his party would certainly be supporting the bill at second reading.

This multipartisan support is very encouraging, and I thank all members for helping to ensure the bill is as strong as it can be moving forward.

One thing that all members of the House agree on is the quality of the work that our border service officers do at the CBSA. The CBSA processes millions of travellers and shipments every year at multiple points across Canada and abroad.

Let us just look at some of the numbers. I know they have been mentioned in the chamber already in this debate, but it warrants repeating: 97 million travellers, 27 million cars, 34 million air passengers, 21 million commercial releases. Every day at 13 international airports, 117 land border crossings, 27 rail sites and beyond, CBSA officers provide consistent and fair treatment to travellers and traders.

This is particularly important because, as we know, travelling can be very stressful. For those who are more vulnerable, for asylum seekers, for those who do not speak either of our official languages, for those with disabilities, for those on the autism spectrum and for travellers who are travelling for the first time, it can be intimidating and even frightening to cross a border point.

*Government Orders*

As the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness has said, the CBSA officers' professionalism when dealing with people crossing our borders is of the utmost importance. He has said that they are the most public of public servants, and they truly are the face of Canada.

For visitors, newcomers or Canadians returning home, our border officers are their first encounter. However, much more than that, they are responsible for upholding the integrity of Canada's borders. That means their work is integral to Canada's well-being. We are at a junction where border management and enforcement are truly front and centre for the government and for Canadians.

Nearly one year ago, the government introduced a federal budget, proposing investments of \$1.25 billion for the CBSA. That funding includes support to modernize some of our land ports of entry and border operations, with the goals of ensuring efficiency and enhancing security. Members will recall that budget 2019 provided funds to close this important gap.

The idea has been to expand the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission, or the CRCC, to act as an independent review body for the RCMP and the CBSA. That is why the government introduced Bill C-98 last year, which received all-party support at third reading. It is why we are now introducing Bill C-3, with more time for debate and discussion. This bill aligns well with our commitment to accountability and transparency.

Under the proposals, the PCRC would handle reviews and complaints for both CBSA and the RCMP. Whether the complaints are about the quality of services or the conduct of officers, the PCRC would have the ability to review, on its own initiative or at the request of the minister, any non-national security activity of the CBSA. The PCRC would be available and accessible to anyone who interacts with the CBSA or RCMP employees and who seeks recourse. That includes Canadian citizens, permanent residents and foreign nationals, including immigrant detainees. The commission would investigate and offer its conclusions as to whether procedures at the border are appropriate or not.

• (1240)

These proposals would bring the CBSA in line with the rest of our security agencies, including CSIS and the RCMP, which are currently subject to independent review.

These accountability functions for border agencies are common in our peer countries and this bill would help us join that group. All of us would like to ensure that the public can continue to expect the world-class treatment the CBSA provides.

The CBSA has worked to ensure it has the resources and infrastructure in place to support this new review board. It already holds its employees to a high standard of conduct, and I am confident it will continue to uphold that standard.

As I have mentioned, this is coming at a time of renewed focus at our border. The agency is operating in a complex and dynamic environment. It must be responsive to evolving threats, adaptive to global economic trends and innovative in its use of technology to manage increasing cross-border volumes. Let us remember that

some of those threats and trends are some of the greatest challenges facing parliamentarians and Canadians today.

The opioid crisis continues to pose a serious threat to the safety of Canadians, for example, and the CBSA plays a key role in detecting opioids at the border through new tools and methods. We have also seen rising rates of gun and gang violence in recent years. Again, the CBSA is front and centre here, remaining vigilant in combatting the illegal smuggling of firearms. It is keeping pace with rising volumes in the supply chain, including the growing prevalence of e-commerce. It is central to our economy and to our country's overall prosperity and competitiveness. It is undertaking all of this hugely important work in an environment where its clients demand a high level of accountability and transparency.

The professional men and women at our borders would be well served by an independent review function for the CBSA. Canadians deserve it as well. That is why I encourage all members to join me in supporting Bill C-3 today.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I share the member's sentiments about the fine work the CBSA does most of the time and about how this bill would enhance public confidence in the CBSA.

I have tried to raise several times with government members who were in the last Parliament the issue of Bill C-23 from the last Parliament, the new Preclearance Act, which created a situation where U.S. border officials would be exercising similar powers of detention, questioning and even use of force against Canadians on Canadian soil, without any accountability or complaint mechanisms in place for the actions of those U.S. officers in treating Canadians on Canadian soil.

Is the member not concerned that we have created a new category where there is no accountability for the actions of those officials?

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg:** Madam Speaker, I can assure my colleague that any officers who are operating on Canadian soil are subject to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and anything they do has to be in full compliance with the Canadian Charter of Rights.

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I was listening to my colleague's speech. Bill C-3 is being brought forward early in this Parliament.

Could the member explain her thoughts about the opportunities that will exist at the committee level to bring in actual border guards, and I do not mean union representatives, I mean individuals who will be using the rules herein, to have their voices heard and does she think that would be a good idea?

• (1245)

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg:** Madam Speaker, as the hon. member knows, a committee is able to bring in any witness it sees fit. A broad debate on this and hearing all different voices is incredibly important. I would imagine that the members who are on that committee will look at that as well.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Brandon—Souris, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to follow up on my colleague's comments in regard to the 117 various points that the CBSA is involved with across the country.

Could the member elaborate on that? We have had a lot of differentiation between the activities that take place in different border crossings across Canada, and they are not all along the border? There are airlines and those sorts of things as well.

We are all in favour of seeing those people come to the committee, as indicated, but what can the member do in her role to enhance that and are there any select areas of importance on which it needs to focus?

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg:** Madam Speaker, a lot of those priorities will be set by the committee members.

As the member mentioned, there are 117 land border crossings. There are 27 rail crossings and all of our international airports as well. This is a large issue.

Also, I want to take this moment to reiterate the professionalism of the CBSA agents at these border crossings. With this incredibly large volume, obviously this is of major concern. I think we are all interested in making sure that is made better for both travellers and Canadians.

**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, it is always a pleasure to rise in this place and ask a question following a member's comments or speech.

My colleague was complimenting the fine work our border control agents do, day in, day out, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. When we look at the need to have a public oversight committee, I think it is important to emphasize that while there are approximately 2,500 complaints cases a year, our border control agents have millions of interactions that every year.

I wonder if the member can provide her thoughts on the large number CBSA agents deal with versus the number of actual complaints, as well as the importance of providing a process for those complaints.

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg:** Madam Speaker, there are a small number of complaints, but every single day, day in, day out, there are heroic stories.

I recall the story of a 12-year-old minor who was travelling alone from Burundi and coming through the Ottawa airport. Her mother said that her daughter had never seen an escalator before and she was unaccompanied.

It was absolutely heartwarming to hear how our border services people, and everybody involved, were able to make sure that 12-

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year-old, who was alone for the first time in a foreign country, was able to find and be reunited with her mother. Every one of us has stories like that.

**Ms. Nelly Shin (Port Moody—Coquitlam, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to stand in the House today to give my maiden speech.

I would like to thank my constituents in Port Moody—Coquitlam, Anmore and Belcarra for electing me and allowing me the privilege to serve as their member of Parliament.

I would like to thank my volunteers for knocking on thousands of doors through pouring rain and sweltering heat, and walking up many flights of stairs and steep hills to help me be here today. I am also grateful to my campaign chairs and managers, our EDA and generous donors for their incredible support.

From the idyllic Como Lake to the deep cedar forests of Anmore, the misty blue and green of Rocky Point and the pastel sunrises of Bedwell Bay, I am blessed to be part of a caring and diverse community that lives in the midst of breathtaking natural beauty.

As I was door knocking during my campaign, constituents expressed their concerns on affordability, housing, home ownership, bureaucratic red tape that hinders businesses from thriving, better access to mental health care, employment, the environment, infrastructure and many more issues. Today I want to renew my commitment to my constituents to keep working hard and do my best to ensure their needs are heard and dealt with.

