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# House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, October 6, 2020

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayer*

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• (1005)

[*English*]

## POINTS OF ORDER

### ORAL QUESTIONS

**Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order today to address a question raised yesterday in Question Period around a comment I made last week with respect to time overseeing the Phoenix file. As someone who has dedicated her life to dispelling myths and championing the rights of individuals with all forms of disabilities, including mental illness, I regret and apologize for my poor choice of words.

I know how important and powerful language can be in the elimination and creation of barriers and stigma. I take responsibility for my words and commit to doing better.

**The Speaker:** I thank the hon. minister.

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

### PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** I want to remind hon. members when presenting petitions to be precise, concise and as short as possible. Get the idea across without going on for unlimited time. We only have so much time for petitions. I am not pointing fingers at anyone, but merely pointing out what should be done.

The hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

### CHINOOK SALMON

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to table a petition on behalf of residents from Port Alberni, Qualicum and Parksville.

The petitioners cite that 2020 marked the second consecutive year that widespread restrictions on chinook retention around southern B.C. negatively impacted the recreation fishery and associated industries. The residents of Vancouver Island and the Pacific coast are already experiencing economic hardship.

There is a mark-selective fishery in place for coho on the southern B.C. coast. The states of Washington and Oregon have instituted a mass adipose fin clipping at their hatcheries and a mark-selective fishery. They believe that the current chinook hatchery production is enough to implement a successful chinook mark-selective fishery.

The petitioners call upon the government to begin operations of adipose fin-clipping machinery for the existing production of chinook hatcheries in the Pacific region and that these new hatchery-marked chinook may be retained as soon as they reach minimum legal retention size.

### SEX SELECTION

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to be tabling a mere three petitions today.

The first petition deals with the issue of sex-selective abortion. Petitioners note that this is an issue on which there could be wide consensus in Parliament. Certainly there is among Canadians. It calls for measures by the House of Commons that would address and seek to stop the practice of sex-selective abortion.

### HUMAN ORGAN TRAFFICKING

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is with respect to legislative initiatives dealing with forced organ harvesting and trafficking. Petitioners would like to see it made a criminal offence for a Canadian to go abroad to receive an organ that was taken without consent. We know that this is an issue in China and in other places where organs are taken forcibly, sometimes from political prisoners, sometimes through exploitation. Petitioners want to see Canada stand up and be counted with respect to combatting organ harvesting and trafficking.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition deals with the human rights situation of Uighur Muslims in China who face horrific abuses in modern-day concentration camps. Petitioners call on the government to recognize that Uighurs in China have been and are being subject to genocide.

*Routine Proceedings*

Recognizing the responsibility to protect that flows from the recognition of genocide, the petition also calls on the government to use the Magnitsky Act to sanction and hold accountable those who have been responsible and are responsible in an ongoing way for these horrific crimes being perpetuated against the Uighur people.

**The Speaker:** Before we continue, I want to thank the hon. member for being concise and precise.

The hon. member for Nickel Belt.

[*Translation*]

## CARBON PRICING

**Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table petition e-2542 initiated by the Citizens' Climate Lobby, which seeks to improve the federal carbon pricing policy.

[*English*]

These Canadian citizens are calling upon the Government of Canada to continue a price on pollution and to continue distribution of carbon pricing revenues to Canadians as a cheque or bank deposit instead of a tax credit.

**The Speaker:** I want to remind the hon. members when presenting petitions to please bring their petitions to the table.

• (1010)

[*Translation*]

This will help protect the health of the pages.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman.

## FALUN GONG

**Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to present petition e-2814 on behalf of more than 1,800 Canadians who signed this petition.

As colleagues know, Falun Gong practitioners have been outlawed in China. They have been targeted by China's Communist Party for organ harvesting and are being persecuted because of their religious beliefs. We know that the Falun Gong discipline is very peaceful, disciplined and is centred on the principles of truth, compassion and tolerance.

As well, I sponsored the Justice for Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act (Sergei Magnitsky Law) that provides the government with the tools to sanction individuals. There are 14 specific Chinese officials who are named in this petition that the petitioners would like to see targeted with Magnitsky sanctions by the Government of Canada for the detention, persecution, execution and organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners for the past 21 years.

## EQUALIZATION

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, my constituents have reminded me that an unkept promise leads to a bad life, which is a Yiddish proverb. I have three petitions to table on behalf of my constituents today.

The first petition is on equalization. Petitioners in my riding are drawing the attention of the Government of Canada to the unfair-

ness inherent in the equalization system. Fifty-four petitioners have signed it.

## SEX SELECTION

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition I am tabling is by 53 petitioners in my riding, who are calling on the Government of Canada, the citizens of Canada and the House of Commons to pass a Criminal Code prohibition on sex-selective abortions. They are drawing attention to the House that sex-selective abortion is legal, as Canada has no legal restrictions on abortion. They are also drawing attention to the House that Canada's health care profession recognizes sex-selective abortion as a problem.

## SERGEANT TOMMY PRINCE

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, in this third petition that I am tabling, 36 petitioners are asking that the Government of Canada honour Sergeant Tommy Prince and put his image on the \$5 currency bill that the Bank of Canada is currently reviewing, thus honouring a very important indigenous war veteran.

## SEX SELECTION

**Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of my constituents and Canadians from coast to coast who put forward this petition calling on the government to prohibit sex-selective abortion. They do so on the basis that this is antithetical to Canada's commitment to equality between men and women, and that there are organizations around the world, including the World Health Organization, United Nations Women and United Nations Children's Fund, that have identified unequal sex ratios at birth as a growing problem. Petitioners are calling for action from the current government.

## GAZA STRIP

**Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present petition e-2565, which has 2,686 signatures. It calls upon the Government of Canada to request that Israel immediately lift the blockade on Gaza, in order to enable medical and humanitarian aid during the COVID-19 pandemic; insist that Israel permanently end its blockade of Gaza; and vote at the UN General Assembly in alignment with the majority of the international community taking a stance in line with international law and human rights for Palestinians.

## FERRY SERVICE

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and present e-petition 2652, signed by over 700 Canadians in support of Campobello and its island residents. I would be remiss if I did not mention and thank Justin Tinker and his advocacy committee for this proposal.

*The Address*

Petitioners point out the economic and personal losses owing to accessibility issues in recent years for residents travelling to and from their homes on this New Brunswick island in the Bay of Fundy. The only way to access Campobello Island most of the year is by exiting Canada, driving through Maine for almost an hour and crossing back into Canada on a bridge to Campobello. Each time a family or business do this, they pass and are inspected at U.S. customs and again at Canadian customs.

This petition calls on the federal government to adopt a team Canada approach and facilitate a permanent solution that allows Campobello residents to access the rest of New Brunswick without having to travel through the United States, something every other Canadian from coast to coast takes for granted every single day, whether they are travelling within their provinces or across this magnificent country.

The federal government can do this by working with the province to secure a ferry vessel that provides year-round service. Campobello residents are not asking for special treatment. My riding has three other beautiful islands, Deer Island, White Head Island and Grand Manan, which all have ferry service within New Brunswick. It is time similar treatment was extended to the great people of Campobello.

\* \* \*

• (1015)

**QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER**

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

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

[*English*]

**RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

The House resumed from October 5 consideration of the motion for an address to Her Excellency the Governor General in reply to her speech at the opening of the session.

**The Speaker:** There are five minutes remaining for questions and comments.

The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask this member about fiscal anchors in terms of the government's plans and its proposal with respect to spending. Does the member think at some point the government should balance the budget, and if so, when? Is there a limit to the amount of money the government should be spending? How much is too much? If the government was spending \$600 billion or \$700 billion in deficit, at what point would this member say that it is too much?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, on this side of the House, we are committed to spending responsibly. The reality is that, at the moment, we have historically low interest rates. The alternative, to not spend to support Canadians, small businesses and families, would be far more expensive in the long term. Standing idly by is not an option for this government. We need to continue to be there for our entrepreneurs. We need to continue to be there in order to create jobs and make sure that our economy rebounds. We will continue to keep the House apprised of our spending and to act in the interests of all Canadians.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I have a concern. The parliamentary secretary said the government has not been standing idly by, but start-ups have not been getting any support. Most of them have not been able to apply for CECRA, the Canada emergency wage subsidy or most of the benefits. In fact, my colleague from Cowichan—Malahat—Langford has a really important business: V2V Black Hops, a social enterprise brewery built by veterans, has not been eligible for the wage subsidy because of a technicality.

These are important. We have not heard the government respond to that or the CECRA, because we know it is broken. We want to hear the government address these issues.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Madam Speaker, we know the importance of start-ups to the future of the Canadian economy and we are there for start-ups. In fact, just a few days ago, we announced additional funding for the regional relief and recovery fund. This fund, as the member knows, is available to all small businesses, including very small businesses that might not otherwise be eligible for the CEBA loan or the wage subsidy. It is important to be there for all of our hard-working entrepreneurs in Canada, and we are there for them.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to ask about the record-low interest rate that the government is borrowing at currently. The policy rate of 0.25% was set by the bank. The government seems to be taking credit for this low interest rate, although it is incredibly short-term and it was set by an organization that belongs to the Government of Canada.

Would the member agree that it would be great to give that 0.25% financing to our small businesses so they could address some of the financial stress they are feeling through this COVID period? Right now, that is not available to them as they seek options of how to get through this pandemic.

*The Address*

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Madam Speaker, we have locked in these historically low interest rates for decades, and we have done so because we know that it is better for Canadians that the government take on this debt than for Canadian families to take on debt. We have acted and spent so that Canadians not only survive this pandemic, but also avoid being in debt for decades to come.

I would add that the supports we have provided to small businesses, including, for example, the CEBA loans, are interest-free. We are supporting entrepreneurs with interest-free loans, which include a grant, to make sure they can see through this pandemic to the other side.

● (1020)

**Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to speak in support of the Speech from the Throne. The Speech from the Throne lays the foundation of our government's direction and goals, and how we will work to achieve them.

Before I begin, I want to recognize the hard work the front-line workers in my riding of Richmond Hill have continued to provide throughout the pandemic. Grocery store clerks, health care workers, law enforcement officers, first responders and small business owners are some of the many who have been the backbone of our community at this time. I want to thank them for their services.

In this time of need, members of our community have also been coming together to ensure they are not alone in the fight to flatten the curve. I have seen communities in Richmond Hill organize food drives, create handmade masks for local centres or donate their time and money to local organizations that serve our most vulnerable. It is my honour to represent the people of Richmond Hill and to continue to advocate for them.

This speech was created with everyday Canadians like the residents of Richmond Hill, in mind: Canadians who are working to support their families, who have local businesses, who give back to the community and who rely on the government to provide them with public services that empower them and their families.

Through the four major pillars of our speech, we told Canadians that their voices and advocacy had been heard, and that their opinions, indeed, matter. The four pillars are fighting the pandemic, supporting Canadian businesses, addressing the gaps in our social systems and standing up for who we are as Canadians. These will guide our government to best support the people of Canada and create a stronger, more resilient country.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that when people are suffering, the onus is on the government to ensure that they remain stable and are equipped to fight this virus. From the outset of COVID-19, our government has had a plan to tackle the challenges brought on by the crisis.

Our first step was to ensure that Canadians and Canadian businesses were protected. This was why we introduced the Canada emergency response benefit. Our response ensured Canadians did not have to worry about putting food on the table or paying bills by providing direct support to them. The CERB was a temporary program that helped close to nine million Canadians through a very difficult time.

We ensured that businesses could keep their employees on the payroll by introducing the Canada emergency wage subsidy. The wage subsidy protected over 3.5 million jobs and preserved our nation's small businesses.

We also took further action by creating the made in Canada initiative, which invested in domestic PPE manufacturers and provided support to Canadian scientists researching and developing a vaccine. By investing in Canadians, we will fight the virus. As the throne speech highlighted, that support will continue. The Canada emergency wage subsidy will be extended until next summer so that businesses like Benson Lock in Richmond Hill can continue to keep workers employed.

Many Canadians in Richmond Hill benefited from the CERB, and the improved employment insurance program will continue to support them during this time. For those who do not qualify for EI, the Canada recovery benefit will help get them back on their feet.

To recover our economy, we must invest in our vulnerable industries. I have heard first-hand from those in the travel and hospitality industries, which have been hit the hardest. By expanding the Canada emergency business account to help businesses with fixed costs, and improving the business credit availability program, we are providing direct support to most vulnerable industries.

We are also investing in communities. The safe start agreement allocated \$19 billion to municipalities to start their economies. Richmond Hill received \$4 million to address associated start-up costs and protect the community. This funding for my riding ensured that safety measures were in place and public services could be maintained. It also enabled the municipal government to prepare for what is now the second wave of the virus.

As we prepare our municipalities, it is also imperative that we consider the long-term impact of the initiative and how it affects our environment. Climate action is a key component of our government's mandate. After consulting with climate activists and organizations in my riding, including Neighbours for the Planet, BlueDot and Drawdown, I understand the urgency of a comprehensive plan to fight climate change. The government will create millions of jobs for Canadians by retrofitting homes to save energy costs for families and by supporting investment in renewable energy and clean technology solutions.

● (1025)

We will also invest in our cities to deliver on fast public transit. As the representative of a thriving suburban community, my constituents rely on convenient and affordable transit options to go to work. We will transform the way we power our communities through the clean power fund and become a world leader in clean technology.

As we work to protect our planet, we must also do the same to protect the most vulnerable in our communities. That is why addressing the gaps in our social security system is a key priority for this government. Our nation's seniors have worked hard to build this country, and we owe it to them to provide the best long-term care. By working with the provinces and territories to create a new national standard for long-term care, we will allow our seniors to receive the best support possible.

We will also increase old age security once a senior turns 75, and boost the Canada pension plan survivor benefit.

These initiatives will benefit many seniors' organizations and long-term care centres in my riding. Seniors program organizations in Richmond Hill, such as Community and Home Assistance to Seniors, CHATS, and The Mariann Home are able to provide quality support and care to Richmond Hill seniors.

Next I would like to acknowledge another aspect of the speech that resonated with my riding and me. I have had the chance to work with organizations within Richmond Hill that address homelessness in our community, and the commitment to eliminate chronic homelessness in Canada is of great importance. The government's historic national housing strategy will increase investments in rapid housing in the short term, and will partner with not-for-profits and co-ops to find the best solution. The government will work with organizations like 360° Kids in my riding, which provides support to homeless youth in the York region.

This week is Mental Health Awareness Week. On the subject of mental health, our government understands that the mental health crisis in our country has reached a tipping point and it is urgent that we invest in community programs. As the chair of the parliamentary mental health caucus, I have worked with various stakeholders to advocate for more investments and resources in mental health research and support for those struggling. We will invest in people like Kathy Mochnacki from Home on the Hill Supportive Housing, whose organization provides resources for individuals with mental illness.

I am so glad to see a commitment to increasing intersectional wellness resources so more people can receive the support they need. I believe that supporting and recognizing the diversity of those in our community is crucial to uniting us as Canadians.

The last point I would like to mention is our government's plan to combat racism. The pandemic has exaggerated and highlighted what many of us already know: there is still much work to be done in the fight against systemic racism. I represent a riding that is incredibly diverse. Of the population of Richmond Hill, 60% identify as a visible minority and 57.4% are immigrants. The need for a comprehensive strategy to address racism is long overdue, and this government has proved that it will do that by continuing to fight hatred and discrimination, as well as by economically empowering disadvantaged communities so we can all succeed. The recently announced Black entrepreneurship loan fund, as well as initiatives aimed at strengthening indigenous communities, show that this government is committed to addressing systemic discrimination and empowering all Canadians.

### *The Address*

As members can tell, this plan is ambitious, but it is necessary to protect and support Canadians. The benefits outweigh the costs, and keeping Canadians on their feet is the most important goal of our government. To quote the speech:

It is no small task to build a stronger, more resilient country. It will take hard work.

The hard work is what this government is prepared to do. I hope we can gain the support of all members on this goal and work together to build back our great country.

• (1030)

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the member's speech. He talked about the need to work together and the need to build back better. I am curious about his thoughts of whether that is consistent with the fact that his government prorogued Parliament for six weeks. Certainly members on this side of the House were ready to keep working for Canadians. The Liberal government, the Prime Minister, shut down the ability for parliamentarians to do just that for six weeks at a time when Canadians expected their elected officials to come together to do what was best for them. Certainly, in a parliamentary sense, it was not even necessary to do the so-called legislative reset that the Liberals promised.

I wonder if the member has any thoughts on that.

**Mr. Majid Jowhari:** Madam Speaker, let me share with members what I did during those six weeks. About 154 of my colleagues and I reached out to our constituents, small businesses, parents, seniors and not-for-profit organizations. We held consultations and round tables with them. We understood what their concerns were.

We communicated those concerns through various channels to government, whether it was through the ministers' offices, departments or our sub-regional caucuses. We made sure that the issues at the forefront of Canadians' minds were communicated. I am glad, as I said in my speech, that our government heard those concerns.

Could the hon. member share with us what he did during those six weeks?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my colleague said that the government listened to the voices of Canadians and kept their interests in mind in its throne speech.