I am blessed because of the prayers and encouragement of friends who cheered me on to the finish line and who continue to nourish my soul on this political path. I would like to thank my parents for their unconditional support and the values of sacrifice, perseverance and hard work they instilled as I watched them struggle to settle into Canada as first-generation immigrants. I would like to thank my sisters for their support as we continue to journey closely together through thick and thin.

I am here today because of the people who shaped me, the circumstances I have lived through, the choices I have made and a measure of providence. In 2008, after seven years of working for the public school system, I came to a crossroad very much like the one alluded to in Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken*. I was grateful for the opportunities I had every day to make a positive impact on my students as a high school English and music teacher, but I felt a longing to explore more of what life had to offer.

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My hunger for greater purpose and meaning in life compelled me to leave my permanent job and sell my home. I was then ushered into a wilderness journey of living within limited means, serving the hurting and the marginalized, and learning about the complexities of the human condition as I served as a missionary in different urban centres. I found myself listening to a lot of stories from the homeless, impoverished families, young drug addicts and adult survivors of childhood trauma. My heart broke and expanded as I came to a better understanding of the depth of human suffering, the cycles of dysfunction and the power of hope. I found joy in serving. I discovered that my life work is to help restore people's lives.

I am here today as a member of Parliament to continue working through the life assignment I discovered in the wilderness. I come with a vision of individual and national prosperity and filling in the gaps to make that vision possible.

I am grateful to be serving with a dynamic team of MPs and leaders in Her Majesty's loyal opposition. I am coming to love each member as a brother or a sister. As a pianist, composer and supporter of the arts, I am particularly grateful for my appointment as deputy shadow minister of Canadian Heritage. My view of the Canadian heritage portfolio is to strengthen the patriotism and unity of our diverse nation through the cultural institutions of our country. I look forward to the work I will be doing with the Hon. Minister Steven Guilbeault; shadow minister, the Hon. Steven Blaney—

• (1250)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The member cannot use members' names in the House.

**Ms. Nelly Shin:** I apologize, Madam Speaker. It was a rookie mistake.

I look forward to working with ministers and my colleagues across the aisle on this unique and dynamic portfolio.

When I look around this room at other members, I see passion for people and passion for causes. Whether or not we share the same views, we are all here because we have a part in a greater purpose. That greater purpose is to serve the people of Canada and their well-being, and to steward well the land we live on. I value the role of different political parties as important parts of a greater ecosystem to prune, refine and balance our mandates as lawmakers.

I hope we will always look to the people we serve as the heartbeat of our work and do so with the integrity, common sense and unity that Canadians expect of us and deserve. So many times at the door my constituents expressed their longing to see the parties working together for the greater good. They say more would get done.

I trust the 43rd Parliament we are serving in will provide ample opportunities for us to hit the reset button on Canadian politics and build a culture of honour that allows public discourse to unfold in a safe manner that allows transparency and constructive discussions to thrive.

On that note I would like to thank the Liberal government for bringing forward Bill C-3 for consideration. I support the bill because issues pertaining to the protection of Canadians in our communities is of great importance.

From what I have learned, Bill C-98 was introduced in the 42nd Parliament and reintroduced in our current session with slight modifications as Bill C-3. Bill C-3 proposes to repurpose and rename the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP to the public complaints and review commission.

I would like to thank the RCMP and CBSA members for their service of hard work to protect Canadians.

Public servants across our nation must be held to a standard to uphold the integrity of people who are visiting or passing through our country, while ensuring our laws and international laws are upheld. Therefore, an oversight agency, as used by police services across our nation, including the RCMP, is agreeable and long overdue.

Budget 2019 proposes to invest \$24.42 million over five years starting in 2019-20, and \$6.83 million per year ongoing, to expand the mandate of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP. It is good to know that a budget has already been allocated.

Where I would like more certainty is on the efficacy of how the government will implement Bill C-3 in practice.

Oversight is a good thing. People need assurance that there is someone who will be able to look into actions that are not consistent with the law. The implementation of the bill should not be another expansion of bureaucracy. The public complaints and review commission should have investigative powers and the ability to review situations, provide feedback and determine the course of action and its scope and scale with anyone who violates our laws.

Bill C-3 would provide a mechanism for complaints about inappropriate actions by border officers. Police agencies have had civilian oversight and review for decades. It is common practice around the world to provide mechanisms for overseeing law enforcement.

However, to my knowledge, the bill is not clear on how officers who violate the law, code or principle will be held accountable. It is only clear that the public complaints and review committee can examine evidence, call witnesses and write a report.

Without clarity on how the officers will be held to account, we run the risk of creating bureaucracy that appears to provide a mechanism of assurance for Canadians but that, in practice, will not resolve the issues addressed.

While I support this important legislation, I look forward to seeing how the House and the committee will examine the bill with proper scrutiny to provide certainty that it will be a bill that will be very practical and steer us toward just actions and resolutions, rather than giving the appearance of protection to Canadians.



• (1255)

**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 want to compliment the member for sharing with us what brought her to this place and some of her background. It was delightful to listen to and I very much appreciate her story.

My question is about something the member said towards the tail end of her speech when she made reference to standing committees. This legislation will ultimately go to a standing committee, and that will be an interesting process in itself for all new members. Good ideas often come out of committee. Amendments will be brought forward with the idea of trying to improve the legislation.

Does the member have anything on her mind that she would like to see modified within the legislation as it is now, or does she support the legislation in general? It seems all parties support it in general.

**Ms. Nelly Shin:** Madam Speaker, I very much support this bill. My comments have to do with giving it the proper dialogue, research, conversations and, as the member said, perhaps even innovative, creative ideas that may come to the table to ensure that it is bulletproof.

• (1300)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to point out that the member is the very first Korean-born Canadian member of Parliament to ever serve in this House. I congratulate her. It is also remarkable timing that she is giving her maiden speech the very week that we heard of her Liberal Party predecessor's massive number of breaches of the code of ethics continuing with the party.

I would ask the member to comment more extensively on some of the issues she heard at doors while she was going through her area in the Lower Mainland.

**Ms. Nelly Shin:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his kind remarks.

When I was door knocking, some of the things I already mentioned in my speech had to do with affordability. Many of my constituents are struggling because the cost of living on the west coast is very high. The mortgage stress test has made it very difficult for first homebuyers and even those who are renewing their mortgages because of the stringency. The opioid crisis impacting young people has raised great concern for parents. Many people care about the environment, especially on the west coast where the beauty of our landscape and resources is a huge part of our lives and culture. There are other issues pertaining to mental health. I have met parents who have lost their children to drug addiction and some are roaming around East Vancouver.

Those kinds of issues came up and I look forward to opportunities to address some of those things. I have already done so on the opioid crisis. I look forward to collaborating with all members of the House on helping to bring resolutions to those issues.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I welcome the member to the House. It is always hard for some of us when the previous member, who is a close

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friend, was the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam. When I hear that, I am going to have change who I expect to see.

My question is about the bill. I wonder if the member shares my concern that if we are going to have a robust review mechanism, it has to be adequately funded. I am concerned that when we do, as we seem to, agree that this bill should pass even with some amendments, that the government has to make proper resources available so that complaints against CBSA members will not hang over their heads for inordinate amounts of time, that we properly fund the commission so it can deal expeditiously with complaints.

**Ms. Nelly Shin:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member, who is a friend of the previous member of my riding, for his kind remarks. On that note, I look forward to continuing the great work that he did and hope to accomplish much in my riding.

I am a bit concerned about the budget. I agree that, because there is an overload of work that the border agencies have to do already and other things, it would be great to have more discussions and see more details on how the budget will be worked out and if there needs to be more.

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate on Bill C-3, which is an uncontroversial starting place for this Parliament, given the fact that there is quite broad support.

Clearly, an independent review body for the Canada Border Services Agency is a significant and welcome proposal. This is not only because it strengthens accountability and trust among Canadians, but also because it improves Canadians' overall experience with our world-class border services.