*The Address*

How does he explain the fact that the government turned a deaf ear to the call to increase health transfers, when 81% of Quebecers and 73% of Canadians are calling for an increase and all the experts who appeared before the committee told us that the chronic underfunding over the past 25 years has weakened our health care systems' ability to deal with this pandemic?

Is that what it means to listen to the voice of the public and stand up for their interests in a throne speech?

[English]

**Mr. Majid Jowhari:** Madam Speaker, I take the opposite view of the hon. member. Our Prime Minister met with premiers multiple times prior to the throne speech. As a result, \$19 billion was injected into the provinces through the safe restart agreement. I can assure the member that some of that \$19 billion made it to his riding, because \$4 million of that made it to my riding. It has made a big difference.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member very quickly mentioned long-term care centres and the tragedy that has unfolded there. He also mentioned national standards. Standards are obviously important. The trouble is that none of the provinces are meeting the standards they have already set. The problem is assured funding.

The NDP has put forward a proposal to bring long-term care centres into the health system we have in Canada, so that in working with the provinces, we can provide the funding. The problem is that we cannot staff these centres to the level that is needed, and we cannot pay them enough. These people deserve to get better pay. They need to get better pay or we will not be able to hire them.

I am just wondering what the hon. member thinks of the NDP proposal to bring long-term care centres into the national health care plan.

• (1035)

**Mr. Majid Jowhari:** Madam Speaker, the health of our seniors and the support of our health care workers who support these seniors are of the utmost importance to us. We made a commitment for an additional \$2.5 billion to support eligible seniors. We are working with the provinces and territories to support—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Calgary Forest Lawn.

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan (Calgary Forest Lawn, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister and the Liberal government have framed the Speech from the Throne as a necessary and updated vision for the country. Before I address the speech directly, it is important for Canadians to remember that we are debating a new Speech from the Throne because the Prime Minister prorogued Parliament for six weeks to avoid accountability. All of the committees that are investigating his WE scandal were shut down, and that was the point.

With a new session of Parliament, the Prime Minister is hoping that all 7,000 of his fluffy but empty words in the throne speech will distract Canadians from his corruption and the WE scandal. I believe that Canadians are a lot smarter than the Liberals give them credit for. This necessary reset, as the government prefers to frame it, was supposedly required to respond to new realities exposed by

the pandemic. In actuality, Parliament was perfectly capable of responding to the pandemic prior to prorogation and the Liberals only wasted valuable time.

The Conservatives will continue to hold the Prime Minister and the government accountable, and we will keep fighting for the answers that Canadians deserve.

To respond to the details of the throne speech, I note the government has tried to sell the throne speech as a bold and ambitious vision for Canada. However, the speech has completely missed the mark and is only more proof of the government's reckless economic policy and poor grasp of Canada's economic strengths.

The government has signalled that it will be taking on more debt but has yet to provide a fiscal framework. We have no idea of how the Liberals plan to pay it all back. The government does not seem to understand that debt incurred by the government is debt incurred by everyday taxpaying Canadians. These are people like our grocery store clerks, our nurses, our teachers and so on. Without a fiscal framework, how can we be assured that our children and the future generations of Canadians are not going to be overwhelmed by the government's debt?

The throne speech claims that the government is “guided by values of sustainability and [fiscal] prudence”, but the absence of a fiscal framework thus far proves otherwise. We have a government spending recklessly without a fiscal plan as Canadians navigate the challenges of a global pandemic. The Liberals are racking up a credit card without telling Canadians how or when it will all be paid back.

At the same time, the throne speech reveals a flawed plan for economic recovery. Canada is at a major crossroads in its development. There are some very clear choices that confront us right now. These choices are even more important in light of the economic crisis brought on by the COVID-19 shutdown. The government has chosen to effectively shut down our economy by restricting resource development and exports, with economic policies like carbon taxes, Bill C-69, which restricts new pipelines from being built, and Bill C-48, which is preventing exports of crude off the west coast, and generally discouraging investment in Canada's resources.

Exports are the lifeblood of the Canadian economy. In 2018, 56% of Canada's exported goods were directly from our resource industries. The government seems to think that it can replace these core industries with pixie dust. Despite expressing a commitment to economic recovery, the government has continued to neglect and even hinder resource development in this country during a time when we need these resources the most.

*The Address*

It has been akin to a hockey team benching its all-star players while trying to come back from being down six goals. These industries drive our economy, provide the jobs that Canadians depend on and provide the government revenues that keep our health care and education systems alive. These industries have made Canada the great nation that it is today, yet there was zero mention of supporting struggling resource workers. There was just a continued promise to sacrifice their lives by killing their industries with more taxes and regulations, an added double carbon tax hiding as the Canadian fuel standard and more. Do members know what the worst part is? It is that the government is taking the tax dollars paid by hard-working Alberta oil and gas workers and giving those dollars away to subsidized competitive industries that aim to end their existence. That sounds fair, does it not?

• (1040)

There was also a very large issue that the Prime Minister completely skipped in the Liberals' reset: western alienation. These Liberals stand up in the House day after day and completely deny that anyone in western Canada, in particular anyone in Alberta, feels alienated from Ottawa and the central government. I am here to say, as many of my colleagues have previously, that it is real and it is growing. The Liberals stand to say they are giving more money to Alberta than former prime minister Harper did. They accuse us of making up this crisis. We could not create this even if we tried. The alienation of Alberta is caused by the current government's antienergy, antiwest, anti-Alberta far-left policies that are causing this divide.

Albertans have never wanted a handout or to be bought. They just want the government to get out of the way. We want to be allowed to get back to work doing what we do best: extracting minerals and other resources from the ground, adding incredible value to them and selling them to the world. We have amazing resources and opportunities in this country, but the government wants to ignore them until they go away, because resource development does not fit into its ideological framework.

So many people have said this before me, but let me add my voice. Canada's oil and gas producers, miners, farmers and, in fact, everyone who participates in this economy care about the environment. Canada is leading the world when it comes to environmental sustainability. The investment in innovation and clean technology is incredible. I am fortunate enough to live among those who are leading this incredible innovation, which is taking place not just in the oil sands but in all of our extractive industries.

The Prime Minister likes to talk about balance, but he has achieved none of it. When hundreds of thousands are out of work and suicides are skyrocketing, that is an indication that the Liberals do not care about the economy side of this equation. We do not need to pit one region of this beautiful country against the others when we share common goals. A strong economy and environmental protection can go hand in hand, and we have already seen this happening in Canada. I wish that the government would stop listening to the far-left voices that are opposed to all resource development and seek that balance, even though these voices are also at the government's own cabinet table.

We are so blessed to live in a region flush with resources that Canada and the world require to maintain our high standard of living. Hundreds of thousands of people are employed in resource development. These same industries employ a significant number of first nations Canadians, as high as 6% of the oil and gas workforce. More and more first nations are taking ownership positions in large projects. All Canadians have a mutual desire to see these succeed.

Unfortunately, all we have heard from the government is its desire to ban single-use plastics. Where would we be during this pandemic without plastics? In literally every room in a hospital they are crucial. Masks are single-use, as are the gloves that so many people are wearing when they go out.

If the Liberals are truly interested in a team Canada approach in responding to the global pandemic, the government must provide a fiscal plan that ensures fiscal stability for future generations and an economic recovery that does not ignore our country's core strength of resource development. However, it seems the Prime Minister is only interested in racking up the credit card—

• (1045)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Questions and comments, the hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister and this government are very much interested in Canadians in all regions of the country. That is why we have developed these programs to support Canadians every day during this very difficult time of the pandemic.

I find it interesting that the member says we are not doing enough for oil development in the province of Alberta. The Bloc says that we are doing too much in the provinces like Alberta with respect to resource development. When I reflect, I think of the days when I was the opposition. When Stephen Harper was prime minister, the Conservatives did not build one inch of pipeline to take resources to coastal waters. It is important for people know this.

I wonder if my friend could provide his thoughts as to why Stephen Harper was such a failure—

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

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:** Madam Speaker, I want to point out that four pipelines were built under the Stephen Harper government. It is very clear to see, through my hon. colleague's words, that unity is the last thing the Liberals want in Canada. They are literally pitting one region against another, and we heard that through his own words.

*The Address*

I wish the government would step up and understand the frustrations of Albertans and my constituents and how we need to take a team Canada approach to help our struggling resource sector.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech, which would raise the eyebrows of any environmental stakeholder.

I think that making a connection between the environment and the oil sands is not just slightly off base, it is dead wrong.

My colleague also spoke about western Canada's feeling of alienation, which immediately brought a question to mind.

Does my colleague know that, from 2017 to 2020, western Canada received \$22 billion for the oil and gas industries alone, while in that same period Quebec's forestry industry received only \$827 million?

We are talking about \$22 billion for one industry and \$827 million for the other. I am wondering why western Canada feels alienated when Alberta, in particular, is the province that receives the most money from the federal government.

Should the government not be working to ensure that the forestry industry receives just as much federal funding as the fossil fuel industry?

[*English*]

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:** Madam Speaker, I agree that we need to support our resource sector, and no doubt we all can agree on that. However, to say that western alienation is not happening is very inaccurate. The billions of dollars that were transferred from my province of Alberta, because of the resource sector, ensured that other provinces had rich health care, resources and services. It is because of the great amount of support that our oil and gas sector has provided that we see so many health transfers to Quebec.

Does the hon. colleague think that importing oil from other unethical countries makes more sense than supporting our own industries in Canada?

• (1050)

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the member's speech illustrates why it is so important for us to start investing in a just transition. We do not need to read the tea leaves to see where international investment in oil and gas is heading. If we are going to honour these workers, we need to start making those investments now.

The Conservatives seem to be worrying so much about the spending. Is it their position that they would rather have small businesses take predatory bank loans or have individuals use their credit cards at 21% rates of interest?

**Mr. Jasraj Singh Hallan:** Madam Speaker, we want to have less government in the way of small businesses. We need to support more small businesses. Let us make the economy more robust so people can be successful and we can have more support for our services sectors.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to enter into the debate on the throne speech and to express some very serious concerns I have with it.

The throne speech, at least in English, was nearly 7,000 words, with many catchphrases and talking points but very little substance.

I would like to address two themes. The first is why the government felt that it was even necessary to have a throne speech. Second, I would like to point out some specific challenges I have with the throne speech itself.

Regarding the prorogation of Parliament, I find it incredibly disturbing that the government felt it should shut down Parliament, and not just with the prorogation. The last eight months were bad enough, but in the middle of several concurrent investigations into the Prime Minister's conduct, Parliament was shut down. It shut down committees, members of Parliament and Canadians, truly. There is one place in the country that allows all the voices of Canadians to be heard, and that is within the hallowed walls of this chamber. The Prime Minister, in an extraordinary abuse of executive authority, used a legitimate parliamentary mechanism to shut down investigations into his own conduct, and that is shameful.

Unfortunately, but not surprising, after several months of denial and flip-flopping, when the government finally figured out, I think on March 13, that the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic was actually serious and it changed course and we saw the first bill for some emergency relief measures brought forward, even though members of my party had brought up concerns about why there were no increased measures at airports or other actions being taken to ensure Canada would be better prepared to deal with the threat of this global pandemic. However, instead of it being simply about emergency relief, it was about an incredible abuse of executive power. We saw an attempted power grab, unlike anything I have seen in the country's history. The government wanted unlimited spending authority for more than a year and a half. In what democracy would that ever be deemed acceptable to even propose let alone justify it in the midst of a global pandemic? When Canadians deserved and needed help, the government looked out for nothing other than its own power. It is unbelievable.

For members opposite who are curious about some of the aspects of parliamentary procedure and who say we need this to be a legislative reset, I asked a question of one of the members from the Liberal Party here just a few minutes ago. He somehow suggested that the six weeks was necessary to ensure the Liberals could consult with Canadians on the throne speech. It is interesting that he mentioned a few examples about how he did town halls and whatnot. He also suggested other members were not talking to their constituents, which is insulting. I was asked to respond, but since I did not have a chance during the questions and comments I will respond now.

It is unbelievable and speaks to the Liberal elitist mentality to suggest that somehow their prorogation allowed them to have an inside track on influencing the future of the country in a minority Parliament. They should well know that it is this place that allows all voices to be heard, not simply Liberal Party voices. The Conservatives received more votes in the last election than the Liberals. The Liberals had a significantly reduced mandate after the last election, yet it seems they have refused to accept the will of the Canadian people when it comes to their place in Parliament and the fact that Parliament is truly an essential service.

My last point on the concerns around why we have a throne speech today is that the government seems to play quick and fast with all aspects of how it does business, such as manufacturing urgency with the passing of Bill C-2.

• (1055)

We could have been debating this for weeks. It could have been passed weeks ahead of the deadline, yet the government waited until the eleventh hour and showed up at a press conference. Then the Liberal House leader tweeted out that this was a confidence motion, that it must be passed or we could go to an election and Canadians would suffer as a result. It was circumstances manufactured by the government. That is typical Liberal elitism.

I digress in that regard and will move on to some of the serious concerns I have with the throne speech. I summed it up simply to my constituents when they asked me to describe in a sentence or two my feelings on it. I said that it was vague, expensive and Ottawa knows best.

On the vague aspect of it, there were few concrete measures. The Liberals talked about their four pillars of a recovery. They have a lot of catchphrases and slogans. If there was an award for catchphrases and slogans, the government would get it. It seems to be copying from various campaigns, even other election campaigns from other democracies around the world. It throws in these catchphrases and hopes that people will somehow believe they will get the job done. On this side of the House, we know that is not the case.

It is unfortunate that most of the aspects of the throne speech are simply recycled Liberal promises. I point to one example, which is its promise to plant two billion trees. It promised this in the last election, yet in the year that has passed, it has planted zero trees. However, we have an oil sands company that has planted millions. This speaks to the bigger context of the throne speech. Many promises were recycled. The Liberals seem to think that making these grand promises and having no plan for delivery somehow serves the best interests of Canadians, and that is simply not the case.

That is one of many examples. What could have been an opportunity to see many specific concrete paths forward for our country, we saw very few. This is unfortunate. It was a huge missed opportunity.

Further, it seemed to be a vanity project for the Prime Minister. He prorogued Parliament for six weeks and had the Governor General read a throne speech, a significant aspect of our parliamentary tradition that takes the focus off the politics of the country and al-

### *The Address*

lows our head of state to outline an agenda. However, that was not good enough for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister had to have his face on television to continue his sorry trend of cottage chronicles, to have a televised address that simply repeated things.

I have much more to say, some of which I have addressed in other speeches, like the unity crisis. The fact is that we are six months into a fiscal year. I know many people who work in the Jim Flaherty building down the street, named after the former Conservative finance minister. There are incredibly intelligent and capable finance people in the department, yet the Minister of Finance said yesterday that it would not be prudent to estimate what the deficit would be. I know many of the people in the Finance Department have a good idea. I suspect it has more to do with the fact that Liberals are scared of what Canadians will think when they find out the cost and lack of accounting associated with their spending. At a time when all Canadians know we need to support those who need it, doing so without a plan is very unfortunate.

My last point is this. The Ottawa knows best mentality is best represented on page 18 of the throne speech. In talking about a national pharmacare strategy, the Liberals use a word when they talk about working with provinces to develop a pharmacare plan, of which there is no detail. They say that they will only work with “willing” provinces and territories.

• (1100)

When it comes to the government, it is clear that it is only willing to work with those who are willing to fall in line with its narrow ideology and perspective on what the future of our country should look like. That is driving in wedges across our country that are harming the capacity and capability of Canadians—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It is now time for questions and comments.

The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**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 have a question for the hon. member based on the first five or so minutes of his speech, when he talked about the prorogation of Parliament.

It is interesting. We were supposed to come back on September 21. The member is right. Instead of coming back on September 21, we came back on September 23. It was two days. For the first time in 30 plus years, we sat in the summer, with the opposition asking questions of the government, literally hundreds if not thousands of questions, and understandably so.

Why does the member believe that it was wrong for the Government of Canada to prorogue, yet the Province of Manitoba has done just that? It has prorogued. Was the Progressive Conservative premier wrong in Manitoba to have prorogued?

*The Address*

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, I always appreciate it when the parliamentary secretary asks a question. In fact, I find it interesting that he has done two speeches on the throne speech. He seems to be the one that is really truly willing to defend his own government's record. Many other members do not seem to be willing to ask members on this side questions about it.

Regarding the prorogation and many of the questions that we were able to ask, it speaks to the government's attitude. It is all style with no substance. Liberals were happy to have a question period, but it did not want Parliament to actually do the tough work.

When it comes to prorogation, many provinces prorogue on a regular basis. It could have simply been a prorogation on the Order Paper for that day. In fact, in most provinces, that is what we will see. A legislature will sit in the morning, and it will then prorogue so the lieutenant governor can do a throne speech in the afternoon.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Xavier Barsalou-Duval (Pierre-Boucher—Les Patriotes—Verchères, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague on his passionate and very interesting speech.

I could have pretty much made the same speech myself. I find it amazing sometimes how much we see eye to eye on certain things, like the fact that the Liberals shut down committees and Parliament so that we would stop talking about the infamous WE scandal, or the example of the Speech from the Throne that at the end of the day did not offer anything new and was just a rehash of old Liberal promises. Then there was the infamous address to the nation, when we were told to wash our hands. The Liberals are putting on a rather odd little show.

However, one part of his speech gave me pause, and I would like to ask him about that topic in particular. He said that some oil companies have done more for the environment than the Liberals. I agree with him on that, but is that a reason to rely on the oil companies for a climate change strategy? It seems to me that with oil there is no doubt that we will produce more greenhouse gases and that we will not address the problem of climate change.

[*English*]

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, I love being able to address the environment when it comes to the fantastic record Alberta has in this regard. I am proud to come from a constituency that produces some of the most ethically and environmentally sound resources in the world, and that includes oil and gas.

We should be proud of the resources, the resource extraction technologies, the companies and the record that we have as Canadians, especially when it comes to the reality that carbon-based resources, oil and gas, are still going to be a part of the energy infrastructure needed in our world for many decades to come.

Canadians are faced with a choice. We could have government policies, such as those which the government has proposed, that would force us to look elsewhere for oil and gas and import them from jurisdictions that do not care about ethics, human rights, and the environment, or we could have the most ethically produced, environmentally friendly oil, from right here in Alberta. That could be used all across—

• (1105)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for London—Fanshawe.

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate my colleague's frustration with the Speech from the Throne. I, too, am very frustrated. I think it is because of the empty words, the empty promises and the lack of action we have seen across the board. Specifically for me, as the critic for youth and post-secondary education, I noticed there was not a single mention of students.

The member talked a bit about the WE scandal. I know that New Democrats have been pushing for that \$912 million, almost \$1 billion, to be put directly into the hands of students. I would like the member to comment on his frustrations with that as well.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Madam Speaker, I agree. This clearly speaks to how the government is great on announcing, but fails on delivery.

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould (Vancouver Granville, Ind.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to reply to the Speech from the Throne. I will be sharing my time with the member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

Today I speak in support of the throne speech, but not without reservations. Speaking frankly, my initial instinct and intention was to vote against the throne speech, given the ethical challenges of the government.

However, I cannot vote against it. This is because I have not heard from one constituent in my riding who says they want an election during a pandemic. I have heard this from not one constituent, regardless of political affiliation.

Despite a growing dissatisfaction with the government's approach to governance and its respect for our institutions, there is a level of support at this time for continuity and non-partisanship in governments as we work together to take all necessary steps to confront the pandemic and its impact on our way of life. Fighting COVID-19 must be non-partisan.

There has been some higher degrees of co-operation and general agreement on programs that have been created to support the fight, and importantly, to support Canadians. We all know that at the appropriate and responsible time there will be an election. For now, let us lead as an effective and impactful minority Parliament.

*The Address*

An election will happen, I presume, sometime after the second wave of COVID, and hopefully only after a vaccine has been widely administered. For now, Canadians want us all, and I mean us all, to remain focused on the job at hand, on public health and immediate economic needs, and to do so without mindless partisanship and unnecessary conflict.

We all need to remain vigilant. Governments can only do so much. Individually, we need to be responsible and we must continue to follow all public health advice. There is little room for error. As are all members, I am guided by the people in my riding. Our constituency office has sought and received feedback on the issues that are most important to people during the pandemic.

The top issue people shared is, not surprisingly, dealing with the immediate impact of COVID. Second are issues around finance and the economy, followed by the environment and housing. One message from my constituents, and in reply to the first part of the Speech from the Throne, is about addressing the immediate needs ahead of us. We must all ensure the programs we have put in place with such haste are in fact working, that the law and policy were right and, where these programs continue, they are sustainable.

This is not a question about austerity. It is a matter of good governance. As well, we need new metrics. If we are not just using debt-to-GDP, we need other fiscal anchors. Some specific issues raised by my constituents include a meaningful discussion and move toward a universal basic income, as well as investing in seniors, child care and pharmacare.

As to the balance of the Speech from the Throne, it was a shopping list of progressive policies and many long repeated and long outstanding promises. In the past, I was part of a government that had many of these same items on its shopping list. Often, as Canadians unfortunately have become used to, actions did not match the words when, ultimately, political expediency got in the way of progress.

Importantly, there are many people in groups talking about what our post-pandemic recovery should or should not look like. There is talk of a green recovery and a just recovery. These are important conversations we all must listen to. For any meaningful recovery to work, especially if it is to be transformative in addressing the broader challenges of our time, we need Parliament and all our institutions of government to be more effective and to work better. This is something the Speech from the Throne does not address.

As we have worked together in the face of the common threat of COVID-19, we have adapted. Parliament has adapted. As we move forward, and if we truly want to build back better, as the throne speech opines, then we need to think about the tools we have to build the nation we want and how our government works. If we can work together and change the way this place operates on the fly because of COVID-19, then surely we can make the deeper changes needed to make this place more effective, more accountable and a place where the voices of members of Parliament matter.

• (1110)

We also know from dealing with the pandemic that there are still deep-seated issues with the provinces concerning division of power, including, as has long been the case, health supports.

In our young country, we have an evolving system of co-operative federalism. There is a role for the government and a role for the provinces and territories. If we truly want to build back better when the immediate threat is over, we must ensure that we have the right foundation to build on, one that includes indigenous nations and governments that are recognized and constituted as indigenous peoples determine. We should, at the very least, be open to a conversation about governance reform, including constitutional reform, the Senate, Quebec, indigenous peoples, the environment and making the federation better.

In addition to parliamentary reform, there is a need for electoral reform. There is also much work to do to address true reconciliation with indigenous peoples. Simply adopting UNDRIP and making some program enhancements, although they are important steps, are not enough. With strong governance, we will be better equipped to tackle the big issues of our day, the issues that will still be with us after COVID-19, such as climate change, the breakdown of the international rules-based order, or wealth and equality.

As we come out of this pandemic, we should start with our institutions and make building them better a priority. This will be tough, but Canadians have always been strong and resilient, and able to show governments the way forward. Collectively, we are only as strong and resilient as the institutions that support us, beyond party and politics. I was raised to always seek balance and where everyone in the community had a role to play. Rooted in these teachings is the importance of our interconnectedness, our responsibility to one another and to our environment.

Our collective way of being, indeed, our humanity, is being tested as we respond to COVID-19. We are in a learning moment. There is a reason some groups are being hit harder than others during the pandemic. It is because they are the vulnerable and the marginalized. The disproportionate impacts upon them are, in part, a reflection of endured injustices, and of a legacy of colonialism and systemic racism, which manifest themselves throughout society and our institutions.

More and more, I have been thinking about what it would be like if we had a society in which we truly recognized and supported one another, our fundamental unity and our diversity. This is not a new idea. If we are able to recognize it and do something about it during a pandemic, then why not permanently? If we can see it, but do not act on it now, then when will we?

Moving forward, we need more than a shopping list of policy ideas. We need a vision and we need to establish clear priorities. We need political will and we need resolute action.

*The Address*

We also need a better way to measure our social well-being and our collective health. Today, we typically use GDP to make assumptions about social well-being and our standards of living. The assumption is that the higher per capita amount, the better the standards are. However, as an economic tool, GDP can only make assumptions about the basic standards of living, which can be different across the socio-economic spectrum of a nation.

COVID has highlighted how standards of living are different across communities. Moreover, our welfare is affected by other factors, such as mental well-being, cultural resilience and very importantly, environmental health, which are all things GDP does not consider.

What we need are better and more inclusive socio-economic factors. We need indicators that would help us to develop budgets that aim to increase the social well-being of Canadians, not just the economic bottom line. We need to plan based on what we truly value. When all human potential is maximized, our society will be truly transformed.

This is the core of my teachings, the teachings of my people, the Kwakwala, who have survived for millennia. This is the road to recovery. This is building back better. *Gilakas'la*.

• (1115)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, there has been a great deal of co-operation. Speaking of individual members of Parliament, we see that over the last eight months there has been a great deal of feedback from all sides of the House as we try to guide ourselves through national leadership on this file. It is also important that we work with other jurisdictions, including provincial governments, indigenous leaders, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders. We all have a role to play in this.

Could my colleague provide her thoughts on how important it is that those other organizations, in particular non-profits, also get on board in supporting and continuing to support the fight against COVID-19?

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould:** Madam Speaker, implicit in my reply was the importance and the necessity of recognizing the interconnectedness between and among all of us. Of course, this includes all members of Parliament, and in that regard I believe it is fundamental for members of Parliament to be able to effectively represent their constituents, which includes not-for-profit organizations and faith-based organizations, and to be able to ensure that they develop relationships with municipalities and with provincial representatives in order to provide those comments back to Parliament to make decisions more well-rounded, more effective and more representative of the incredible diversity in this country. I hope that we continue in this minority Parliament to work collaboratively—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

I agree with her that fighting COVID-19 must be a non-partisan effort. However, I wonder how she can have confidence in a government that is incapable of keeping its promises with respect to understanding, awareness and reconciliation.

The throne speech promises to accelerate work on the national action plan in response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The report came out almost a year and a half ago. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's report came out in 2015.

I think my colleague will agree that families, loved ones and communities have waited long enough. In committee this summer, I got no answers from the indigenous affairs minister.

I would like to hear what she has to say about that. Does she think people have waited long enough for reconciliation?

• (1120)

[*English*]

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould:** Madam Speaker, I 100% agree that indigenous peoples, families of the murdered and missing indigenous women and girls, and residential school survivors have waited too long for concrete action from the government. The member opened her question with having a level of trust. Trust is incredibly important and it is incredibly hard to rebuild. Probably more than anyone in this place, I can say that the level of trust I have for actually fulfilling promises has significantly wavered. This is an important issue. It is one that cannot be addressed simply by pretty words or tears. We have to take concrete action. We cannot delay action plans. We know what needs to be done when it comes to indigenous peoples, and we have to act now. I look forward to working with all members in this place and would be happy to have further conversations with the member opposite.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Madam Speaker, it is good to see a fellow colleague from British Columbia deliver, virtually, a very thoughtful speech. She is one of the first former Liberals who has acknowledged the importance of a fiscal anchor. I wonder if she could talk a little more about her thinking around that fiscal anchor. We know that we are giving critical support right now, but it is frightening in terms of what ultimately will be our fiscal challenges and situation.

**Hon. Jody Wilson-Raybould:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member from our home province of British Columbia. We need to continue to be very open and very transparent. I look forward to seeing the budget when it comes. Hopefully it speaks to the necessary need for fiscal anchors. We certainly do not have the debt-to-GDP declining fiscal anchor, so we need to be open and transparent and have conversations about it. I believe fundamentally in fiscal responsibility. I also believe in sustainability and support for Canadians, and in having conversations across the House on fiscal accountability.

**Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to stand here today on the territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people to represent constituents in Nanaimo—Ladysmith, and Greens across Canada.

There are a number of things in the Speech from the Throne that I am pleased to hear. In fact, there are some sections that sound a lot like the Green Party platform I ran on in 2015 and 2019. There are also sections that echo the Green Party's road map to economic recovery from the pandemic, "Reimagining Our Future". What the throne speech is missing are plans for the bold actions in those documents. To quote our new Green Party leader Annamie Paul, platitudes are not a plan.

We are facing two unprecedented crises: a global pandemic and a climate emergency. Both of these crises require that we listen to the scientists and the experts. Both of these crises require bold actions. The Speech from the Throne does not reflect the urgency of this moment.

We keep hearing that we are all in this together, but this pandemic has laid bare the inequality in Canada. Those who have been affected by the pandemic are seniors, women, people of colour, indigenous people, people with disabilities and low-wage workers. At the same time, the wealthiest Canadians have been making money, hand over fist. The 20 richest people in Canada have increased their wealth by \$37 billion during the six months of this pandemic. It is time for a wealth tax in this country. It is time for the wealthy to pay their fair share for the public services their businesses and employees rely on. It is time that the Internet giants and multinational corporations that do business in Canada pay their fair share of taxes as well.

Small and medium-sized Canadian enterprises are suffering from the economic fallout of the pandemic. In particular, the travel, tourism, hospitality and entertainment sectors need additional help so that these businesses can survive. The non-profit sector provides vital services to Canadians, especially right now. This sector needs additional targeted support as well. Small and medium-sized businesses are the engine of the Canadian economy and employ almost 90% of the private sector workers in this country. These businesses need support to get through the second wave of this pandemic.

We need to do a better job of taking care of each other. We are the only country in the world with universal health care but no universal pharmacare. It is mentioned in the throne speech, but we have heard it before and we have not seen a plan. Universal pharmacare would save billions in unnecessary health care costs by ensuring people have the medicines they need. We need a universal dental program to complete our universal health care system. This

### *The Address*

too would save billions in unnecessary health care costs. A \$90 filling today can save \$10,000 in a heart operation down the road.

Our recovery must focus on supporting women and families. Canada urgently needs a universal child care program to enable more women to return to the workplace.

Thousands of people across this country are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It is more important than ever that the federal government invest in affordable housing, in particular community-owned co-operative housing. The announcements on housing programs sound good, but the funding needs to flow right away.

We have an opioid crisis in this country. Thousands of people have died from drug poisonings. Addiction is a health and social issue. Our public health officers are telling us to follow evidence-based solutions to this crisis. We need to listen.

We need a national mental health strategy.

The Green Party has long been calling for a national strategy for seniors, including national standards for long-term care and additional supports for home care so that people can age in place. Seniors deserve a top-up of OAS and GIS to help make ends meet.

Many people with disabilities have been waiting for long periods of time for the benefits and protections that they need. The COVID-19 one-time support payment for people with disabilities was announced three months into the pandemic. It is now almost four months later and nobody has received a cheque. I understand those cheques are supposed to be sent at the end of this month. People with disabilities are sick of waiting and sick of being left behind.

● (1125)

Veterans Affairs Canada had a backlog of almost 50,000 disability benefit applications as of March 2020. It will take three years to clear that backlog with the current resource levels. Veterans deserve better.

Young people and students are not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. The Green Party has been advocating for the elimination of tuition fees so that we can create an educated workforce without burdening our young people with unsustainable debt. Northern European countries all have free tuition. It is a matter of priorities. Let us prioritize our young people.

*The Address*

The Canada student service grant was a very bad idea from the beginning, and we know how that turned out. Those funds should have gone into the Canada summer jobs program to help youth and non-profits get through the pandemic. Canada summer jobs was underfunded. In my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith alone, there was 500,000 dollars' worth of unfunded applications. We need to bring our social programs in line with the northern European countries, where citizens have a real social safety net from cradle to grave.

The biggest opportunity that the government has missed in the Speech from the Throne is a guaranteed livable income. Our current patchwork of social programs allows too many people to fall through the cracks. A guaranteed livable income would create an income floor, under which no Canadian would fall. It would eliminate extreme poverty in this country.

I can hear the objections now. How are we going to pay for all of this? Let us go back to where I began. Canada needs a wealth tax. We need to close tax loopholes that allow people and corporations to avoid taxes in Canada and offshore their wealth. It is worth emphasizing that the costs of social inequality are far greater than the costs of taking care of people to start with.

Let us use this resource wealth we have to create maximum employment and benefits for Canadians, starting with first nations and indigenous peoples, who are the rightful owners of those resources. We need to implement all of the recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It is time to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We also need electoral reform. It was not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, and that is no surprise.

There are good things in the speech, and there are a lot of things missing or things that need to be improved on, but the bottom line is that there is no real plan to do our part to stop our own destructive practices that are wiping out the biodiversity on this planet, destroying our climate and threatening the future of our children and grandchildren. We still have the climate targets set by Stephen Harper's Conservative government, pathetic and inadequate targets, and there is no plan to even reach those pathetic and inadequate targets. Since the first climate conference in Geneva in 1979, successive Canadian governments have been well aware of climate change. Only one government actually bothered to establish a plan to meet the targets that they agreed to. That was the Paul Martin government, which was brought down by the Conservatives and the NDP before those plans could be implemented.

Britain has set a carbon budget in law. It set plans and holds to those carbon budget targets, independent of the toxic partisan politics that dominate our electoral system. The U.K. has reduced its emissions by 42% below 1990 levels, while Canada has increased emissions by 21% since 1990. Canada is a climate do-nothing. I will not vote for a Speech from the Throne that does not include the targets that science demands and a real plan of action to meet those targets and address the crisis we are facing.

My work here is not to ensure that I get re-elected. My work here is not to boost the fortunes of the Green Party. My work here is not to play a game of partisan politics. My work and role here is to

push the government as hard as I can to do the right thing, to improve the lives of Canadians and take real action on climate change. We owe our children and grandchildren nothing less than the full defence of their future on this planet.

There are other members of other parties who know this to be true. I want them to know that their work here is to fight for the existence of humanity. Their party bosses and big donors may be interested in making the last chunk of money from fracking, but they need to question what their purpose is on this planet at this time, in this place. Members should think about those moments in their childhood when they saw a world full of wonder and possibility. We in the House have the power to make decisions that count, decisions that matter.