In travel and trade, Canadians have come to expect exceptional service at the border. For the overwhelming number of people who cross our borders each day, that is what they receive: exceptional service. With 96 million interactions with travellers each year, there will inevitably be a few mistakes made. We have all heard that it is relatively small, in terms of the number of complaints, but still significant enough that it merits an independent review body.

The other thing I would like to say is that lots of activity at our border is a testament to what we have achieved in Canada. It marks a healthy country and a healthy economy.

When it happens that there are complaints, we need to ensure that our system is as accountable as it can be for Canadians. Internationally, when we are compared to our closest allies, Canada is alone in not having a dedicated review body for complaints regarding our border agency. In fact, the U.S., Britain, Australia and New Zealand all have these independent review bodies. Domestically, the CBSA is the only organization within the public safety portfolio that does not have an independent review body.

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While most CBSA activities, such as customs and immigration decisions, are already subject to independent review, that is not the case when dealing with public complaints related to CBSA employee conduct and service. When thinking of large service organizations, and I have worked for a few, it is quite common to have these independent review mechanisms. People can provide feedback; it is really crucial for constant improvement in public service, and I would say it is considered a best practice.

That is why Bill C-3 is the next logical step. We have made major inroads in ensuring the accountability and review of our public safety agencies, including CSIS, RCMP and the Correctional Service of Canada. Under these proposals, if we are once again able to secure all-party support, as Bill C-98 did just eight months ago, we will welcome the newly minted public complaints and review commission, PCRC. This would be an important new tool for Canadians, building on the existing Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP.

The PCRC would have the strong mandate of reviewing public complaints about both CBSA and RCMP employee conduct or service issues, with the exception, of course, of national security issues. What does that mean? That means Canadians can continue to expect fair, consistent and equal treatment at our border. This builds public trust, which I know we all believe in. It would mean more opportunities for the CBSA to enhance its services, developing service standards that broadly cover our Border Services Agency.

I know that everyone in this House would agree that these proposed new measures are critical for an organization that deals with an incredible volume of travellers and trade around the clock. I would like to remind members that complaints could come from a wide variety of issues, not just the conduct of officers. For example, let us say I have had an excessive wait time, long lineups or security checks that are improperly conducted. I could then, with this initiative, register a complaint. The PCRC would be there to ensure the complaint was heard, processed and examined in a thorough and timely way.

I would also like to remind the House that it would not just be a mechanism for receiving complaints; it would also review non-national security activities carried out by the CBSA and RCMP, providing Canadians with public reports on those activities. For example, it would help us find answers to key questions like whether the CBSA's policies and procedures are adequate, appropriate and sufficient; whether the CBSA is compliant with the law and with ministerial directions; and whether the CBSA is using its authorities in a reasonable and necessary way.

● (1305)

When the proposed new PCRC reports its findings on these matters, the CBSA must respond. This is a critical tool to have in place. Independent review processes are well known and create the objective third party mechanism to encourage the reporting of any misconduct and any other feedback. I think that is important.

Particularly, as I mentioned before, as we move toward the border of the future, Canada's airports, for example, are faced with growing numbers of air travellers as business and leisure continue to globalize with volumes rising across all lines of business. Security and international considerations are becoming more complex.

Technologies like blockchain are developing and changing rapidly, with a wide impact on border services.

The border of the future will allow for faster processing of goods and travellers, better intelligence and more seamless travel for everyone. Whatever the future brings, the CBSA understands the need to think and act broadly and to be responsive to the needs of Canadians and the world. It also understands that when problems arise in this changing environment, it cannot be expected to review them all internally. An arm's-length, independent review body must be put in place. That would allow the CBSA to focus on consistent and fair service for Canadians as it meets the challenges of the future and it would give the public confidence that they have recourse when problems do arise, however few they may be.

Bill C-3 would bring Canada more closely in line with other countries' accountability bodies for their border agencies, including those of our Five Eyes allies. This is all about providing border services that keep Canadians safe and improve public trust and confidence. This bill would ensure that the public can continue to expect consistent, fair and equal treatment by CBSA employees.

I encourage all members of the House to join me in moving this important bill forward.

● (1310)

**Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my riding is in Essex, which is very close to Windsor, Ontario and across the border from our friends in Detroit.

Can the member tell me how this bill improves the safety and security of Canadians in my riding?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I have been across the border close to my colleague's riding, so I understand the nature of his riding.

I think this will improve every experience of everybody crossing the Canadian border, whether he or she is an international traveller coming into the country or a Canadian travelling abroad. Having these independent review processes in place really just ensures that we can all give appropriate feedback and report any misconduct that might be happening, however small that might be. I think this is similar to the Speaker's initiative to have a suggestion box in this House. Feedback groups are important for constant improvement in any public service.

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**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the intervention of our member from across the way.

From what I have seen and heard of this bill, it talks a lot about the reviews, processes and studies of the conduct of the CBSA and the RCMP, but there is very little in it that talks about the penalties for those who have contravened what standard practice or accepted practice should be.

Can the member give us any example of what type of penalty action or responsibility will be placed on those who are found to be in contravention of the standard practices?

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, I think this is an important consideration. Of course, penalties that are awarded have to suit the actual misconduct that was found. In Bill C-3, which I took the initiative to read through last night, there are significant protections and safeguards within it. I really think it gives this new independent review body the ability to investigate, call witnesses and really look at complaints in due course, and provide reports.

I do not think that the independent review body is able to penalize or award those penalties, as far as I have read, but it is an important consideration. I am sure we will have more discussion at committee.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see you in the chair, and I will compliment the job you have done so far as long as you do not cut me off.

My question for the hon. member goes to the fact that all parties here are aware of the importance of the bill. It has been a long time coming, as I pointed out several times. I first raised this issue more than six years ago in the House.

Once these measures are implemented, I am concerned that review bodies need to have adequate resources so that when complaints are filed, they can be dealt with in an expeditious manner and not be left hanging over the heads of Canada Border Services officers, who by and large do an excellent job for us each and every day.

I am wondering whether the member shares my concern, and if so, whether he will make it known in his caucus that when the bill does pass, we have to make sure that the review agency is adequately resourced.

• (1315)

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull:** Mr. Speaker, we have to provide resources for any initiative that we take, especially when we are talking about important mechanisms that do independent reviews. We know that responses have to be timely. This is why our government invested \$24 million in 2019 in this initiative. We have allocated and earmarked a significant budget figure for it. We always do take these considerations.

If it is found that additional resources are required in the future, we can look at increasing those amounts. I think there are about 1,200 complaints per year, so we will have to see what the unit of service looks like and how intensive and costly it is to investigate each one of those. In the coming years we will have a better sense of how much we might need to increase the budget.

**Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Conservatives for sharing this time with me so that I can speak to this important bill. As other members have pointed out, this has been a long time coming, and it is something civil society organizations and citizens have been asking for.

CBSA officers are on the front lines at our borders and do important and valuable work. CBSA officers interact with 95 million travellers every year. It is important that the work they do is recognized and that the people who step up to do that job are respected and recognized for the work they do. My sister was a police officer in the OPP for 24 years. My uncle served in the RCMP. I spent time with them on ride-alongs and saw the work they do. I have talked with their colleagues and documented some of the work they do. Just like the folks who are here to serve and protect us as part of our parliamentary security, these are people who step up to serve and protect our communities, and it is important to respect the work they do.

However, there can be complaints that come forward to the media. The last time we were debating this topic as Bill C-98, there was a complaint brought forward to the media by a woman who had been mishandled by the CBSA. She had been strip-searched, felt the whole process was arbitrary, and did not have the confidence to complain to the CBSA about what had happened to her. In 2016 to 2018, there were 1,200 cases of alleged misconduct by CBSA employees. These are the things that can taint an organization that employs many people. There were 228 cases of neglect of duty, 183 cases of discreditable conduct on duty, 59 cases of harassment, 38 cases of criminal association, 25 cases of abuse of authority, seven cases of assault, five cases of intimidation, five cases of uttering threats, five cases of sexual assault and four cases of smuggling. There have been accusations of racism and other things happening at the border.

Most people do not realize that when they cross the border, they are in a legal no man's land and have very few rights. The CBSA has extensive powers to take blood and saliva samples, to access data on computers and ask for passwords, to conduct strip searches, to detain people and to arrest non-citizens. We have had 14 deaths since 2000 in CBSA detention centres, and there has been no independent review of these deaths or any potential criminal implications for any wrongdoing. It is very important to bring the CBSA into the same process that all of our other security forces have with respect to oversight bodies, so having a public complaints and review commission is really important.

There are a couple of things in this bill we would like to see adapted and changed.

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The RCMP Act, under the ineligibility paragraph at subsection 45.29(2), excludes current and former members from serving on the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission. Under the act, “member” has a specific definition, and means an employee of the RCMP. Presumably, this should be amended so the current and former agents of the CBSA should also be excluded from sitting on the public complaints and review commission. It is incumbent that it be independent, because somebody who has served with the CBSA may have colleagues who are being called forward with respect to a complaint. Therefore, it needs to be completely at arm's length if we do not want this continued relationship.

● (1320)

When one is in these security organizations as a police officer, it is like a brotherhood or sisterhood. These people think the best of their officers, and they want to believe the best of them.

This was the case for my sister when she was in the OPP. She was at the Ipperwash inquiry, looking into the wrongdoing of fellow officers. At first, she had trouble believing they could be involved in the wrongful death of Dudley George. In that inquiry, some of the worst behaviour of certain members of the OPP came out. It is important that it is an independent body that looks at these behaviours and reviews it properly.

Another thing we would like to see changed is some notification for people who are to be deported. There is a case of a gentleman named Richard Germaine, who is an indigenous man. He was born in California, lived his whole life in Penelakut Island, which is in the Cowichan—Malahat—Langford riding. He is married. He is a community leader.

Right before Christmas, without any warning or knowledge that his citizenship papers were in any sort of disarray so he could take some steps toward it, CBSA officials showed up at his home. They put him leg irons and took him away in front of his wife, who is a residential school survivor. This traumatized her, their children and their grandchildren. They took him in a van to a detention centre in Vancouver, where he was ordered to be deported as quickly as possible. He had no idea what was happening to him.

Fortunately, he was working with an ethnobotanist at the University of Victoria. The member for Saanich—Gulf Islands helped, working with the minister, to ensure Germaine was taken out of detention.

I realize that some people might cut and run with a notification, but in this case, it clearly shows that just showing up right before Christmas, putting somebody in leg irons and dragging the person away is not appropriate. That is another aspect we would like to see amended.

We share concerns about how this will be funded to ensure the public review complaints commission has adequate funds to do its work.

However, we think this is an important legislation to pass. CBSA should have the same kind of oversight that other police agencies and security agencies have in the country.

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Madam Speaker, we all know what went on in

the last Parliament with respect to the SNC-Lavalin affair. There was a clear overreach by the Prime Minister and people in his office around the issue of judicial independence and the push toward a deferred prosecution agreement.

This legislation purports to expand the purview to create a new mandate for the public complaints review commission. What measures should be in place in the legislation to ensure the minister's authority is restrained and the commission remains independent?

● (1325)

**Mr. Paul Manly:** Madam Speaker, the commission should be completely at arm's length from the minister. When we have these processes, they should be independent and able to do their work without political interference.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, of course the commission must be independent, but how does my colleague feel about the lack of resources that forces officers to work longer hours? They are inevitably more tired.

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Manly:** Madam Speaker, it is very important that the people who step up to serve and protect our communities have adequate resources and that public complaints commissions like this have adequate resources.

To have people in positions of responsibility, like the CBSA, RCMP and any other police force, work extended overtime is not a good idea. We want people to be at the height of their ability to think and act, and to be reasonable. We want them to do their jobs adequately. Being sleep deprived and overworked is no way to do that.

**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, when we talk about public oversight, it is important for us to recognize that we have other agencies with public oversight, the RCMP being one of them. With this legislation, the RCMP and CBSA would have the same oversight group and we would therefore retain a lot of information that is in place today and a level of expertise.

Could my colleague provide his thoughts in regard to the fact that we are putting the CBSA and the RCMP under one oversight group? Would he agree there is a great deal of benefit to doing so?

**Mr. Paul Manly:** Madam Speaker, I agree with the member. It is a very good idea to combine the two of them, because there would be a cost savings and there is a level of expertise already.

One thing I highlighted in my speech is that the RCMP Act, under the review process with the RCMP, says former members of the RCMP cannot be part of the commission. They cannot be part of the complaints process. The bill does not specifically say that former or current members of the CBSA cannot take part in the commission. It needs to be amended so we have the same rules for the CBSA as for the RCMP. I would like to see a level playing field between the RCMP and the CBSA and that former and current members of the CBSA are excluded from this commission.

**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask about a concern we have heard. The commission would be required to submit a report to Parliament. That report would go through the minister's office, and the report could be edited or redacted by the minister before it is received by Parliament. That is a concern for us. Is it a concern for the member as well?

**Mr. Paul Manly:** Madam Speaker, yes, that is a concern for me as well. Parliamentarians should be able to review these reports.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to add my voice to the debate of Bill C-3 at second reading. This important piece of legislation would amend the Canada Border Services Agency Act and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act to establish a new public complaints and review commission for both organizations. This would give the CBSA its own independent review body for the first time.

Transparency and accountability are extremely important in any context. That certainly includes the public safety and national security sphere. Canadians need to have trust and confidence in the people and agencies that work so hard to protect them. Right now, among the family of organizations that make up the public safety portfolio, only the CBSA lacks a full-fledged independent review body dedicated to it.

The RCMP has had such a body since 1988, the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP. The CRCC reviews complaints from the public about conduct of RCMP members and conducts reviews when complainants are not satisfied with the RCMP's handling of their complaints. This process ensures public complaints are examined fairly and impartially.

Canada also has an office of the correctional investigator, which provides independent oversight of Correctional Service Canada. The correctional investigator essentially serves as an ombudsman for federal offenders. The main responsibility of the office is to investigate and try to resolve offender complaints. The office is also responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on CSC policies and procedures related to those complaints, the goal being to ensure areas of concern are identified and appropriately addressed.

The CBSA really stands out in this context.

Before I go any further, it is important to point out that a fair number of CBSA's activities are already subject to independent oversight through existing bodies. Customs-related matters, for example, are handled by the Canadian International Trade Tribunal. With the passage of Bill C-59, the CBSA's national security-related activities are now being overseen by Canada's new National Security

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and Intelligence Review Agency. This agency is an independent, external body that can report on any national security or intelligence-related activity carried out by federal departments and agencies. It has the legal mandate and expertise to review national security activities and serves an important accountability function in our democracy.

However, a major piece is missing in the architecture of public safety and national security oversight and accountability. There is currently no mechanism for public complaints about the CBSA to be heard and considered. That is a significant oversight, given the scope of the agency's mandate and the sheer volume of its interactions with the public.

CBSA employees deal with thousands of people each day and tens of millions each year. They do so at approximately 1,200 service points across Canada and at 39 international airports and locations. In the last fiscal year alone, border officers interacted with 96 million travellers, both Canadians and foreign nationals, and that is just one aspect of its business. It is a massive, complex and impressive operation. We can all be proud of having such a professional, world-class border services agency.

In the vast majority of cases, the CBSA's interactions with the public happen without incident. Our employees work with the utmost professionalism in delivering border services to those entering the country. However, on rare occasions, and for whatever reason, things go less than smoothly. That is not unusual. People are human and we cannot expect everything they do will be perfect all the time. However, that does not mean there should not be a fair and appropriate way for people to air their grievances. If people are unhappy with the way they were treated at the border, or the level of service they received, they need to know that someone will hear their complaint in an independent manner. Needless to say, that is currently not the case.