This is our time to meet the challenge of our time. The Speech from the Throne does not meet the challenge. It is time to do better. I will be voting "no".

• (1130)

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member mentioned universal pharmacare, which is an important plank in the throne speech, and said that he has not seen a plan. I wonder if he could comment on the Hoskins report, which the government commissioned for universal pharmacare, and on the government's movement to create a Canadian drug agency and a formulary. There is also a commitment to federal funding for rare drugs.

Does he support that? Is that a plan? Does he disagree with the Hoskins report?

**Mr. Paul Manly:** Madam Speaker, I agree with the Hoskins report, which also calls for a universal single-payer pharmacare system. We need to get that implemented. There are people in this country dealing with rare diseases and very expensive drugs who need help. There are seniors and families dealing with the high cost of drugs. When people cannot afford the drugs they need, they end up in the emergency room, and they are costing our health care system a lot more.

Let us get the Hoskins report recommendation done—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Questions and comments, the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest.

*The Address*

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Madam Speaker, there was a lot in there. The member wants to harness the wealth of the resource sector, yet the Green Party wants to shut down Canada's hydrocarbons. The member wants to go after offshore savings. Of course, Canadians send money offshore when taxes at home are too high, but his solution is higher taxes.

Let me give the member some numbers from Dr. Mark Milke. People who earn up to \$50,000 represent 68% of the tax filers in this country and pay 21% of all personal income tax revenues. People who represent \$50,000 to \$100,000 represent 23% of tax filers, and they pay 35% of all tax revenues. People who earn \$100,000 to \$150,000 represent 5.8% of filers and account for 18% of tax revenue. For people who earn \$150,000 to \$200,000, we are down to 2.1% of filers. The member is in this tax bracket, and he and other taxpayers account for 13% of all tax revenues. Finally, those who earn above \$200,000 a year account for the 1% and pay 21% of all tax revenues.

Who is the member talking about taxing? Is it all taxpayers? Is it those who earn a million dollars? There are not many of those people. Is it those who earn \$100,000, like he does? Who is he talking about taxing to bring in these billions—

• (1135)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Nanaimo—Ladysmith.

**Mr. Paul Manly:** Madam Speaker, I am talking about the 20 billionaires who made \$37 billion during the six months of the most catastrophic economic problem in the history of this country. What does Jim Pattison need \$8 billion for? What do these people need to hoard all this wealth for when in this country their workers are working for minimum wage? Why?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Nanaimo—Ladysmith for his wonderful speech. I agree with him on many points, and I have a specific question for him.

A number of the points he raised fall under Quebec's and Canadian provinces' jurisdictions. Health transfers are of particular concern to me. The Liberal government boasted about paying \$40 billion a year in health transfers, but in accordance with the constitutional agreement, health care costs would be around \$91 billion, which represents a shortfall of \$51 billion.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on the importance of respecting provincial jurisdictions and on equitable transfers.

[*English*]

**Mr. Paul Manly:** Madam Speaker, I believe we need to get health transfers to the provinces to make sure the citizens of this country are taken care of properly. We need to expand our health services, with mental health services that are included in the Canada Health Act and with universal pharmacare and universal dental care. We need to take care of Canadians properly. It is the responsibility of the provinces to do that, and we need to transfer the money to them to make sure that happens.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Northern Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to

speak today, in virtual Parliament, to the throne speech. A year ago, I never really thought I would be in my home office in Mary's Harbour in rural northern Canada, in the wonderful riding of Labrador, or in any other community, logging in to the House of Commons to participate in parliamentary debates and votes. From that perspective, I think we have done well as a Parliament to ensure that parliamentarians' voices are being heard and that there is full participation.

In spite of COVID-19 and its horrible impact on people's lives, with the wake of tragedy and devastation that it has left for so many families, it has prompted a renewed defence in protecting our health, communities and country. We have all been forced to become more self-sufficient and resilient in the fight against COVID-19. It has also brought many of us together as Canadians and allowed us to comfort each other while modernizing the future for all Canadians.

The Speech from the Throne is being debated today in the House of Commons. There are many, on certain sides of the House, who really believe that the Government of Canada is not going far enough in our programs and support for Canadians. There are others who feel we have gone way too far.

I believe we have been fair and responsible in looking after Canadians at a time when they have needed it most. I really believe that our government has set out priorities that not only will assist Canadians today as we make our way through this pandemic, but will allow us to assist Canadians into the future and allow Canadians to move forward. In these uncertain and unprecedented times, there is no blueprint for what we are dealing with today in this country. There is no blueprint to show us a direction for the future.

Our government has listened to Canadians. We have been attentive and focused, and we have been listening to what our constituents are telling us. We know we must have a strong defence to protect our health and help Canadians, not just in weathering the pandemic, but also in weathering that which lays ahead in the future.

We are doing that by providing for the supports they need now and by laying down a concrete plan to build back better after this is over. We know that we must bridge the social and economic gaps that this pandemic has shown us. For many marginal groups, such as women, northerners, indigenous and rural Canadians, to name just a few, we know that those economic gaps have been glaring. We know that more is required if we are to build back better and address those particular gaps in society.

*The Address*

From the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, our government, the Prime Minister, cabinet and all MPs have been out there supporting Canadians who needed it most. This was done through the Canada emergency response benefit, for example. Because of it, over nine million Canadians were able to weather the financial hardship that was brought on by this pandemic. Many of my own constituents would not have come through these last number of months, some with even a roof over their heads, without the Canada emergency response benefit, so I know personally and first-hand from my own constituents how much this program benefited them.

We increased funding to the new horizons for seniors program, which helped deliver essential services and goods to the elderly in isolation and helped them improve their community supports. We did this so there would be better outreach to seniors and so that individuals would stay connected with their loved ones in their communities.

• (1140)

I know that through the emergency community support fund, there were so many community organizations, like the Labrador West Food Bank, Libra House, a crisis shelter for women and children in Goose Bay, the Transition House in Nain, in Nunatsiavut, and so many others across my riding, that were able to access funding so they could provide vital resources and social programs amidst all of these challenges and what was happening during the pandemic.

In fact, we have invested in every women's shelter and food bank across Labrador, in both indigenous and non-indigenous communities, and we did that because we knew the demand was there. We knew there was a gap and it was evident that support from the federal government was going to assist those who were most vulnerable. We knew it was imperative for our government to act and, therefore, we acted.

When we look at communities like Nain and Hopedale, first nations communities like Natuashish and Sheshatshiu or communities in the south of Labrador like Cartwright to West St. Modeste and all communities surrounding it, we saw programs and investments in all of these communities that were able to help residents through these last seven months.

Since March, our government has listened to the advice of Canada's top health and science professionals and we knew it was important that we follow direction from the experts among us. We needed to ensure that our heroic front-line workers were provided with the necessary equipment they needed to do their jobs and provide all Canadians with the most up-to-date information on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our communities and support residents during this difficult time.

We have made tremendous progress as a country already. We are already more resilient in our personal protective equipment and the manufacturing that goes with it. We are more effective in our distribution. All of these things have drastically improved since 2019. This pandemic brought out the resilience in both individuals and businesses to fight this pandemic together.

As a government, we implemented historic economic and social programs to financially support individual Canadians and business-

es across the country. We know that, in many ridings, Canadians would have lost their homes or businesses. There are still some who may lose those important assets that are essential to their lives, along with losing their jobs. However, we know that without the federal government stepping up with the supports that it has, it could have been a lot more drastic. It will be more drastic if the government does not continue to do so.

The Prime Minister connected with Canadians individually and responded to their needs. Whether it was the Canada emergency wage subsidy, the Canada emergency commercial rent assistance program, the Canada emergency business account, student programs, additional top-ups to GST, disability benefits for those who needed it, additional benefits under the child tax benefit program, they have all helped offset what has been a very difficult and challenging time financially, socially and economically for citizens in this country and many across my riding who I know very well.

Not only that, our government worked hard. We worked with provinces and territories to fund wage top-ups for front-line workers. I think about all of the workers out there today who kept their doors open while we stayed home to stop the spread of this virus. They continued to work hard every day in the midst of a pandemic to ensure that there was first response, there were essential health care services and there was food security for those who needed it. Many caregivers worked on the front lines and in seniors homes. We will be forever grateful for the work they do and that they braved this pandemic to provide the services that so many Canadians were dependent upon. In my own riding, I have seen it, community to community. I have seen the determination and willpower of workers on the front lines.

• (1145)

I have seen so many people make tremendous sacrifices so they could be there to serve other Canadians and others in our communities at a time when they needed it most. For those people, I will always be grateful. They will always have my undivided thanks and gratitude.

We talk about our seniors and how they have braved their way through this. I want to do a shout-out to them. I know it has not been easy, but with the support of loving and caring families, very caring and kind communities, and so many service providers, we are all working together to get through this.

In this pandemic, we also recognized the disparity that exists in food security and medical care in northern, Inuit, indigenous, first nations and Métis communities across Canada. We invested millions of dollars in the distinctions-based indigenous community support fund. We know that, without it, indigenous communities across Canada would have been left very ill-prepared to fight this pandemic.

We invested in first-time subsidies to help with heating costs, preparing emergency shelters and medical preparedness plans in case of an outbreak in indigenous communities in northern regions. We were there to step up and assist them every step of the way, and we are still there today. We are not going anywhere.

We will see Canadians through this pandemic, and we may have to do it with kicking and screaming from some of our colleagues in the House of Commons. Canadians will not be left behind. They will have the supports and the services that they need to fight this.

For example, we looked at specific sectors, like the oil industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, where we have just invested over \$380 million to help support the industry and to create and maintain thousands of jobs in the oil sector in the province. We invested in Canada's fishing sector. We worked with those in the industry who were impacted from a financial perspective. We—

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order. I suspect if you were to check with the parliamentary secretary, I believe her intent was to split her time. She could confirm if that is the case.

• (1150)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Could the hon. parliamentary secretary confirm if she intended to split her time? If so, she is out of time.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Madam Speaker, I will just conclude by saying that we have reached out to many Canadians. We are going to build back—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Could the hon. parliamentary secretary confirm if she would like to split her time?

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Yes, Madam Speaker, I am sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg South.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Madam Speaker, there is a full page about reconciliation in the throne speech. However, communities still have problems with infrastructure, housing and drinking water. I want to go back to a topic I mentioned earlier.

Families, loved ones and communities have waited long enough for the government to take real action on reconciliation. I would like to ask a question of my hon. colleague, who may know more than I do about the so-called plans that were announced, since all we see are blank pages without details or timelines.

When will the government present a national action plan in response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls?

[English]

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Madam Speaker, it is important to acknowledge the tremendous work that we have done together with indigenous communities across Canada.

We are committed to full reconciliation with indigenous government and indigenous communities across Canada. We have made

### *The Address*

major strides in working with Inuit, first nations and Métis governments and communities, and we will continue to do that.

However, as a government, we will not arbitrarily outline those directions. We work in partnership with our indigenous communities and indigenous partners to plan that road map towards reconciliation together. The colonialism that existed in previous governments is what got us to the point where we are today. Going forward as a government, we believe that indigenous people have to be the authors of their own future. We will work with them to ensure that that happens.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Madam Speaker, before the pandemic many Canadians were voicing their need for affordable and accessible child care. In fact, the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce said it is its number one issue. The Liberals have been promising child care for 20 years, in fact, children who needed child care 20 years ago are needing child care now. This summer when the Liberals had the opportunity to invest in child care with transfers to the provinces, they refused to do what was needed. Parents, especially women who want to work outside the home, want to get back to work, but they do not have a safe place to send their kids.

We are fighting for safe, affordable child care. The Province of B.C. has been investing in child care. It needs a federal partner, a champion. I am asking the member: When will this happen? We cannot wait another 20 years. Does the member agree that this is not just a social issue, but a very important economic issue? We saw the success of the program implemented in Quebec. It grew the GDP, 70,000 people went back to work and most of them were women. This is the time to implement such a program as we recover from the pandemic.

**Ms. Yvonne Jones:** Madam Speaker, it is good to see the member in this virtual Parliament. He is right. Child care in this country is not just a social advancement, it is an economic advancement for all of us in society. We have learned how COVID-19 has impacted women and those in our society in terms of the gaps that exist. I certainly support the national strategy toward child care. It is an important direction that our government is taking and I am happy to see that the NDP is there to support the work that we are doing to ensure that all families have access to child care and services where they need it.

• (1155)

**Mr. Terry Duguid (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages (Western Economic Diversification Canada) and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change (Canada Water Agency), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise virtually in the House of Commons this morning on behalf of my constituents here on Treaty 1 territory, the homeland of the Métis nation, to highlight the many commitments our government has made to support Canadians as we continue to fight against COVID-19.

*The Address*

Our government knew that we needed to provide immediate support to Canadians as our country grappled with the most serious public health crisis and economic crisis of our lifetime. Within a matter of weeks, our government introduced the Canada emergency response benefit, the CERB, which provided direct and immediate income support of \$2,000 per month to those who had suddenly lost their jobs. The CERB provided over 277,000 Manitobans with money so that they could make their rent or mortgage payments and put food on the table. Now, as we transition away from CERB, our government continues to support Canadians with an improved EI benefit that provides \$500 per week for those who continue to look for work.

Canadians should not have to choose between their livelihoods and their health, and that is why we introduced a national sick leave benefit. We also announced a caregiver benefit for parents who need to take time off to care for a child or a loved one.

I know that these benefits have been absolutely critical to many families in my communities. I know many parents have had to make difficult decisions regarding their employment, and women in particular have faced the brunt of these difficult choices. The numbers we have seen are shocking. Women's participation in the workforce has dropped to levels we have not seen since the 1980s. Canada's economic recovery will not be complete without a strong return to work for women across the country. To achieve this, we have committed to a national child care strategy so that parents will have access to quality, accessible and affordable child care as they return to their jobs.

During this difficult time, many of my constituents have emailed, phoned and sent letters regarding key policies they wished to see in the Speech from the Throne. Thanks to their thoughtful feedback, our government has made strong commitments to establishing national pharmacare, increasing old age security, supporting family reunification and many important initiatives that would have a significant and positive impact here in Manitoba and across the country.

I know that all members of the House will agree when I say that Canadians have truly risen to the occasion and supported one another in amazing ways in the last six months, and Manitobans are no exception. Let me take this moment to recognize the selfless efforts of our front-line health care workers in Manitoba, who have worked tirelessly under the most difficult of circumstances. I also want to recognize essential workers, such as our truck drivers and grocery store clerks, who have stepped up when we needed them most.

I want to take a moment to give a special mention to the folks at the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg. It has been at the forefront of incredibly important work to protect the health of Canadians, including developing the first Canadian COVID test on January 15, providing testing regimes for remote northern communities, and conducting essential research support for vaccine and therapeutic development.

We have often heard the proverb that it takes a village. During COVID, we have seen it come to life in my community of Winnipeg South. Mosques, churches, temples and local organizations

here have exemplified what it means to be a community and have come together to take care of those most in need.

We know that the devastation facing our small-businesses community has been among the biggest challenges our country has faced through this pandemic. Small businesses are the backbone of the Manitoba economy, providing thousands of jobs in every corner of the province. Our government recognizes this, and has committed to supporting SMEs through a number of initiatives. Early on, we provided the emergency wage subsidy, which covered 75% of a worker's wages so that businesses could continue to keep their employees on the payroll. Not only have we made this program more flexible, we have also announced that we will be extending it to next summer so that businesses can plan ahead.

Other federal support programs have also been critical to the vitality of our businesses, including the Canada emergency business account loan program, which has provided \$40,000 in interest-free loans to qualifying businesses to help them bridge to the other side of the pandemic.

● (1200)

For businesses that have been unable to access these programs, Western Economic Diversification and our regional development agencies across Canada have been critical in helping us provide direct support to SMEs.

In May, the government earmarked approximately \$1 billion to the regional relief and recovery fund, RRRF, which was designed specifically to aid small businesses that may have fallen through the cracks and were unable to access other business programs. In my home province of Manitoba, the RRRF has supported 85 different businesses, with a total funding of over \$8.4 million. Just last week, our Minister of Economic Development announced an additional investment of \$600 million to the regional relief and recovery program so we can continue to support small businesses and help them weather this time of economic uncertainty.

This is a very difficult time for so many, and our priority remains protecting people and saving lives. At the same time, we cannot forget that when it comes to protecting people there is another crisis on the horizon that will create even more health and economic disruption than COVID-19. I am, of course, speaking of the climate crisis. Nowhere is the climate crisis felt more strongly than in the disruptions to our water cycle and our freshwater systems.

Decades of public opinion surveys record that Canadians feel no resource is more important than fresh, clean water to our economy, health and well-being. I am delighted the Government of Canada cemented its commitment, in the Speech from the Throne, to create a Canada Water Agency to work with provinces, territories, municipalities, indigenous governments and stakeholders to better manage and protect our precious freshwater resources. I am especially pleased and honoured that the Minister of Environment and Climate Change has asked me to lead this effort.

*The Address*

As Canadians, we are fortunate to have over two million lakes and rivers: approximately 20% of the world's freshwater. Our waterways support fisheries, tourism, shipping and navigation, and so many other industries. They are crucial for aquatic ecosystems and wetland habitats, which are vital for many plants and animals.

An important part of keeping our freshwater resources protected and well managed includes improving deteriorating water quality. To this end, in 2017 we invested \$70.5 million in the Great Lakes and the Lake Winnipeg basin. Over five years, \$44.84 million was provided to the Great Lakes protection initiative in order to address the most significant environmental challenges affecting the Great Lakes: water quality and ecosystem health. For the Lake Winnipeg basin, \$25.8 million was allocated to address the increasing challenge of nutrient pollution and toxic algae in restoring the health of Canada's sixth great lake.

In this era of climate instability, flooding has had a major impact on communities and the public treasury. The government has paid out more in disaster assistance in the last 10 years than in the last 40 years. The Manitoba flood of 2011 alone saw more than 7,000 people displaced from their homes, critical infrastructure destroyed, and 70 states of emergency declared in local communities, resulting in a \$1-billion impact to the Manitoba economy.

To address these flooding and water challenges, the Speech from the Throne commits the Government of Canada to make investments in the Canada Water Agency, as well as in major water infrastructure to better manage and protect our waterways for the benefit of the environment, the economy and future generations.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has been the most serious health and economic crisis our community has faced in generations. In Manitoba, as well as in communities across the country, we have seen Canadians come together and work together in extraordinary ways to help one another through these difficult times. There has been unprecedented co-operation among the provinces, territories and the federal government. Canadians want to see that co-operation continue, and they want to see all parties in the House work together to help meet the challenge of COVID-19 and build a better Canada when the pandemic subsides. Let us not disappoint them.

• (1205)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I specifically want to ask the member about the Canada Water Agency. This is an exciting undertaking. I am really quite excited to hear about this and follow its progress.

I have a private member's bill, the national strategy for fresh water, Bill C-245. I wondered if the member and his government have any plans to support this bill, as it looks to do a lot of the same things as he was talking about regarding the Canada Water Agency.

**Mr. Terry Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for her interest in, and passion for, fresh water. As she knows, we are blessed with 20% of the world's fresh water. It is a precious resource, and we need a freshwater strategy for the country. We view the Canada Water Agency as a mechanism that can help bring that about. As the member will know, water is a complicated jurisdiction with provinces, municipalities, territories and the federal government all having responsibilities. The Canada Water Agency will

work across those government lines to better manage and protect our fresh water.

**Mr. Ron McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am particularly interested in the Canada Water Agency and I note that the member has indicated that he is responsible for this file. Could the member give us insight of what the benefits and consequences of this agency will be for us here in British Columbia?

**Mr. Terry Duguid:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his interest in water. I know he is passionate about salmon, which is a very important resource for all British Columbians including the indigenous peoples there. It is the home of the Fraser Basin Council, which really is a model for Canada on how stakeholders, governments and indigenous governments can work together to better manage and protect our water resources.

This will be an agency for the whole country. It is modelled in part on the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, which unfortunately was closed by the previous Conservative government, but we will be there for B.C., for salmon and for the freshwater interests of British Columbia.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise in the House, as opposed to participating virtually, as we debate the Speech from the Throne. I am very pleased to be here.

I want to start by acknowledging how very challenging these last seven months have been for so many. I look at the people working in the hospitals and long-term care facilities and front-line workers everywhere, including people delivering groceries. It has been seven months and it has not been getting any easier for many of them. We know they are getting tired and we want to express our immense appreciation for what they are doing. I also want to recognize that many individuals and businesses also continue to face extraordinary challenges.

Regardless of the disagreements we might have in the House, I think it is fair to say that we are united in the agreement that we must do the best we can to support Canadians during this time. In these unprecedented times, it is healthy to have vigorous debate and at times disagreements on the best path forward.

*The Address*

About one year ago, we were on the campaign trail. Just a few short weeks later, the current government was given a new mandate by the people. It was a minority mandate, because the Canadian public did not have quite as much faith in the Liberals as they had in the previous election. There was an important message in that election for the Liberal government to hear, but I am not sure the Liberals heard it.

Since that time, we have had two Speeches from the Throne, but we have had no budget. We have had over 80-plus days of the morning show on the Rideau porch. The Prime Minister would come out on his porch and announce spending and extraordinary new measures. During that same time, we had 14 sitting days in the House. Let us think about that. We had a Prime Minister announcing extraordinary new programs during an unprecedented crisis and we had only 14 sitting days. The bottom line is that we heard about billions and billions of dollars, with very minimal debate.

That is how mistakes get made. By bypassing Parliament, committees and process, the Liberals will make mistakes. That is why things like the loan program for businesses was such a disaster. The Liberals did not look to the brainpower, to the people and the experience within the Parliament, to take that extra bit of time needed to do things properly. That is on the government. It was 80 days of the Prime Minister on the porch and 14 days in Parliament with minimal debate.

I went back to read a number of Speeches from the Throne as part of my process of thinking about what I would say today. I went back to 2008 and 2011 and I saw very workmanlike speeches. They were very orderly, workmanlike, telling Canadians what the vision and goals of the government were.

Then I went to the Speech from the Throne in 2015 from the current Liberal government. What it said was that the Government of Canada “will promote more open debate and free votes, and reform and strengthen committees.” Right now a committee is looking into some challenges of the current government, the WE scandal, and the government is doing its very best to shut that committee down.

That speech also said, “notable are the things the government will not do....it will not resort to devices like prorogation and omnibus bills to avoid scrutiny.” What did the Liberal government do in the middle of a crisis? It prorogued. No one believes it was anything other than to avoid the WE scandal and further testimony about how the government was helping Liberal friends in this time of crisis.

I found it absolutely stunning that when we finally came back after the prorogation period, we had a fast-tracked bill. Again, there was no committee debate. Was this 2015 promise just for 2015 when the Liberals had a majority or was it a promise for what the Liberal government wanted to do?

• (1210)

However, the Minister of Environment had the nerve to say to the media that we had to fast-track the bill because we had to get help to Canadians. I remember reading this and thinking about fast-tracking the bill. We had five weeks in which we were ready, willing, able and we would have done anything to do proper scrutiny of the bill to ensure it was done right so we would not be in the same

position we are with the bills we have seen, such as the rent assistance program.

They did indicate that they wanted to trust their government. The Liberals say that they want Canadians to trust them. I do not know about other members, but as we hit ethical scandal after ethical scandal, I think that trust is eroding in many ways.

I did not mention democratic reform, but that again was a strong commitment by the government.

After reading this Speech from the Throne, I am left with some doubt on whether the Liberals will do what they say they will do. They have a propensity to recycle their broken promises. Their promise on child care goes back 20 years, which is an awful long time. Their promise on pharmacare has been there for a while. The Speech from the Throne focused a little on the current issue and a whole lot on recycled, broken promises.

On what is most important to Canadians right now, the Liberals have said that their number one pillar is to fight the pandemic and save lives. I think everyone in the House can agree with that, but we have to look at the execution of this. Who sent all our PPE equipment either to the dumpster or to China? Who failed to keep our stockpile up to snuff? Who failed to look at what other countries were doing with respect to rapid testing? Who failed to close the borders in an appropriate time and accused the opposition of being racist by suggesting we should close the borders? It was the government. However, we need to look forward now.

We now know that everyone expected a second wave would come. We knew that there was a bit of a window to prepare for that. What did the Liberals do about fighting this pandemic and saving lives?

The Liberals will set national standards for seniors, because those are the people who have been most impacted. A recent article in the Canadian Medical Association Journal talked about the issues with seniors, and standards were not one of those issues. They were issues of ensuring protective equipment, training personnel, licensing inspections and capital improvements. Those things would prevent issues in a second wave. Did the government make a move? I know it is the responsibility of provinces and territories, but did the Liberals say to the provinces and territories that a second wave was coming, that they wanted to support them, what could they do to help, was it just about money or were there other things they could do to help? If a second wave hits these seniors homes, part of it is on the current government.

*The Address*

For indigenous people, they were very specific 10 months ago. The Liberals would eliminate all long-term drinking water advisories on reserve by 2021. In the speech, they say they will make additional resiliency investments. What does that mean? I think most first nations know what eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories means, but do they know what additional resiliency investments are?

I find much to be concerned about with the government's current approach. Certainly, from our side, we would have great difficulty supporting this Speech from the Throne.

• (1215)

**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, the member made reference to the fact that there was a different expectation after the last federal election and I concur. Canadians do have a very different expectation and the government has risen to that, which is to work more with opposition parties. In fact, anything and everything that passes through the House now requires that support and we continuously reach out for it. Even the throne speech will have the support of at least one other political party in the House, otherwise it would not pass. It is the same thing with legislation. Canadians also sent a message to the Conservative Party, one of co-operation. What we have witnessed over the last couple of months from the opposition party is anything but co-operation. Those members seem to want a dysfunctional House of Commons.

Last Friday, we debated Bill C-3, the Judges Act. The Conservative Party is completely in support of it. Their former leader Rona Ambrose wanted that bill. At one point, the Conservatives wanted unanimous consent, yet they continued to talk out the bill to prevent it from passing.

Why is that the case? Why this destructive force in the House of Commons?

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the Liberals have very few willing to defend their position. The hon. member has had a lot of say, but we do have Liberal members doing their maiden speech in the House.

It is time for us to take our jobs as parliamentarians seriously. When bills are introduced in the House, there is a process. There is a committee process with expert witnesses and that is what prevents mistakes. When the Liberal government keeps introducing legislation and wanting to ram it through without proper scrutiny or a committee process, that is when we end up in trouble. Why would we have a Parliament if all the government wants is unanimous consent to ram every piece of legislation through at its will?

• (1220)

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague on her brilliant speech.

I would like to hear her thoughts on how the Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government just replied to her, claiming that the opposition parties are continually opposing and blocking the government. However, it was the Liberal Party that imposed a

gag order, thereby preventing the opposition parties from making any amendments that would have improved certain bills.

I would like to hear my colleague's opinion on that.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, that is a great point. I look again at landlords' support for our small businesses and the rent program for which landlords needed to apply. That program has been a disaster. It has created huge issues throughout the country. It was a much-needed support for small businesses, but it was designed improperly.

We need to have conversations in the House. The Liberals are not going to get everything right and that is what Parliament is for, that is what committees are for. Certainly, it is very inappropriate for the parliamentary secretary to say that the opposition has been obstructing when the Liberals have had important bills go through the House in record time. In fact, last week a bill worth almost \$50 billion was approved without proper scrutiny. That is not right. The Liberals should reflect on that.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, like all members of Parliament, I have been in regular contact with small businesses in my riding. We know the two major fixed costs for small businesses are labour and rent.

I am thinking of organizations such as a social enterprise in my riding, the V2V Black Hops Brewery, which was unable to qualify for the wage subsidy because it was a new start-up company. Therefore, the eligibility rules were too restrictive. I also had a small business that had been in the community of Duncan for 25 years. It went out of business because it had an uncooperative landlord and could not access commercial rental assistance.

Does the member share my concerns? The rental assistance, in particular, was not even mentioned in the throne speech? For many months now that has been one of the biggest areas of concern we have heard repeatedly and the Liberals need to act on it.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, we agree that the design of this program was very flawed. The Liberals need to act on that. It was not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. Nor was it in their first piece of legislation, and they could have fixed it at that time. Even walking down Sparks Street can break one's heart to see small business entrepreneurs who have had shops for many years. Yesterday, one of them had a liquidation sign in its window.

One business in my riding was open again, but the owner was not sure if the business would survive. That program was critical and it really anticipated by small business owners.

*The Address**[Translation]*

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate virtually today. I would like to take this opportunity to say hello to my House of Commons colleagues and everyone following our proceedings. I would like to point out that I am taking part in today's proceedings from the city of Lévis, which is currently in a red zone. I want to commend the resilience of the people of Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis who are experiencing the strains of the lockdown.

The purpose of my intervention today is to convey that I cannot support the Speech from the Throne delivered by the Governor General on September 23, 2020.

The role of government and of parliamentarians is to help and support people, to minimize the impacts of the pandemic and to try to make things run smoothly. I simply cannot support the throne speech because there are two fundamental components missing from it, things that would help people in red zones, like the people of Lévis.

Measures need to be put in place immediately to deal with the resurgence of the pandemic. That includes quicker testing and results analysis. For example, the wife of one of my colleagues who works in the education system was tested for COVID-19 and has been waiting for three days now for her results, which means that my colleague also has to wait for the results. That is paralyzing the work of our organizations, despite telework being an option. It slows things down, not to mention the fact that some jobs require staff to be on site.

In our region, there are a lot of manufacturing jobs. These measures are needed immediately to support public health authorities in order to make testing faster, something that is not clearly set out in the throne speech.

Another necessary measure involves providing reasonable and targeted support to businesses and individuals during the pandemic so that the government remains agile and flexible once it is over. Unfortunately, even before the pandemic, the Liberals were already caught in a deficit spiral. Right now we are far from improving our situation.

What is in a throne speech? As my colleague from British Columbia mentioned, we usually expect a throne speech to present a vision.

This vision could have explained how to fight the pandemic and help people right now while presenting a plan for the medium term. However, neither of these elements is in the throne speech. On the contrary, it is chock full of all kinds of promises. Having many priorities means that there are none. It is just a jumble of words. Unfortunately, this does not meet our immediate needs as the pandemic surges and we are experiencing a second wave.

In my view, the best analysis of the throne speech is the one provided by the Parliamentary Budget Officer. His analysis leads us to conclude that the throne speech is not what Canada needs right now to face the pandemic. We should remember that the Parliamentary Budget Officer is an independent officer and he is in some ways the

government watchdog. He is there to remind the government that it must stay on track if it wants to prevent problems from arising further down the road.

We have seen the warning signs. Before the throne speech, my old colleague and former finance minister, Joe Oliver, said that it is time for Canada to pick a fiscal anchor.

Of course we need to support people. In 2008, the Conservatives did that through massive infrastructure investments to stimulate the economy. Many projects got built in my riding, including the Lac-Etchemin arena, the Lévis water treatment plant and the Notre-Dame-Auxiliatrice-de-Buckland infrastructure project. Those were measurable outcomes of targeted investments, and the Conservatives also had a plan at the time to balance the budget.

● (1225)

A former Liberal finance minister, John Manley, said it is important to have a fiscal anchor because that shows the financial markets that Canada is supporting people and knows where it is going in the medium term. Unfortunately, the throne speech proves that this government is going in the opposite direction.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer's economic outlook, it is possible to get through the pandemic and stay on track with realistic fiscal anchors, but that will not be possible if the government engages in new spending.

As my colleague from British Columbia said, the Liberals are interfering in programs that are provincial responsibilities. As the saying goes, they are throwing money out the window. That is not the sound management we expect. Moreover, financial markets are worried. Firms such as Fitch Ratings have downgraded Canada, and credit rating agencies such as Bloomberg and Moody's have warned Canada that if it does not stop spending shamelessly and keeps introducing poorly targeted measures, it is going to crash and burn.

We want to support Canadians, but we want to be able to do that now and in the long term. The measures proposed by the Liberals combined with the government's extravagant spending would threaten the social safety net in the medium term. That is troubling. We are not even close to achieving sustainable development.

According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, there is a risk that the sustainable debt-to-GDP trajectory could be reversed. In other words, if we continue to spend excessively on extravagant and poorly targeted measures, we will be temporarily "doped" by a significant cash injection, but we will have to pay for the damage in the medium and long term, since this is borrowed money.

*The Address*

There is another aspect that concerns me. The Speech from the Throne says that interest rates are going to stay low for decades to come. Of course that is unrealistic. The Bank of Canada's key interest rate is currently 0.25%. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer's assumption, that rate could remain stable for the next three years, but it is expected to increase by 1% within five years' time. That is five times higher than the current key rate. The rate would remain fixed at 1.25%, but that would still increase the debt by \$8 billion. The government seems to be deluding itself regarding easy credit.

The third thing that worries me is the government's poorly targeted measures. People received more money than they lost from their savings. This is borrowed money, though. It belongs to the government.

Canadians' household income went up by 5.4%. That is nice to see, but since this is borrowed money, it will have to be paid back. The problem is that the Liberal government makes poor spending choices and implements measures that hurt the economy. For example, it did not encourage people to stay connected to their jobs or to return to work.

I will not support the throne speech because it contains extravagant expenses, is devoid of any fiscal anchors and does not present short-term measures to combat the pandemic.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Chair for coordinating the hybrid sitting. This is the first time I have participated.

I will now yield the floor to my colleagues and I would be happy to take questions.

● (1230)

[*English*]

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the member and of all Conservatives.

I get confused when I hear the Conservative response to the Speech from the Throne. It is all about the government not spending enough money and needing to take care of situations with businesses or people who have fallen through the cracks. On the other hand, I hear that we are spending too much money, so I get confused.

We have in the NDP caucus 24 members who have, through the last six months, accomplished a great deal for Canadians. Almost all of the benefits that Canadians needed and received to help them through the COVID pandemic came from NDP proposals, yet the Conservative caucus, in my view, has achieved nothing.