The way things currently work is that if a member of the public makes a complaint about the CBSA, it is handled internally. In other words, the CBSA investigates itself. In recent years, a number of parliamentarians, commentators and observers have raised concerns about this problematic accountability gap. To rectify the situation, they have called for an independent review body specific to the CBSA. Bill C-3 would answer that call.

*Government Orders*

• (1330)

Under Bill C-3, the existing Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP would be given new powers and remain the public complaints and review commission, or PCRC. The newly established PCRC would consider complaints related to conduct or service issues involving either CBSA or RCMP employees. Those who believe they have had a negative interaction with a CBSA employee would have the option of turning to the PCRC for remedy and would have one year to do so.

The same would continue to be the case with respect to the RCMP. This would apply to Canadian citizens, permanent residents and foreign nationals. That includes people detained in CBSA's immigration holding centres, who would be able to submit complaints related to their conditions of detention or treatment while in detention.

The complaints function is just one part of the proposed new PCRC. The commission would also have an important review function. It would conduct reviews related to non-national security activities involving CBSA and the RCMP, since national security, as I noted earlier, is now in the purview of the National Security and Intelligence Review Agency. The findings and recommendations of the PCRC would be non-binding. However, the CBSA would be required to provide a response to those findings and recommendations for all the complaints. I believe that combining these functions into one agency is the best way forward.

The existing CRCC already performs these functions for the RCMP, and the proposals in the bill would build on the success and expertise it has developed. Combining efforts may also generate efficiencies of scale and allow for resources to be allocated to priority areas. On that note, I certainly recognize that additional resources would be required for the PCRC, given its proposed new responsibilities and what that would mean in terms of workload.

That is why I am pleased that budget 2019 included nearly \$25 million over five years, starting this fiscal year, and an additional \$6.83 million per year ongoing to expand the mandate of the CRCC. That funding commitment has also been positively received by stakeholders. With Bill C-3, the government is taking a major step toward enhancing CBSA independent review and accountability in a big way.

I was encouraged to see an apparent consensus of support for this bill in our debate so far. As we know, just eight months ago, the previous form of this bill, Bill C-98, received all-party support during third reading in the House during the last Parliament. In reintroducing this bill, we have taken into consideration points that were previously raised by the opposition parties, and we hope to rely on their continued support.

The changes proposed in Bill C-3 are appropriate and long overdue. They would give Canadians greater confidence in the border agencies that serve them and they would bring Canada in line with international norms in democratic countries. That includes the systems already in place with some of our closest allies, such as the U.K., Australia and New Zealand.

I am proud to be supporting this important piece of legislation. I will be voting in favour of this bill at second reading and I urge all of my hon. colleagues to do the same when the time comes.

• (1335)

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, under this bill, are there provisions for the cost of defence when a complaint has been brought against a member?

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** Madam Speaker, I read the summary of this bill last night. That is a very important question and I thank the member opposite for bringing it forward. These are the kinds of questions that could be examined at the committee level.

**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 want to highlight, as I did a little earlier, that Canada border control agents are more than just the individuals that we see at border crossings between Canada and the U.S. They are also in other areas, such our international airports. Having a presence is really important in terms of visibility, but they do provide an essential service to ensure there is an efficient flow of travel, trade and so forth.

I am wondering if my colleague could provide her thoughts in terms of a lot of the fine work they do, but having said that, how there is still a need for a public oversight committee because it assists in having public confidence in the system.

• (1340)

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** Madam Speaker, I believe that the essence of this bill, and I think the essence of my colleagues' view in this House, is to ensure that accountability and transparency is sought out with the creation of this bill. I think Canadians expect that, however small the number of cases. I understand that there are approximately 1,200 cases reported per year. Every case is different, and every case is important.

Every Canadian deserves to be treated with respect, and we should ensure that accountability and transparency is sought in every process of every complaint.

**Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have been hearing a lot of great-sounding words from the government House leader and the member about public confidence, transparency and accountability, but it makes me want to return to this question about SNC-Lavalin. This was a case where the Prime Minister and people in his office had no problem at all trying to interfere in the judicial process. In fact, the result was the attorney general at the time being removed from caucus. That was a very serious affair, and Canadians were rightly upset by it.

If Canadians do not have trust in the government to not interfere in the judicial process, how are they going to trust the Liberal government to not interfere with the affairs and business of the new public complaints review commission?

*Government Orders*

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** Madam Speaker, I would like to remind the member that, on October 21, the public, Canadians across the country, instilled confidence in this government to govern and form government. I think that Canadians across the land have confidence in this party and in this government. Second, the committee itself is made up of an impartial body of individuals, and therefore we expect that the report or its findings will be transparent and impartial.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Madam Speaker, what concerns me somewhat are the asylum claimants.

I would like to know if they will have the opportunity to file a complaint. Given that these complaints often create delays and can be used by these people to delay their deportation, I would like to know what my colleague opposite thinks about that.

**Ms. Patricia Lattanzio:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his very relevant question.

What I understand about this bill is that it pertains not just to Canadians but also to those crossing our borders. That is a very good question and I expect it will be discussed in committee.

[*English*]

**Mr. Kelly McCauley (Edmonton West, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to join the debate on Bill C-3 today. I imagine all the masses sitting at home huddled in front of their TVs watching this on CPAC are quite surprised to see every party stand up and support the bill. I am pleased to support it in general as well. The 18 people at home watching on CPAC probably outnumber those at home watching CBC right now.

Before I get into my general speech, I want to make some comments regarding the oversight committee and its independence from the minister.

A couple of days ago we were debating an opposition day motion about doing a review of the Parole Board and the Parole Board process for appointees, in light of the release of a previous killer into the streets to kill again.

I bring that up because during the debate, some government members intervened and put through an amendment to change that to condemn not the Parole Board, which knew about the situation of the man visiting a prostitute, but to condemn the parole officer and make the officer the scapegoat, rather than blaming the Parole Board in general.

I worry that instead of focusing on the process in general and the lack of training and the lack of resources, the new oversight committee will go after individual CBSA officers, so I look forward to the bill getting to committee and seeing this issue being brought up so that there is a clear delineation between the government and the board. I hope the oversight committee is appointed through a transparent process and not through patronage appointments of under-skilled people, perhaps like the people on the Parole Board who released that murderer.

There is another thing I want to bring up, and I am really glad that so many people have it brought up already. I want to thank CBSA officers who are working to protect and serve Canadians.

CBSA has been one of our best government departments in hiring veterans. A rule was brought through by the Conservatives stating that if anyone serves on our military and is released for medical reasons, that individual will go to the very top of the hiring charts in the public service. After that, before anyone else, is the individual who retired from the military after serving three years in uniform.

We brought in legislation as well that recognized their seniority. If someone has served Canada for 15 years, perhaps served overseas or served five years in Afghanistan, that time serving Canada would be recognized when the individual joins the public service. These seniority rights would count towards vacation and in work scheduling.

We have a lot of problems with getting government departments to hire veterans, but CBSA is probably at the top and has done the greatest job. However, we heard that the Liberal government bargained away seniority rights from veterans who had been medically discharged and had joined the public service.

It is nice to hear members of all parties in the House today praise the CBSA and all the workers, but I hope they put their talking points aside and stand with the CBSA veterans who served our country overseas, those who were perhaps medically discharged or who served in uniform and then found a job with CBSA. I hope members stand together and demand the Liberal government bring back seniority rights for those veterans who are now working with the CBSA.

That said, I want to get to Bill C-3 itself.

The backgrounder says that CBSA ensures Canada's security and prosperity by facilitating and overseeing international travel and trade across Canada's border and interact with thousands of Canadians and visitors to Canada at airports, land border crossing ports and other locations, ensuring a free flow of people and goods across the border.

It continues to say that "the government recognizes that robust accountability mechanisms can help ensure that the public trusts Canada's public safety institutions."

I want to make sure that we actually have robust oversight of the oversight. It is kind of like the *Watchmen* comic book, "Who's Watching the Watchmen?". I want to make sure that these are not just people fulfilling some government agenda, as was suggested during the debate on the opposition day motion, when there was an attempt to make the parole officer the scapegoat instead of addressing the general issues at large.