I am wondering if the member could explain to me what the focus of the Conservative caucus is.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, it is very simple. The core and main goal of our Conservative approach is to support Canadians now and later. Recently, we saw the Liberal government cutting debate, shutting down the House and preventing us from putting efficient measures in place to support our collectivity.

I will refer my colleague to the specific example of measures that are so ill-conceived, they are having the opposite impact than the

one the government aimed for, which was to support businesses. Restaurant workers in my riding are having a hard time finding jobs and pharmacists have a hard time hiring students because the measures did not incentivize or encourage them to stay in the labour market. Conservatives want constructive measures and, in that regard, we also need targets that will—

● (1235)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments, the hon. member for Jonquière.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech.

He mentioned the Parliamentary Budget Officer several times. I could add to that by saying that, in 2013, the Parliamentary Budget Officer released a devastating report on health care funding. In the report he indicated that, if nothing is done, year after year the provinces would have to absorb the deficits that the federal government does not want to face while running surpluses.

Lastly, I asked his colleague from Chicoutimi—Le Fjord a question. As his colleague from Carleton tells me, often in politics you have to repeat yourself. My question for him is this: Knowing that the provinces have asked for transfers to be increased to 35% and that 81% of Quebecers agree with that increase, would he be prepared to promise that a future Conservative government will increase health transfers to 35%?

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

Obviously we are in favour of reliable, predictable transfers in health. That would allow us to support the provinces, especially during a pandemic.

What I was explaining in my speech is that given the Liberals' irresponsible management of public finances, these same transfers could be compromised in the medium and long term, so say many economists, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and former Liberal finance ministers and advisers. That is why we want a responsible approach that will allow to continue to support health care and the provinces, especially during a pandemic.

[*English*]

**Mr. Bob Bratina (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my friend from Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis why we cannot accomplish the things he mentioned would be desirable by the continuation of Parliament. How would Canadians be served by collapsing the House and forcing another election, with as much as a month or more perhaps of no parliamentary activity?

*The Address*

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Mr. Speaker, Conservatives certainly are champions of maintaining Parliament and having committee debates. Unfortunately, as we know, my colleague's government shut down Parliament. We feel that only four hours of debate for \$50 billion of investment in the Canadian economy is not sufficient. We want a full and effective Parliament with all of its procedures, so that we can create effective measures that will sustain and support Canadians through the pandemic.

**Mr. Robert Morrissey (Egmont, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Mississauga East—Cooksville.

I am pleased to rise in the House today in the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, in the second session of the 43rd Parliament. I first want to congratulate the government on its Speech from the Throne. During a difficult time, it is fair to say that the government has done an excellent job balancing the safety of Canadians with the need to encourage a prosperous economy.

[*Translation*]

I feel the federal government has done an excellent job of meeting the specific needs of all communities, especially those of my riding of Egmont.

[*English*]

I am impressed with the four foundations of the government's plan. Of course, we must fight the pandemic and protect the health and safety of all Canadians. Second, we have been on a consistent course of supporting the values of reconciliation, equality and the fight against systemic racism. Third, our immediate effort is to help Canadians through this difficult time. As I have heard from many people in my constituency of Egmont, there is an appreciation and respect for government's rapid and effective decision-making. Government responded in a way that was reliable and it built confidence in our country. Across my community, individuals and businesses feel they are supported and respected.

● (1240)

[*Translation*]

I think Canadians know that the government respects all communities and understands the needs of every individual.

[*English*]

While concerns certainly remain, there is a great sense that government will do everything in its power to protect the interests of every Canadian.

Finally, the fundamental goal of creating jobs and continuing our support for the middle class truly looks forward. We need that aspirational language. We need to put together the constructive framework for future success and we need to provide a clear pathway toward better days ahead. In my opinion, government is meeting that test of leadership. Furthermore, I believe government has achieved its leadership role in partnership with individuals and communities. We have not worked in a top-down manner. Instead we have listened to Canadians. Thanks to the hard work of thousands of Egmont residents, we are building a stronger economy that benefits everyone. As a result, the people of my community have told me they believe they have a share in the community's progress. They

believe that we are all in this together and will share the challenges and the opportunities.

I want to thank all those in Egmont who reached out with clear, articulate ideas to move our community forward even in the context of our greatest crisis since the Second World War. In the largest sense, government has done well for the past five years to accentuate a spirit of partnership with Canadians. In my opinion, I believe that community partnerships that emphasize job growth through infrastructure is the best road forward.

In Egmont, that forward-looking plan is helping to build one of the greenest communities in Canada. Our leadership role in renewable energy is well recognized across Canada. For decades, Egmont has adopted an approach that accentuates advances in wind power and now there are new projects that build on the promise of solar energy. The key part of these efforts is government is providing its expertise and investments in a way that benefits an entire community.

We all have the opportunity to share in Egmont's environmental progress. As we emerge from the current crisis, we will be in a tremendous position to take advantage of the world's changing energy demands. We are building, and we are building stronger and smarter. For that reason, I was very happy to see references in the throne speech to an Atlantic energy loop. For years, Atlantic Canada has worked on plans to co-operate on energy initiatives. The support signalled in the throne speech reflects my hope for an eastern partnership that permits freer flow of energy resources while rewarding hard-won advances in technological innovation.

From the perspective of individuals and families, I am also pleased to see further evidence of the government's ability to focus on people. During the spring, we were all deeply concerned about the effects of the pandemic on long-term care facilities. Mercifully, there were no outbreaks on Prince Edward Island, but every Islander shared in the pain and distress experienced across Canada.

For that reason, I am very pleased to say that we will be working on national standards for long-term care, which will protect thousands of Canadians and build confidence in our systems. To achieve that confidence-building goal, we will need to work with our provincial partners and provide the resources needed to create safe and welcoming places.

Additionally, I am extremely pleased to see that we will embark in a new direction when it comes to disability supports. A program modelled after the guaranteed income supplement for seniors will make a tremendous difference in the lives of many people in my community. I look forward to the day that we make this commitment a reality.

*The Address*

In some ways that promise reminds me of the government's decision to reverse the decision by the former administration to push the retirement age to 67. Personally, I know many people who have worked more than 40 years and are looking forward to retirement at age 65. To move those goalposts was unfair. I want to commend the government once again for reversing that unfortunate agenda. Again, that is why I am proud to be a part of this government.

The Speech from the Throne does not pick winners and losers. It does not favour one group over another. Instead, we are following a path that tailors itself to the needs of individuals, families and communities. We are not about the broad, sweeping generalizations of the past government, rather this is a government that embraces unique challenges faced by every Canadian in a way that responds to specific needs and recognizes opportunities.

Along those lines I also want to congratulate the government on its rapid and effective response to COVID. All of us remember the difficult days of March and April when there was so much uncertainty and concern. Programs were designed that almost immediately addressed those worries and built a relationship of trust and confidence between the federal government and Canadians.

I admit that I was worried. I was concerned that the crisis was too big, that we would miss people and lose sight of communities, but we did not. We succeeded because this government has an understanding of the uniqueness of every individual and every community.

In closing, I would like to encourage the government to maintain that path, to remain vigilant about the concerns of the kitchen table and the need to build a stronger national economy.

I want to thank all the residents of my community for their hard work, creativity and willingness to build a stronger community.

• (1245)

[*Translation*]

We worked together, and together with Prince Edward Island, we are building a stronger Canada.

[*English*]

We are beginning to emerge from this crisis and I am confident that we can do so in a way that will leave both Canada and communities like Egmont even stronger than before.

[*Translation*]

As a Liberal member, I believe that a government can accomplish great things. As parliamentarians, we must work together for all Canadians.

**Mrs. Louise Charbonneau (Trois-Rivières, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague referred to various proposals put forward in the throne speech.

He spoke about retirees who have decided to change their lives at this time. However, in the throne speech, there is nothing for people 65 and older. The Liberals are only offering an income supplement starting at age 75.

Why does my colleague think that the government has chosen to ignore a segment of retirees, of older people, who are often women, and seniors who find themselves alone?

[*English*]

**Mr. Robert Morrissey:** Mr. Speaker, one of the first moves of this government when it came to power was to return the age of eligibility back to age 65. At the same time, it increased the guaranteed income supplement by 10%. That was because we recognized the majority of seniors who live alone are women. We were committed to advancing support to single seniors, the majority of whom are women, in that particular decision.

Our government will continue to support seniors as we proceed.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I sit on the fisheries and oceans committee together and I know he cares deeply about our oceans. I also want to thank him for voting in favour of my unanimous motion to tackle ocean plastics. One part of that motion deals with ghost and derelict fishing gear. We were glad to see the government commit \$8.6 million to dealing with the cleanup of that abandoned and derelict fishing gear, but it is literally a drop in the bucket. It is not the only solution. We need a polluter-pays model with tracking, marked gear, regulations, monitoring, better accountability and enforcement if we are really going to tackle this issue. Washington and Oregon have done a great job. The Global Ghost Gear Initiative has made many recommendations to the current government, but when it comes to the Speech from the Throne, it barely mentions oceans. It talks about a blue economy and our oceans protection.

Will the member commit to coming up with a comprehensive plan to deal with ghost and derelict fishing gear and not put it on the backs of taxpayers, but on the polluters who are creating this problem that is choking out our ecosystem and actually hurting our fishing economy?

• (1250)

**Mr. Robert Morrissey:** Mr. Speaker, when our party formed the government in 2015, one of the commitments we moved on quickly was to restore funding to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in the key areas of science, habitat protection and protecting the industry.

As for removing plastics from the oceans, I agree with my hon. colleague that we should be moving toward a system that makes the polluter pay for those particular items that he referenced in his question.

**Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as we know, in just the last few years the Liberal government is set to triple our national debt. Can the member explain the Liberal plan to balance our budget or does he want to admit that it really does not have a plan to balance the budget?

*The Address*

**Mr. Robert Morrissey:** Mr. Speaker, one of the great myths is the hypocrisy that often occurs within the Conservative Party when questioning in the House on the balancing of budgets. We can listen to the rhetoric that we hear day after day coming from across the floor or we can look at the actual practice of Conservative governments. We have had two in the past, one in the late eighties that racked up the biggest deficit at the time in the history of the country when facing no extraordinary measures. Therefore, it is a bit ironic for the Conservative Party to lecture this government on balancing books when it barely did it on one minor occasion in about 20 years of governing.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous honour and privilege to be a voice for the residents and businesses of Mississauga East—Cooksville and to virtually speak in Parliament from my great community.

I would like to acknowledge we are gathered on the ancestral land of the Mississaugas of the New Credit.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank all the front-line workers from all sectors of health care and essential services from my home of Mississauga East—Cooksville and from all members' hometowns from coast to coast to coast. In no particular order, they include Canadians from all walks of life: personal support workers, police, bus drivers, military personnel, pharmacists, supermarket workers, nurses, doctors, drivers, public servants, waste-removal people, construction workers, cleaners, security guards, support staff, postal workers, our teachers and thousands more. I believe I speak for all members when I say we owe them a debt of gratitude and thank them for their self-sacrifice, their service and their dedication to our communities across our great country.

The war against this invisible enemy has truly been a team Canada effort to protect the health and safety of Canadians and to support workers and businesses. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have put Canadians first. The way our Liberal government, led by our Prime Minister, has collaborated and consulted with our partners, including the provinces, territories, municipal governments, labour, businesses, not-for-profit agencies, scientists, public health authorities and so many other stakeholders, has been essential to the successes we have had in our fight against the coronavirus. As was crystal clear in the Speech from the Throne, for our Liberal government, support for our workers and families is paramount. The health and safety of our workers and the recovery of our economy remain our government's top priorities.

I need to address what I feel in my heart of hearts was the saddest and most tragic aspect of this pandemic. COVID-19 has exposed significant ugly weaknesses in our health care system. Of all of Canada's deaths related to COVID-19, a staggering 85% have occurred in long-term care homes. Now with the second wave, we must do more to protect our most vulnerable. Our hearts go out to all those who have passed away from this terrible virus.

Many seniors from my riding were residents of Camilla Care long-term care home. Tragically, Camilla Care lost over 70 residents to coronavirus. The reports of understaffing, COVID-positive residents sharing rooms with residents who were COVID negative and a lack of basic care, including feeding, toileting and dressing, are unacceptable and cannot happen again. I heard from families,

friends and loved ones who could not see or speak with their dying parents. They will live with these painful memories forever. The lives lost in long-term care homes to COVID is one of Canada's greatest tragedies. Vulnerable seniors deserve to be safe, to be respected and to live with dignity.

Although long-term care falls under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, the federal government will take any action it can to support seniors while working alongside our provinces and territories. Canadians stand strong with us on this righteous cause. A recent survey showed 88% of Canadians agree that there is a need to implement extensive social and health programs to help and protect our seniors and most vulnerable citizens.

The Liberal government will work with Parliament on Criminal Code amendments to explicitly penalize those who neglect seniors under their care, putting them in danger. The Liberal government will also work with the provinces and territories to set new national standards for long-term care so that seniors get the best support possible, and take additional action to help people stay in their homes longer. Let us all thank the members of the Canadian Forces who were there in long-term care homes and shined a light on the neglect.

• (1255)

The Prime Minister said recently that he remained unapologetic for doing everything we could to support our seniors, that they deserved nothing less. We agree and we grieve for all those we have lost.

The Speech from the Throne addresses gaps in our social system. The pandemic has underscored the inseparability of Canada's economic, health and social well-being. Our sound recovery will address these stark gaps in our social safety net and ensure that the most vulnerable communities are not left behind.

The government has pledged support, taken action and will continue to work with further targeted measures for personal support workers; help for vulnerable communities; support for the disabled; increased flexibility of systems to reach people at home, i.e., like we are doing here virtually; and the accelerated development of a universal pharmacare program. We will support our communities, investing in all types of infrastructure, including public transit, energy-efficient retrofits, clean energy and affordable housing.

*The Address*

The throne speech is a plan for a stronger and more resilient Canada. I can say unequivocally to workers in my community and across our country that if they have lost their jobs, we have their backs. Since March 15, almost nine million people have received the Canada emergency response benefit, also known as the CERB, helping millions of Canadians and their families avoid catastrophic household income loss while, at the same time, helping to keep our economy strong. People are still living in uncertain times and the government will continue to be there for them. So many residents in my area have emailed, written and called me just to say what these concrete investments have meant to them, and the financial stress and strain they have alleviated.

We are shoring up our employment insurance system. The government has created a transitional Canada response benefit to help Canadians transition from the CERB to the employment insurance system, which will be revamped to include self-employed individuals and those in the gig economy. A more flexible EI program, paid sick leave and a caregiver benefit will allow us to continue helping Canadians and their families.

The government will do whatever it takes and use whatever fiscal firepower to support people and the businesses that employ them. I have worked closely with the Mississauga Board of Trade and the many businesses that have been impacted negatively by this pandemic. I can think of no greater shock to a business than to have to stop cold, through no fault of their own, and live with the uncertainty of when things will get better or start to normalize.

I have reached out to small businesses to identify needs and facilitate access to programs, such as the Canada emergency business account and the Canada emergency wage subsidy. These and other programs were greatly appreciated in my riding and the government's commitment to extending these programs is welcome. The wage subsidy program has literally saved tens of thousands of jobs and has prevented many businesses in Mississauga East and across Canada from going bankrupt.

The Liberal government will take the following steps to support struggling businesses. It will extend the wage subsidy into the summer of 2021, expand the Canada emergency business account, improve the business credit availability and introduce support for industries that have been hardest hit, like travel, tourism and hospitality.

In conclusion, the throne speech reflects our government's road map to manage the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and the role that Canada will play in a world that has likely changed forever. When I think of the millions of everyday acts of kindness and thoughtfulness that are being performed across this country, I know we are already building back better. We are and will be more resilient, more innovative, more economically dynamic, but also more generous and sharing. However, for now, we must stay alert, control the virus and save lives.

• (1300)

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the member spoke about small business at the end of his speech.

I know that small business owners in my riding of London—Fanshawe have heard the Liberal rhetoric. They have heard how Liberals are putting Canadians first and that they have their backs. So many of those small businesses and their owners barely made it through the first wave, and they are terrified about what the second wave will have in store for them. They are unsure they will survive it.

A lot of problems came in the failure of the rental subsidy in the commercial program that the Liberals put forward. It was because it was given to landlords. It was not provided to tenants. I would like to hear the member's explanation for why the government chose to do it in that really specific way, knowing that it probably would not actually help the majority of small business owners.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, our businesses, especially our main streets and small businesses, are really the backbone of our communities and our economy. That is why, from day one, the government was always there, every step of the way, helping those businesses through the wage subsidy program, through business loans and through a number of other programs.

We are going to continue to help them as we go through this second wave. As was seen and read in the throne speech, we will also be there to address other fixed costs for these small businesses.

I know we are on the street, in touch with them, speaking to them every single day, consulting, listening and understanding, so that we can provide the tools they need to be able to bridge this pandemic, get to the other side and continue to succeed and be those great beacons of light in our communities.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoulu, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will repeat that according to my colleague, the Prime Minister said that he remained unapologetic for doing everything for our seniors.