### *Government Orders*

Bill C-3 would also legislate a framework for handling a serious incident regarding CBSA personnel. This includes giving the PCRC responsibility to track and report on serious incidents. That is great, but I want to come back to the CBSA officers.

• (1345)

As I mentioned during a previous intervention, we have serious issues with the cultural structure of the CBSA. I mentioned how the government stripped veterans' benefits from those serving in CBSA. During the most recent employee survey within CBSA, 63% of the members said they do not believe they can bring up concerns without fear of reprisal.

Remember, this is the same government that, when it was presented with a unanimous report from all three parties in the last Parliament to strengthen whistle-blower protection to protect public servants, Scott Brison threw it in the garbage.

We had an operations committee on TV, with a commitment from Scott Brison to come back to explain what his government was doing. He did not come back. For five months before he left the House, left Parliament, he refused to come back. I hope the new President of the Treasury Board will come back and explain what the government is going to do to protect public servants.

Think about it. Almost two-thirds, 63%, of people at CBSA are afraid to come forward for fear of reprisal. In the operations committee, we heard what some of these reprisals were. Lives were destroyed, people were thrown out of work or blackballed from work. We heard of someone who brought up an issue, and the government actually sued the person.

When the whistle-blower blew the whistle on the Liberal government's payout to Omar Khadr, Liberals were not concerned about paying a confessed murderer \$10.5 million. They spent tens of thousands of dollars investigating and going after the whistle-blower.

We have all the parties in the government saying CBSA officers are valued workers. The CBSA workers are saying they do not trust their senior managers or the government. We have a serious issue and I hope we will address these issues in ongoing legislation.

Another issue that came up is that 57% do not have confidence in senior management. These are the same workers who we are expecting to be exposed, in a way, and held to trial, in a way, by this new oversight process. It does not mention the oversight of the management, nor does it mention the fact that perhaps there is a culture of fear within the department. Again, I look forward to these things being hashed out at committee so we have a proper system.

Also, 51% do not believe senior management act ethically. Think about it. These are the people who are supposed to be stopping smuggled goods, protecting us from bad people coming across the border and dealing with hundreds of billions of dollars of trade throughout the year. However, 51% do not believe their managers act ethically, and 63% do not believe they can come forward to the government to bring this up without reprisals against them. Again, I hope these issues are brought up.

We have a lot of problems at CBSA. This is from the departmental plan the government tabled as part of the estimates process. Ralph Goodale tabled it last year, but these are some of the Liberals' goals for the coming year.

The percentage of high-risk commercial goods targeted by CBSA examined at the border was 94%, and 96% under the Conservatives. The Liberals' goal for this year we do not know. It actually says "to be decided". Last year, the government put the goal for this year as "to be decided".

For the percentage of threats identified that lead to an enforcement action or inadmissibility recommendation, the goal was 18%. They are saying only 18% of the threats identified would actually be held to enforcement. They are saying 80% of threats identified, they are not going to go after. This is a problem.

The percentage of high-priority foreign nationals removed for issues such as war crimes is 80%. They have dropped their goal from previous years, so their goal is only to remove 80% of war criminals from Canada.

The reason I bring this up is that it is a serious problem. If we look at the same departmental plan tabled by the government, over the next two years the Liberals are cutting \$410 million from the budget, according to their plans. This is on top of \$150 million that was cut from last year to this year.

The government wants to do this, this and this, but it is actually doing something completely opposite. I hope the government will get on track and support CBSA, and we will get on track and support this bill if it does so.

• (1350)

**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 always find it interesting when statistics are brought before us. There is a lot of validity to the idea that they can be manipulated at times. I do not necessarily know all the background of the report the member across the way cited, but I suspect it was a fairly thorough report.

One of the things anyone following this debate will have detected is that there is a wide spectrum of support, from all political parties in the House, to see the bill pass, so can it go to a standing committee. Many of the concerns that have been raised during second reading will be afforded some limited discussion and dialogue at the standing committee.

My question for the member opposite is related to the standing committee and the important role it plays in looking at the possible amendments. Does the member have any tangible amendments he will move forward with on this legislation? Does he know if his caucus has any amendments?



*Government Orders*

• (1355)

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Madam Speaker, I want to assure the member for Winnipeg North, since we are flying out of Ottawa at almost the same time today, that I have looked online and his flight to Winnipeg is on time. I was hoping that would be his question.

I was not quoting statistics earlier, I was quoting facts. These cuts are directly from the Public Accounts. The Speaker was on the public accounts committee, so she knows full well that these are actual numbers. These are not made-up numbers like the Liberals throw around all the time, like saying they have housed 100 million people in their housing program, which is not true, or that they have created this or that. These are actual, truthful numbers.

When I quote from the departmental plan, showing that it is reducing funding to CBSA by \$410 million over the next couple of years, that is from its own plan on which its minister signed off. These are not made-up numbers. One side can say whatever it wants, but these are actual numbers.

As for what I would like to see put forward, although I am not on that committee, I would like to see a very strong overview plan so we protect Canadians who have legitimate complaints. However, I also do not want us to scapegoat the CBSA.

My colleague across the way mentioned there was support for this around the entire House. There was support from every party for our motion about a proper review of the Parole Board, but the government tried to change it to scapegoat the Parole Board officer and not the general problem.

I hope that in committee the members will look at a system that protects Canadians and protects CBSA officers and workers in general, but that it is not used for perhaps scapegoating someone to further the government agenda.

**Mr. Chris Lewis (Essex, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have somewhat of a two-point question here, but I will be very brief.

Is this the most pressing priority facing Canadians today? We have a rising number of illegal firearms, rising shootings by gangs, skyrocketing overdoses, mental health challenges, court blockages, repeat offenders out assaulting Canadians, serious rural crime issues and more. Why is this the top priority for the public safety department?

**Mr. Kelly McCauley:** Madam Speaker, I do not know why this is the top priority for the government.

The election was October 21. When Britain had its election, Boris Johnson recalled parliament within six days. I can see, with the change in government from Conservative to Liberal like in 2015, it takes two months to recall Parliament. However, there was no reason we had to sit on our hands, waiting for the Liberal government to recall Parliament. This is only the third week we have been sitting in three months. If there was such an urgency, I do not know why the government did not just get on with it.

It is the same with committees. Three months after the election, most of the committees dealing with such issues, including the CBSA, still have not had their first seating. The government, just like the 42nd Parliament, seems to be wandering aimlessly from point to point, waiting for an issue to pop up so it can tackle it. I am not

sure why it has placed this ahead of opioid issue or the jobs crisis in Alberta, but that is typical of the government.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today on this stormy Friday in Quebec. Obviously, as usual, everything is going smoothly here in the House with no sign of a storm.

We are here on this Friday afternoon to talk about Bill C-3, an act to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Canada Border Services Agency Act and to make consequential amendments to other acts. Essentially, this bill would create a committee that would oversee the operation of these two organizations. It is also the logical next step to a bill that was introduced and passed in the previous Parliament, Bill C-98.

As members probably already heard from some of the previous speakers, the official opposition is in favour of this bill. I wanted to say that right off the top. However, we have some concerns that we will raise during the debate at first and second reading and in committee.

First, I would like to take this wonderful opportunity to pay tribute to those who work for the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency. Every day, they work to protect, sometimes at the risk of their own lives, our security both within Canada and at our border crossings.

We do not think about this often enough, but we are extraordinarily privileged to live in such a safe country. That is due to millions of Canadians, of course, but above all to the people whose job it is to protect us all. That includes the members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. It also includes the officers who protect border crossings across Canada, both those working on the ground, right at the border, and those working in our airports and ports. We must not forget that we share the longest land border in the world with the United States, and we can be very proud of it because we know it is well guarded by these officers. We owe them so much.

As I was saying, this bill flows from another piece of legislation from the last Parliament. Members will recall that in 2015, the current government got itself elected by saying it would table a bill addressing the concerns this document is about.