However, did they really do everything? There is an annual \$23-billion shortfall in health transfers that Quebec and the provinces have unanimously asked the government to make up. Based on constitutional agreements, the annual shortfall is actually \$51 billion. In July, the old age pension decreased by between \$4 and \$5, and last week, it was increased by a few measly cents.

Therefore, I am asking my colleague to tell us who is mistreating our seniors by refusing to respect health transfers and financially starving our seniors with increases that are minimal and reductions that are significant for them.

*The Address*

• (1305)

[English]

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to health care, I and millions of Canadians find that our universal health care is one of our Canadian values that we cherish dearly. The government has always been there, every step of the way, working together with our provinces and territories to find ways to provide better health care. We did it with mental health services and home care services in previous budgets. We will continue.

During this pandemic, we did it by deploying our military to help in our long-term care homes that were hardest hit. We will continue. We want a universal pharmacare program for our nation. We will continue to make this one of the strongest values in Canada, working with our partners, the provinces, and showing leadership to be able to provide the type of health care that we want to see from coast to coast to coast.

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last week we passed a bill with over \$50 billion in expenditures. Would the member agree that more than four and a half hours of debate and some parliamentary committee work might have actually had the benefit of improving the bill?

**Mr. Peter Fonseca:** Mr. Speaker, respectfully, what I hear from the Conservatives is that one second they want to cut and the next second they want to spend more money. I do not know what side of the fence they are on. They keep jumping. One cannot suck and blow at the same time.

We are investing in Canada. We are investing in Canadians. The Conservatives will say that universal health care is a social experiment. I just talked about how it is the value of Canada. If we had the same Conservatives back in the day when we brought in universal health care, they would have scrapped it and it would not have gone forward.

The Conservatives have to come clean with Canadians and say what they want to cut. Is it the CERB? Is it health care? What is it that the Conservatives want to cut?

[Translation]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Before resuming debate, I want to quickly address all the members who are participating virtually.

I appreciate the fact that all of you are looking to the Chair for guidance regarding speaking time. This helps the sitting go smoothly and ensures that the speaking time of all members is respected.

[English]

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Sturgeon River—Parkland.

**Mr. Dane Lloyd (Sturgeon River—Parkland, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to once again rise in this House to represent the good people of Sturgeon River—Parkland.

The past six months have been a time of tremendous trial for my constituents and all Canadians. Loved ones have been lost, families have been separated, businesses have shut down permanently and our government has failed to provide a clear plan for a way forward for this country.

Alberta and the other western provinces were hurting before this pandemic. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have been lost, including in my constituency. The Liberals have refused to sign off on new resource projects, costing thousands of jobs and billions in investments. Their infrastructure bank and infrastructure minister have failed to deliver billions of dollars in investments, costing our communities and many more thousands of jobs. Just the other day, Alberta was hurt again with the announcement that Suncor will be laying off thousands of workers, along with TC Energy.

Canadians pulled together to get us through the first wave of COVID-19. We endured lockdowns in the spring that cost hundreds of thousands of jobs and closed tens of thousands of businesses. Yes, we saved lives, but what did the Liberal government do with the sacrifice of Canadians? It dithered.

While our government could have spent the summer procuring rapid testing or planning for an economic recovery, it focused all its energy on shutting down an investigation into its own ethical failures. We have yet to receive the full details of the WE Charity scandal created by the Liberal Prime Minister, and if the Liberals had it their way, Canadians would never know the full truth. That is why we are here today, not even a year since the last Speech from the Throne: Instead of governing the nation through this crisis, the Liberals chose to play political games, prorogue Parliament and shut down any committee investigations into their wrongdoing.

Our Conservative team will not relent. We will hold the Liberal government accountable for its ethical failures. I know that on this side of the House, we are looking forward to sunny ways and sunny days indeed. While many Canadians may be dealing with a COVID pandemic, the government is dealing with an ethical sickness. The Prime Minister has been fond of telling the opposition that sunlight is the best disinfectant, and we have heard him loud and clear. We will be taking his advice and prescribing a full dosage.

There is a pandemic, and everyone out west is talking about it, but it is not COVID-19; it is the joblessness pandemic. It is a disease that has been with us for years before COVID-19 hit us. Unfortunately, rather than working tirelessly to save our struggling energy industry and the western economies, the Liberals looked eager to dance on our graves and declare our economy bust.

*The Address*

Why else would nearly every decision since their election in 2015 appear to be targeted toward undermining our jobs and energy industry, whether it be the pipeline-killing Bill C-69, their carbon tax or now their mega carbon tax that is masquerading as a clean fuel standard? Why is it that whenever western MPs stand up for their constituents, they are accused of only playing to regional interests? Whenever our auto sector or aerospace sector is threatened, all Canadian MPs are called together to stand up to save jobs, yet we hear nothing when our energy sector is suffering.

Alberta was proud to support fellow Canadians in the 2008 financial crisis. We carried this country's economy when the federal government had to bail out an American auto company. We were proud to support our brothers and sisters in Newfoundland and Labrador when their offshore industry was suffering. When the Atlantic economy was struggling, it was the cheques sent home by Atlantic workers working in the Alberta oil patch that kept families going.

Today, Albertans are struggling and Saskatchewan is struggling. The west is struggling. The engine of Canada's economy is facing record unemployment. Where is our federal government to lend us a hand? We have shovel-ready projects that will create tens of thousands of jobs. We do not even need a bailout from taxpayers; we just need the Liberal government to get out of the way.

The Nova Gas Transmission line, which has been waiting for nearly a year for federal approval, would create 5,500 jobs. It is the next generation of polypropylene production in the Alberta industrial heartland. At least 2,500 jobs are on the line, yet the Liberals are pushing forward with their antiplastic manufacturing agenda. With the Liberal mega carbon tax at an estimated \$350 a tonne, major players that produce fertilizer to feed our farms and produce fuel to heat our homes are at risk of packing up and moving south of the border. Western Canadians do not need a minister of the middle class and those working hard to join it; we need a minister of the middle class and those working hard just to survive and stay middle class.

• (1310)

The Liberals are promising Canadians a lot of goodies in the throne speech, but nothing that has been promised has not been promised before by the Liberal government. The Liberals will say that this time is different, that they are working with the NDP, which holds the balance of power. We have heard this story before. I have a word of caution to my colleagues in the NDP. They can learn a lot from the B.C. Green Party or the Liberal Democrats in the U.K.: Things never really work out for the junior partner.

The throne speech should be praised for its commitment to recycling. By that I mean recycling old Liberal talking points. The Liberals have promised universal pharmacare and a universal day care system. They have promised universal broadband as well. Yet, they have been in power for five years and have failed to deliver for rural communities.

All of this is happening while the Liberals continue to plow forward with the greatest expansion of government spending and debt financing in modern Canadian history. This is over \$400 billion in federal deficit, not counting the hundreds of billions taken out by arm's-length Crown corporations such as the Bank of Canada,

BDC, EDC and the CMHC. This is hundreds of billions off the government's books, but hundreds of billions that Canadian taxpayers will still have to pay for if things go bust.

How exactly are the Liberals going to finance this new pandemic debt, while also launching the most radical expansion of the Canadian welfare state in a generation? It is with low interest rates, cries the Prime Minister. We can afford everything, as if we can sustain low interest rates for decades on end without the consequences of massive inflation: inflation that will erode the savings of our vulnerable seniors, inflation that will risk the opportunity for millennials and those in generation Z to buy their first home and inflation that will devalue the hard-earned wages of the working class for the benefit of big business and debt holders.

If the government chooses not to go down that disastrous path, we are left with two alternatives: They will increase taxes to finance this new spending or they will cut spending in other areas to reallocate to these new promises.

Will the Liberals be cutting the child care benefit and child care expenses tax deduction for families so they can pay for their new national day care system? Will families be denied the choice of whether to stay home with their young children or send them to day care? When the Liberals remove the Canada child benefit and tax deductions, that is exactly what they are doing. They are removing choice from parents who want to raise their children at home.

How will the government pay for this new universal pharmacare system? Will they cut health transfers like the Liberals did back in the 1990s? Will they refuse to allow new life-saving drugs like Trikafta, which miraculously saved the lives of those with cystic fibrosis?

If they do not cut spending, they will have to raise taxes. The throne speech talks a bit about this. It talks about raising taxes on digital giants and closing stock loopholes. This is not necessarily something I disagree with, but will these new taxes generate the tens of billions in new dollars that will finance universal day care and universal pharmacare? The fact is that they will not.

We are left with few alternatives. Will the Liberals raise the GST that the Conservatives lowered from 7% to 5%? Will they raise personal income taxes or capital gains taxes? Are they going to raise corporation taxes and risk capital and investment being taken to our neighbour to the south, a low-tax jurisdiction?

*The Address*

It is time for the Liberals to be honest with Canadians about their fiscal plan. Canadians deserve that honesty. Will the Liberals allow mass inflation to destroy the middle class? Will they raise taxes on Canadian families? Will they cut spending and benefits? Will it be a combination of all three? Canadians deserve a real answer.

• (1315)

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member talked about our neighbours to the south and pointed to their finances and the way they operate in terms of taxation. However, clearly their deficits, debt-to-GDP ratio and deficit-to-GDP ratio are much higher.

Is that a jurisdiction we should model for our taxes and social programs? I am wondering if the member could elaborate on how Canada should run more like the United States.

**Mr. Dane Lloyd:** Mr. Speaker, the United States is a completely different jurisdiction from Canada. It is a worldwide reserve currency. When they print dollars, the world is ready to lend the United States money.

Back in the 1990s, there was a time, under a previous Liberal administration, that the world refused to lend Canadians money. We cannot simply allow the Bank of Canada to keep printing money and buying up Canada's debt. There is going to be a consequence to this. We will hit a fiscal wall and have massive inflation, tax hikes, job cuts and spending cuts.

The Liberals have to pick their poison and stop living in this fairy tale world they are making up. There are going to be consequences. They need to come up with a plan because Canadians deserve to know what their fiscal plan is.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Mario Simard (Jonquière, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a hard time understanding the basis for my colleague's argument that the Canadian government has abandoned the fossil fuel industry.

In the past four years alone, the government has invested \$22 billion in fossil fuels, while investing only \$800 million in a comparable industry, the forestry industry. That is very disproportionate.

Perhaps my colleague is having a hard time accepting the very simple truth that, with the drop in oil prices, the oil sands industry is just not competitive anymore. I am therefore asking my colleague if we should consider transitioning Alberta's economy to something other than fossil fuels and oil sands.

• (1320)

[*English*]

**Mr. Dane Lloyd:** Mr. Speaker, I dispute the member's finding that 22 billion in federal dollars went toward our energy industry, which has been a huge net contributor to our nation's economy. He will notice that, earlier in my speech, I said that we are not asking for a bailout in the energy sector. We are asking the Liberal government to get out of the way. With bills like Bill C-69 and the new mega carbon tax clean fuel standard, it is threatening to shut down industries that already exist, let alone bringing new industries to this country.

The west is very distinct from Quebec. Quebec is blessed with ample hydro resources, low-carbon hydro resources, and those are wonderful resources to have, but in Alberta we are dependent on natural gas to fuel our electricity. I hope the member would agree our economy is distinct, just like his province is distinct, and we need to have different approaches to our economic growth.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, at one point in his speech my colleague was talking about the clean fuel standard. I am hoping he can clarify the Conservative Party's position on this. When I look at organizations such as the Canadian Canola Growers Association and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, I see that they both support an increased Canadian clean fuel standard. Canola farmers in particular, and many of them have Conservative members of Parliament, are in support of this.

Is it the position of the Conservatives that they are going to go against this very vital sector of our Canadian economy? Are they going against the canola growers who live in their own ridings when they go against the clean fuel standard?

**Mr. Dane Lloyd:** Mr. Speaker, my family members are canola farmers, so I know well the challenges we are facing. The devil is really in the details of what this clean fuel standard is going to be. There is going to have to be a lot negotiation.

Liberals could have a very bad clean fuel standard, which we are afraid of, or they could have a fuel standard people could deal with. When we talk to canola and wheat farmers, they tell us that one of their biggest inputs is fertilizer. There is a major fertilizer producer, a nutrient fertilizer plant, in my riding that says it will not be able to compete and create fertilizer if this clean fuel standard goes through.

How are farmers even going to grow canola if they cannot access fertilizer? They will have to buy it from the United States, which means more lost jobs for Canada. I cannot support that.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Governor General and recognize the hard work of her staff, who are no doubt under even more pressure than usual.

I also want to take this opportunity to give my best wishes to retiring members of Parliament, Bill Morneau and Michael Levitt. The WE organization promised its international trips were life-changing. In the case of the former finance minister, that turned out to be true.

My friend Michael Levitt departs politics under more honourable circumstances. I hope his own very principled approach to many foreign policy issues, such as his call to list the IRGC as a terrorist entity, had a positive impact on his Liberal colleagues. Unfortunately, some of his work remains undone, as the IRGC remains unlisted, but I know his advocacy for important issues of justice and human rights will continue.

[*Translation*]

The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health crisis that also brought on an economic crisis. No government should have been caught off guard by COVID-19. While most Canadians could not have imagined that a coronavirus pandemic was possible, it is incumbent on governments to be prepared to respond to crises.

Less than 20 years ago, the world experienced another coronavirus pandemic, which led the government of the day to create a national public health agency whose primary responsibility was to prepare a plan for responding to a potential future pandemic. However, this government did not ensure that the agency had the necessary plan or equipment in place.

Given the compassionate tone we sometimes hear, it is easy to forget that this government originally spread anti-mask messaging because of its own failure to ensure an adequate supply of masks.

In response to COVID-19, our Minister of Health insisted that the risk was low and that the border should remain open, until it was too late. She wanted to promote her medical aid in dying agenda and eliminate life-saving benefits, rather than working to make much-needed improvements to assisted living. She had her priorities backwards.

Even after the government announced controls at airports, many journalists and Canadians saw that the measures were not put in place early enough, at the time when they would have had the greatest impact. If we had had border controls and mandatory masks sooner, if we had started using rapid testing like South Korea did over six months ago, if we had had contact tracing technology ready to go, we could have avoided the economic shutdown. It was all so preventable.

● (1325)

[*English*]

In Alberta and elsewhere, oil and gas workers and their families face the painful intersection of multiple threats to their livelihood. Those of the radical left are talking about a just transition for oil and gas workers. They tell them to give up their jobs today and they will be given a job of the future at some indefinite point around the corner.

If I told my employees that I was going to arrange a just transition for them, those salty words would not hide the fact that they were getting fired. Nobody is fooled by the language of a “just transition”. It is in reality a code for the intended destruction of highly productive parts of our economy, which have, up until now, been producing commodities that the world will continue to desperately need.

The truth is that making petroleum products is both a job of the present and of the future. If these products are not produced here,

they will be produced somewhere else, because the world is going to need petroleum products for a very long time.

Can members imagine the absurdity of it? Can they imagine trying to get through a pandemic, or even run a hospital during normal times, without any petroleum-based products? The anti-energy zealots in this place should not only stop taking flights or car rides, but should also swear off the use of any plastic products. I defy them to organize a protest without the use of petroleum products.

I would like to now build on the throne speech's references to international development and Canada's role in the world as it relates to my own portfolio as shadow minister for international development and human rights. When it comes to thinking broadly about how to achieve international development, it is critical for us to learn the lessons of history.

Too many of the interactions between the west and the global south during the late 20th century were characterized by a post-colonial echo, in which the worst ideas from the west were promoted and then inflicted on countries in the global south by local elites with the encouragement of some western or European voices, and with the direct support of some international organizations.

Ideas such as communism, state-imposed atheism and coercive family planning all had their genesis in western Europe, and yet they were never fully implemented there, outside of a few fateful months in 1993 and 1994. Generally speaking, while avoided at home, these bad ideas have been imposed in various ways for much longer periods of time on much of the world's poor in Central and Eastern Europe, and in various parts of Asia, Africa, and Central and South America. This echo of colonialism, the use of the developing world to experiment with violent and coercive revolutionary policies, which were never really attempted at home, has led to untold suffering and loss of life.

Revolutionary ideas from the west attacked free enterprise, faith and family. The destruction of pre-existing markets, traditions and family autonomy, with an eye to so-called modernization, obviously did not lead to actual improvements in happiness or quality of life. These experiments were a grand and tragic failure. China's destructive Great Leap Forward, Cultural Revolution and one-child policy are examples of the horrific impacts of this post-colonial echo.

The so-called Great Leap Forward led to between 30 million and 45 million deaths. The Cultural Revolution intentionally turned families against each other in a horrific never-ending show trial of revolutionary purity. These events in China earned Mao the dubious distinction of being the most violent person of the 20th century, but the communism he imposed had its genesis in the west and not in China.

*The Address*

The one-child policy led to forced abortion on a massive scale, as well as large-scale infanticide of baby girls, murdered at the hands of desperate parents who preferred a male child. An estimated 100 million missing women were killed or aborted across Asia as a result of the gendered impacts of coercive family planning.