Today, we can see that the people on the government side seem surprised that things are not moving along as fast as they hoped. I would remind them that, despite getting elected on that promise back in 2015, they did not table Bill C-98 until the very end of their first term. If they really thought it was so important, so integral, so essential, so vital to their commitment, they could have tabled that bill much sooner.

*Government Orders*

I will not mention certain promises that were not kept during the Liberals' first term, such as the "modest deficits" and the return to a balanced budget in 2019. However, this also proves that this government, which got itself elected on the strength of certain promises, did not accomplish what it said it would.

Since we are talking about border services, I want to share a sad episode in Canada's history, perhaps the saddest episode in the history of our border services. Unfortunately, this episode was not provoked by our workers, our employers, our public servants, our RCMP officers or our border services officers, but by the Prime Minister of Canada himself. He is the one who is fully responsible for the refugee crisis we have had and continue to have in Canada. We are sad to say that it has been nearly three years since the Prime Minister himself unwittingly created a crisis.

It was the evening of January 28, 2017. I remember because I got a Twitter alert on my smart phone indicating that the Prime Minister had just tweeted something.

The Prime Minister, who was all too happy to tweet something to outdo the Americans, but especially to give himself some brass and prestige on the world stage, wrote a tweet that essentially said, you are all welcome here in Canada. The Prime Minister's tweet came on the heels of the U.S. government's announcement that it was closing its doors to all refugees from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

• (1400)

That tweet set off a border crisis the likes of which we have never seen in this country. Over 40,000 people entered Canada illegally at Roxham Road, showing complete contempt and disregard for the honour and hard work of other people from around the world who followed the rules and dreamed of coming here to enrich Canada with their presence. Unfortunately, those 40,000 people got the Prime Minister's green light to come into Canada through the back door, which is illegal.

I am choosing my words carefully because I know that there is a war of words going on. Some people call it "irregular", not "illegal". If it is indeed irregular, why is there a huge sign at the entrance to Roxham Road saying that it is illegal to cross the border except at an official crossing?

Once something illegal has been done, how can it then be considered "irregular"?

• (1405)

[English]

This is a big deal. This is why those guys, the Liberals, are talking about irregularity instead of illegality. My colleagues and I have been asking the government for the last three years why there is a huge sign at the entrance of Roxham Road that says it is an illegal entrance. People cannot go there. It is illegal.

If the Liberals cannot accept what their own government is writing on signs they should resign, but they will not.

[Translation]

That is the problem with this government. It likes to crow about its lofty principles, wears its heart on its sleeve and brings everyone

to tears talking about how Canada is the most beautiful, most wonderful country on the planet, a country that will welcome every last living creature with open arms.

The actual fact of the matter is that Canada has laws and rules that must be obeyed, not because one leans left or right but because everyone needs to follow the rules and the rules apply to everyone.

When we were in power, we took in 25,000 refugees. Unlike the current government, we did not make a big show of it when people arrived at the airport. We did not convene the media, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the minister of this, that and the other thing and an opposition member to please everyone and get some air time.

We focus on being a serious, rigorous and humanitarian country that cares about individuals more than those TV appearances the Liberals like to use to show that they are the best and the nicest. Our serious Conservative approach allowed 25,000 refugees from around the world to come enrich our country.

Refugees and immigrants contribute to our country's wealth. I know what I am talking about. This is a bit of a conflict of interest for me because my parents came here in 1958 as immigrants. It is important to disclose any conflicts of interest, and I just did. I cannot thank Canada enough for welcoming my parents in 1958.

Some 40,000 people have crossed illegally into Canada at Roxham Road. I remind members that this sparked a battle with the Government of Quebec, which had to wait three years to get reimbursed for all this.

What is worse, these illegal crossings were an insult to the thousands of people from around the world who follow the rules and contact various embassies, consulates and border services. As members of Parliament, we know how this works, since we see all kinds of cases at our riding offices. These people were not fortunate enough to see the Prime Minister's tweet, take Roxham Road and automatically gain access to Canada.

On April 3, 2018, the National Post reported that the first secretary at the Canadian embassy in Mexico warned the government that the Prime Minister's tweet was causing all kinds of problems.

In conclusion, I want to sincerely thank all of the RCMP officers as well as all the Canadians, from both the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency, who keep us safe.

**Ms. Christine Normandin (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Louis-Saint-Laurent reminded us that Bill C-3 pertains to the handling of complaints within the Canada Border Services Agency, or CBSA. However, he then went on to speak for 10 minutes about irregular migrants who cross the border at Roxham Road.

*Government Orders*

Am I to understand that he believes that irregular migrants are to blame for the poor handling of complaints at the CBSA?

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Madam Speaker, I salute my colleague and congratulate her on being elected.

When she started talking about the CBSA, I was a little surprised, because I thought she was talking about the CBC, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Clearly, that is not the case. As a Conservative member, I would never dare pass judgment on the CBC, since that could complicate things down the line.

First of all, I mentioned that we are well aware of what is happening within the CBSA and the RCMP. I wanted to pay tribute to them and review the history of the bill. I did not spend 10 minutes talking about Roxham Road. I think my colleague will agree with me on that.

The reality is that dozens if not hundreds of CBSA officers have been grappling with a problem entirely created by this government. The House has a duty to correct the situation and shed some light on the problems, especially since they have been artificially created by heavy-handed political interference.

• (1410)

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my friend, my colleague and my neighbour in the Confederation Building for his comments.

Before entering politics, I worked for the RCMP for almost 24 years. The RCMP has an independent investigative process. When my colleagues had to file a complaint, the majority of them had confidence in this system.

Can my colleague tell us how important such a system is in terms of properly serving our fellow citizens?

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to answer my colleague's question. I hold her in high regard and have a lot of affection for her. We crossed swords from time to time when I was the finance critic and she was the parliamentary secretary to the finance minister. We had a lot of fun together. I also want to acknowledge the contribution of the member for Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe.

We agree on the principle of the bill. We believe that this is the right approach. That is why, when we studied Bill C-98 during the 42nd Parliament, we made rigorous and legitimate efforts that led to the passage of the bill. Of course, we raised some very relevant questions, which we will raise again. I am convinced that we will have the opportunity to examine this issue more thoroughly in committee.

We definitely agree on the principle of the bill.

[*English*]

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I will start with thanking my colleague for the great work he does in the House, particularly on the national unity file and in speaking about the importance of projects in Alberta. I think Albertans should know about the great work being done by members of our caucus from all parts of the country, in-

cluding from Quebec, in standing up for projects like Teck's Frontier project and communicating those messages in both official languages.

I would like my colleague to share a little more about the frustrations being felt in different parts of the country with the challenges at the border. These are things we hear about. There are concerns in Manitoba and Quebec especially, where some of this is happening, but all across the country as well. What policy recommendations would he suggest to the government in terms of responding to these issues?

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** Madam Speaker, I want to pay my respects to my colleague, who is always present in the House and always has something to say, and always something interesting to say too, which is quite important. Sometimes we have people on the other side who always speak but do not really speak on the good side.

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

**Mr. Gérard Deltell:** We can disagree, which is what democracy is all about. This is why we are in the House of Commons. This is why we are here and, unfortunately, why they are there, but time is moving, so watch out in the next two years.

However, on the question, yes, the crisis created by the Prime Minister's tweet was also a threat to national unity. People in Quebec, as in Manitoba, as in each and every province, would love to welcome people coming to our shores, but they also want to welcome people who will follow the rules, and those asylum refugees, the 40,000 and more who passed through Roxham Road, were the first victims of the Prime Minister's tweet—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for North Okanagan—Shuswap.

**Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise, but unfortunately the previous member got cut short. I am sure he had more to say. He is such an eloquent speaker and it is always a pleasure, but always a challenge to follow someone like him.

It is rather fitting that this bill is up for debate this month. Some members may be aware, but I do not think most are, that February 1, 2020, was the 100th anniversary of the forming of the RCMP in Canada. It is an exemplary police force. I heard a member today say she had worked for the RCMP for a number of years before coming to this House. I know we have members on both sides who have served in police work, the RCMP and so on.

My brother-in-law entered the force back in the early 70s. He got transferred out to where we lived in North Okanagan—Shuswap. He met my sister and, even after the rough time our older brothers gave him, they decided to get married. He spent many years in the force and retired from the force from the audit department.

*Government Orders*

That audit department is internal in the force. They go in and review all the cases in the detachments. He travelled throughout western Canada and spent many years doing that, a very honourable but sometimes challenging role because he was reviewing his fellow officers' work.

I speak about the RCMP and the honourable role it has had. I am also fortunate we have a retired RCMP commissioner, the first female RCMP commissioner. She went through the first female recruiting class at Depot in Regina in 1974 and was posted to Salmon Arm in my community of North Okanagan—Shuswap. She served many years with the RCMP and eventually retired as commissioner, but chose the North Okanagan—Shuswap area as her retirement home.

Many people may not be aware, but she is now appointed as senator from B.C. to the upper chamber of the Senate. It is a great honour. We have gotten to know her, her husband and her friends over the past few years. She is a very honourable person and a great fit in our legislative system here in Canada.

There is so much honour in the roles of the people within the RCMP and CBSA. Unfortunately, we have the odd person who many not be as honourable, and that is why we need these review processes. I would not want to see the entire CBSA be tainted and for the public to think we have to review everyone in that department. That is certainly not the case.

I mentioned that February 1 was the 100th anniversary of the formation of the RCMP. In the town of Vernon, we had a couple of fellows form a small committee to do an RCMP Appreciation Day. I went home last weekend and took part in that at the Vernon Museum and Archives. It was a great representation there.

One of the greatest pieces was they also had two brand new RCMP recruits, who had arrived in the last 48 hours, take part in that ceremony as part of that recognition. Later that night, they were in their red serge and came out on the ice to help drop the puck at the Vernon Vipers hockey game. That honour and tradition was there. Senator Busson was there in her regalia and the members were there in their red serge, showing the honour that is there.

Many of us travel through airports. I do regularly, back and forth in travel from B.C. and North Okanagan—Shuswap. We have seen many instances of those CBSA workers in the airports being challenged by unruly, impatient and sometimes impaired passengers.

● (1415)

I was passing through Calgary around Christmas and saw an incident take place. I have to congratulate the CBSA guards and security people who were on duty at that time. They handled the situation very professionally.

We also run the risk that guards and members will be set up because of all the tools and technology out there with cellphones. Some want to act unscrupulously so they can initiate an incident and only perhaps record part of it to attack a department or person.

That is where I think this review process will be very beneficial, as long as it is open and transparent. We have heard discussion today about an annual report to the minister. We want to make sure

that the report is transparent, that it is not redacted by the minister and that Parliament gets to review it in full.

A review process needs to be open, transparent and fair. It also has to find a balance between national security and an individual's right to privacy and security. We have heard concerns about access to cellphones and personal data on cellphones. Many of us keep our personal information, like passwords and so on for our accounts, on our cellphones. For border guards to have access to that basically without restraint is very troubling for some. It should not be for those who live their lives in a respectful manner, but marginal people may have a lot more issues with that.

I also want to touch on an issue that I heard just this week about outdoor tourism. People from outside of the country come to Canada for guided fishing or hunting trips, and some are being challenged at the border because of offences from many years in their past, sometimes when they were teenagers. They come to Canada as seniors, and because of impaired driving charges earlier in their lives or minor criminal offences in the U.S., they are being barred from coming into Canada.

There has been some great debate on Bill C-3 and I look forward to seeing it move to committee.

We are all heading into a constituency week, so I want to wish everyone well. I will be heading back to my riding of North Okanagan—Shuswap to the biggest winter carnival in western Canada: the Vernon Winter Carnival. It named its Queen Silver Star and her princess last night. There will be proclamations, parades and snow sculptures. Unfortunately, the hot air balloon fest will not be happening this year. There will also be parka parties and many other events in my riding over the next 10 days.

I am certainly looking forward to being back home, as I think many members are as well, as we move into a constituency week to go back to our ridings to talk to our constituents.

● (1420)

**Hon. Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased that all members of the House, I believe, approve of this legislation and recognize that it is very important.

As my hon. colleague mentioned, we know that all members who work for the CBSA, almost 14,000 of them, provide a tremendous service to protect our borders and protect us as Canadians on a regular basis. We recognize that the work we are doing to put this review in place is not for the majority of them, but for the exceptions to the rule.

*Government Orders*

Could my colleague elaborate on the importance of putting together this independent review process and how he feels it would benefit his constituents and all constituents?

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** Madam Speaker, this piece of legislation still has to be reviewed at committee, and there may be amendments made to refine it and make it better. I think we are all in agreement that it is ready to move to that stage, but we want to make sure every member in this House has the opportunity to debate it and put their points forward. I was certainly glad to have my opportunity today to recognize the members of the RCMP and the CBSA, who do such a commendable job in their duties every day.

The review process that will be put in place will benefit every constituency and every constituent in this country, because it will give accountability to those who may step offside. That accountability is so important, not just for our enforcement agencies but for our governments as well.

Unfortunately, the Liberal government has not been so accountable. We have seen the issues in the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner's reports. The reports have come out, but there has been no retribution required, and one of the troubling pieces of this bill is that there does not seem to be a penalty process in place to deal with someone who has done wrong.

• (1425)

**Mr. James Cumming (Edmonton Centre, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the depth of his understanding of the RCMP, the stories of the RCMP, the importance of that organization and all the great work it does in our country.

As the member knows, I am new to this place. It strikes me that this is a piece of legislation that was introduced last sitting, and I fail to understand why it has taken so long for what is a relatively straightforward piece of legislation to come back into the House.

**Mr. Mel Arnold:** Madam Speaker, I congratulate the member for Edmonton Centre on arriving here after the election last year. It is a great feat to be elected to this House. It is certainly an honour, and he is doing a great job of representing his constituents in Edmonton.

The fact that it has taken so long troubles me as well. We went six months without sitting in this House and there was no government legislation. A government that had been in power for four years should have had legislation ready to drop on very short notice, but it took the government six months to start doing any business.

Now we see committee work has been delayed even further, with many committees not coming back until after this upcoming con-

stituency week, which brings us well into February. A lot of this could have been taken care of by a government that should know how to govern, but it certainly has not shown that this term.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, Bill C-3 is about accountability. One of the government's first pieces of legislation in this Parliament is to increase civilian oversight for our law enforcement agencies. This is a bill that Conservatives are generally supportive of. However, we do find some irony in the fact that the government's immediate priority is to strengthen the accountability of somebody else when the biggest problem we have is with the government's lack of accountability, its failure to be accountable for its many terrible decisions and the impact that is having on Canadians.

Let us start with the Liberals' lack of accountability today in question period, when my colleague from a neighbouring riding, the member for Lakeland, asked important questions about the Teck Frontier project. She asked what the government was going to do about this project, which is vital for our national interest. If this project were to be arbitrarily rejected by the government, it would likely create a new larger unity crisis.

She asked those questions and the parliamentary secretary refused to be accountable and explain the government's thinking. All he said was that there is a process and that there will be a decision made at some point.

Meanwhile, leaks are coming out indicating that the government is thinking of an aid package, as if Alberta had been hit by some kind of natural disaster. The disaster hitting western Canada is not a natural disaster; it is very much a disaster made by politicians here in Ottawa.

Let us end the disaster. We do not need disaster relief. We need to end the disaster by approving projects that are in our national interest, supporting the Teck Frontier project and supporting pipelines.

The government needs to be accountable for its own failures, and perhaps it should prioritize being accountable itself before bringing forward legislation to make somebody else accountable.

• (1430)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It being 2:30 p.m., the House stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 18, 2020, at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Orders 28(2) and 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 2:30 p.m.)



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