China's oppressive policies also hampered its development at a time when its neighbours were roaring ahead. Its effects will be enduring, as China deals with skewed sex ratios and a coming demographic winter. Some who work in international development want to talk about a demographic dividend associated with smaller families. However, we are now on the verge of the devastating social impacts that will follow an abrupt aging of the population, which is the result of the steep drop-off in population brought about through coercive family planning.

The one-child policy was not a crime that the government of China committed alone. The United Nations population fund, while claiming to eschew coercive family planning, gave China's government an award for this policy and funded the data collection system that facilitated it. The UN population fund has yet to recognize and apologize for its complicity in this crime.

Conservatives will champion a development policy that holds the UN and other multilateral institutions to account, leverages Canadian expertise and involvement, and promotes partnership with the global south. Rather than seeking to upend existing structures of private enterprise, faith and family, we believe in promoting partnerships that seek to help free enterprise, faith and family to flourish according to their proper nature and purpose. That is the true path to humane development.

We will restore a principled foreign policy that sides with free nations and freedom-seeking peoples against oppressive governments and coercive international institutions. We will oppose all neo-colonial coercive policies, which limit freedom and choice, and we will make the case for the power of free trade and free markets to fight poverty. This will be animated by the idea of solidarity as an individual and community virtue, and not as an excuse for coercive power.

We will support economic growth by seeking to deliver training and financing to the world's poorest entrepreneurs, giving them the capacity to build opportunity for themselves and their families. We will partner with willing nations to strengthen justice systems, fight human trafficking, protect collective security and promote the advancement of propluralism education.

Propluralism education is neither narrowly sectarian nor relativistic; rather, it celebrates the traditions and faith of one's own community as well as the rights and contributions of those with different beliefs. Supporting propluralism education is key to supporting the development of harmonious societies around the world. We will fight to restore Canada's historic role defending religious freedom and communal harmony.

Under Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canada invested more in international development than it does currently. We also gave more to our military, and we even got more votes at the UN. The current government's platitudes tell one story about Canada and the world, but the numbers tell a very different story. The Liberal Party

says it will spend more every year on international development, although they have not specified whether that means more in nominal terms, in real terms or as a percentage of gross national income, and currently its contributions are lower than they were under Stephen Harper.

The current government is spending larger and larger portions of our aid through multilateral organizations, instead of working with Canadian charities that engage Canadians directly in the delivery of vital assistance, which are often more efficient. This betrays a lack of confidence on the part of the government in Canada and in Canadian organizations.

Conservatives are building a different vision of how a strong international assistance policy can contribute to the advancement of our values. Conservatives believe that our approach to international development must be characterized by respect for and partnership with the global south, not by the imposition of failed revolutionary doctrines of collectivism.

I hope that 50 years from now Canada's international development budget will be zero, because the goal of international development is to put itself out of business and establish the conditions whereby nations no longer require the generosity of others in order to survive and thrive. Under the Liberals' economic policies, it is more likely that we will be a recipient of development assistance in 50 years, but I hope for a different path. I hope for a day when development assistance will no longer be necessary because reforms have taken place, education and financing have been made available, vestiges of authoritarian oppression have been dismantled, and free people have been able to prosper through their own ingenuity and with the support and help of strong families and communities.

● (1330)

Our strategic and thoughtful support for the right kind of international development today, tied to rigorous accountability and a focus on results, will help us move toward that desired future.

**Mr. Chris Bittle (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member talked a lot about the pandemic. We have been hearing from the Conservatives that, hindsight being 20/20, what we know now, and taking the measures that we now have, should be applied to what was going on in January, February and March in terms of masking, closing borders and airports.

If we could all go back in our time machines to February and March, I would like the hon. member's comments on how well the countries did that focused on border closures as a primary measure, like Italy and the United States, versus how well public health officials did in Canada.

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member said that hindsight is 20/20. Actually, he did not need hindsight. He could have just listened to what the Conservative opposition was saying precisely at that time, which was calling, for instance, for stronger border measures.

He talked about countries that did that, and mentioned Italy and the U.S. as examples. Italy and the U.S. are not examples of countries that effectively implemented those policies. He should be looking at South Korea. He should be looking at Taiwan. He should be looking at the Czech Republic. He should be looking at what New Zealand and Australia were doing. These countries understood the need to have effective border measures and screening, as well as early masking.

The science was in place. When the government was telling people not to wear masks because it would create a false sense of security for some, the reality was that people were deploying masking already. In the Czech Republic, South Korea and Taiwan it was working, and they still have lower death rates today.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I admire his ability to speak so quickly.

I hear him talk a lot about oil and gas, but I do not know why he is so outraged. If he bothered to read between the lines of the throne speech, he would clearly see that the government plans to keep subsidizing oil and gas companies.

I would like to hear him talk about clean energy. We have unique expertise in Matane, in the Lower St. Lawrence region. The wind energy company Marmen is being forced to lay off hundreds of employees due to a lack of projects in that field.

Does he not think it is time for the federal government to finally invest in the transition to clean energy and help keep jobs in the regions?

• (1335)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, I often speak quickly because I have a lot to say.

With respect to clean energy, I think it is important to recognize the need to include natural gas in that category, along with other types of energy that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[English]

On the issue of subsidies specifically, we often hear this charge of “subsidy, subsidy”, but we rarely hear a specific definition of what constitutes a subsidy. For instance, I am very supportive of things like accelerated capital cost allowance for manufacturing across the board: not just energy manufacturing, but other forms of manufacturing. Accelerated capital cost allowance is an incentive that encourages companies to make investments by allowing them

### *The Address*

to defer the taxes they pay, but I know that some of those on the anti-energy left are looking to count as a subsidy any kind of incentive program that encourages those kinds of investments.

Accelerated capital cost allowance is important in my riding for encouraging the development of new, cleaner technologies, including the development of polypropylene, for instance, and other alternatives to make transportation and energy development more effective. These are good incentives that are useful, not only in my region but in other parts of the country as well, and can stimulate manufacturing activity in every part of the country.

**Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are seeing global oil prices plummet right now. Possibly, and likely, so will peak oil. The oil sands, we know, is the highest-cost oil production in the world. We have seen BlackRock, HSBC, the Norway sovereign wealth fund and Shell all pulling their money out, as we are seeing a global climate emergency and a shift to clean energy.

Right now we have a lot of energy workers in Alberta who are looking for a “just transition” approach and need just transition, including Iron and Earth, a group that is fighting for climate solutions, clean energy and support of indigenous communities and indigenous self-determination.

Does the member not feel that it is a disservice to those energy workers to not be advocating, and calling on the government, to invest a record amount of money in clean energy? I know that in Alberta, as I have been there and seen the start of progress, there is an opportunity to do that right now in response to COVID and these low oil prices.

Does he not agree that it is a disservice for the Conservatives not to be fighting for those energy workers? Does he consider the workers who belong to Iron and Earth as the radical left?

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Mr. Speaker, clearly, we are hearing the rhetoric of “just transition” from the member across the way.

It is what I expect to hear from the NDP. Unfortunately, it is NDP thinking that we are seeing more and more of from the government, in the throne speech and elsewhere, which I am particularly concerned about.

To answer the member's question directly, I think the way we move forward, in terms of achieving our environmental objectives, is by helping to incentivize and support improvements in the development of our energy resources while recognizing the reality that energy will continue to be used. There are all kinds of incredible innovations happening in my riding and other ridings in terms of the energy sector.

The hon. member represents a riding in British Columbia. I suspect he flew here. I suspect he used election signs that were made from plastic. Certainly the NDP in my riding used plastic-based election signs. We have to use petroleum products. They are part of life. They are going to be part of our life for the foreseeable future.

*The Address*

The choice is simply do we produce here in Canada, getting those jobs here in Canada and finding ways to do it more cleanly, or do we push the jobs and economic opportunity out of our country to other places? That is the choice. The government, unfortunately, is undercutting our energy sector right now, and we need to—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate, the hon. member for Pickering—Uxbridge.

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Etobicoke Centre.

Today I rise to speak on the Speech from the Throne. I first want to acknowledge all of those who have lost their lives to COVID-19 and all of the families, parents, friends and communities that lost loved ones. For those who have recovered, like my good friend from Brampton West, I am so glad for them, but unfortunately so many families lost people to this virus.

It is precisely that loss and the seriousness of this virus that made the Speech from the Throne so important. We needed a reset. This is a crisis that generations have never seen before. Legislators need to be at the forefront, sorting out measures to ensure that Canadians are safe and healthy, and to ensure that post-COVID we will rebound to have a greater economy than we saw pre-COVID, with nearly a million new jobs created. That is precisely where we want to get back to. However, the health and safety of Canadians is paramount, and that is why the Speech from the Throne was so important in addressing a lot of these concerns.

In particular, the long-term care community in my home riding of Pickering—Uxbridge was hit hard. I think that, in Orchard Villa alone, there were 78 deaths. Nearly a third of the population in that long-term care home passed away. It was an extreme tragedy. In Uxbridge, Reachview Village lost 14 members of the community. These are our most vulnerable seniors, and my heart goes out to the families and staff members at the homes who are working hard every day to keep the community safe.

COVID-19 has demonstrated that there are gaps in long-term care homes, and I am extremely grateful to the Canadian Armed Forces members who went into Orchard Villa in my riding to provide help and support. Frankly, the report that they released was welcome news to many of the families. It was, in fact, just one week prior to that report being released that I was on a Zoom or Facebook call with family members who were describing the scenes in the long-term care home and what the residents were going through, but nobody was listening.

The families were frustrated because they could not go in to support their family members, and nobody was paying attention. Everybody was saying there were problems with PPE and with separating those who were infected from those who were not, that staff were going into wings that were COVID-free and then going into wings where people had COVID, and there was no reaction. When the Canadian Armed Forces released that report, those families were able to be heard. All of their concerns were now at the forefront, and we talked about them.

When the Speech from the Throne was delivered, my colleagues and I who worked on this file, and family members of residents in

particular, were thrilled to see the acknowledgement of the need for national standards for long-term care homes. These are desperately needed. They were probably needed pre-COVID, but COVID really highlighted some of the gaps that needed to be addressed. National standards are a way to ensure that a tragedy like this never happens again and that, no matter where one lives in this country, our most vulnerable seniors are going to have a standard of care.

The other thing in the Speech from the Throne, with regard to long-term care homes, was the acknowledgement and direction to change the Criminal Code to penalize any individual who neglects our seniors. We read some horrific stories in the Canadian Armed Forces report. In particular, in the home in my riding, we heard that PPE was under lock and key and critical tools were locked away in the basement. These might have prevented deaths had they been accessible to staff and those working hard for the community.

● (1340)

Therefore, that additional Criminal Code change would be incredibly important, moving forward, to hold those accountable who are essentially responsible for some of our most vulnerable Canadians. I think it was the Prime Minister who said that we as a country, we as a society, must really think about the fact that we had to send in soldiers to care for our seniors. That is something that I certainly have reflected on a lot. I hope everybody in this House and around the country thinks about it as we move forward with national standards.

The next area in the Speech from the Throne that I think was important and has resonated with many, certainly for me and my community, were the impacts on women during this crisis. It was predominantly women who took time off work to care for loved ones when they were sick. It was women who often took time off, when schools closed, to care for young children. It was interesting to see a lot of my friends who were trying to work from home with kids in the background. It certainly has proven the need for child care. Reliable child care across this country is incredibly important.

*The Address*

I come from the GTA outside of Toronto and child care is incredibly expensive if people can even find it. This acknowledgement of a national child care program is something that we absolutely needed pre-COVID, but COVID once again has highlighted the need for child care and the need to ensure that women are not adversely affected by the changes in the economy, because it is often women who are the caregivers. We still have so much work to be done in terms of equal pay and ensuring that women are integrated into the economy fairly, so any sort of setback is now just hindering our progress in terms of ensuring that women receive equal pay for equal work.

To address this issue, the other thing that was important was the action plan for women in the economy. We need to fully understand what the impacts would be, short term as well as long term, for ensuring that women get back into the economy as they were pre-COVID, and women should be into the economy even more. The statistic we had previously was that if women's participation in the workforce were at the same level as men's, it would mean an equivalent to something like 3% in GDP growth. That is the type of economic building we want in this country.

There was a lot in the Speech from the Throne, but another area that is particularly important is support for students. Students were adversely affected because the summer is often when they work to pay for their rent or their college or university. Students are among the people who did not have jobs and they still have to go back to school and still have student debt. Therefore, the supports that we will provide to students to ensure that they do not graduate with enormous debt and they do have jobs on the other side are going to be good, not only for students but also for the economy.

Another piece is our universal broadband fund. My riding is semi-rural, but urban. It is right next door to Toronto, and yet we do not have adequate broadband. This is something that, again, pre-COVID was an issue but during COVID when kids were home learning from school virtually or people were working from home, connectivity was a major issue and something that I am glad we are accelerating our commitments on.

I want to acknowledge that the wage subsidy as well as CERB really helped support my community. Businesses would have closed without those supports. I know that we are going to be there to continue to help Canadians as we move forward.

In addition, the best way to help the economy is by dealing with this health crisis. On the other side, I know Canadians know that Liberals on this side of the House are going to be there to support them. We are going to be there to make sure they are healthy and safe. We are going to be there to build our economy back to pre-COVID and better, because we believe that investing in Canadians is the best way to grow the economy.

• (1345)

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I agree that the deaths of seniors in our homes is a national tragedy. However, the Liberals' solution to this is that we are going to create some national standards that are going to take probably years and this area is in provincial jurisdiction.

Is the member aware that the Canadian Medical Association has done a report that looks at research on the differences between Ontario and B.C., what they did right and what they did wrong? It is about protective equipment. It is about infection control. It is about training. There was nothing in the Speech from the Throne that offers federal assistance to the provinces in a short-term way, even if it is just money, to do the things that are going to matter for the second wave. Great, we can talk about national standards or not, but they are not doing the things that are practical. The government is not doing the things that are going to make a difference as we head into the second wave.

• (1350)

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell:** Mr. Speaker, I find it hard to believe that \$16 billion to provinces and territories to deal with COVID is considered by the Conservatives as not practical.

In fact, we were there. We stepped up for communities, for people, provinces and municipalities when the Conservatives talked about not doing anything. They said to get out of the way and let businesses handle it.

I can tell the member that without these supports, businesses would have closed, they would not have been there to support their workers, and those workers would not have had the funds to put food on the table. Creating national standards is to ensure that, moving forward, every Canadian across this country can receive the level of care they deserve.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

I found it deplorable to hear her cast blame on already maligned systems that are making do with what they have.

There was some misinformation about the actions taken. It is not true that Quebec waited for the military's report before taking action. Quebec set up training and called on workers before the infamous report was released.

That said, China experienced its first wave back in October. We all saw the measures they took in November and December. Questions were being asked in the House at the end of January about what could be implemented at that time. We cannot turn back the clock, but we can avoid repeating past mistakes.

If this situation were to happen again, when and how should the government take preventive action?

I would like to remind members that Quebec's and the provinces' health budgets are still \$23 billion to \$51 billion short every year, and not temporarily.

*The Address**[English]*

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell:** Mr. Speaker, there was indeed no blame cast on provinces and territories. However, COVID proved that there are systemic issues in long-term care. If the Quebec government acted early, I think that is fantastic, and every province and territory needs to have taken this very seriously.

However, if we have national standards for building codes, would we not produce national standards for our most vulnerable seniors? If provinces and territories want to go further and beyond that, I hope they do, but we need to ensure that there is a level of care for the most vulnerable seniors across this country.

**Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I will pick up where the last two questions left, and that is with national standards for long-term care.

I totally agree that we need better national standards, but the trouble with national standards is that we already have provincial standards that are not being met in any province, and the reason for that is inadequate funding.

The NDP proposes to bring long-term care under the Canada Health Act so that we can provide that funding year to year so that we can pay care aides enough so that they will actually take the jobs, stay in them and give the care that will meet those national standards.

**Ms. Jennifer O'Connell:** Mr. Speaker, I tend to agree with my colleague, but in terms of creating national standards, we need to do this work, we need to hear from experts in establishing them how best to fund them, and we need accountability.

If we are going to provide additional funding for long-term care homes, which is a provincial jurisdiction, then I want to be assured that what happened in my community where one-third of the population in one home passed away that those funds are being utilized and PPE is no longer under lock and key.

● (1355)

**Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in response to the throne speech.

I would like to start by offering my condolences to the residents of my community who have lost loved ones and friends and, frankly, to the people across Canada who have lost loved ones and friends to COVID-19.

We are rightly focused on the path ahead, and how we are going to support Canadians. However, it is always important to remember the toll this pandemic has taken. By keeping that in mind, it will motivate us all the more to make sure we are doing the right things going forward.

I also want to thank a few other groups of folks, before I talk about the throne speech. In my community, and I know in communities across Canada, heroes have emerged. One of those groups of heroes is our health care workers, those doctors, nurses, technicians, personal support workers and others who have stepped up, worked on the front lines and who have taken those risks, especially in the early going, to serve Canadians. I want to thank them for their service.

I also want to thank a lot of our front-line essential workers. Members will remember that early on, in March, April and May, when much of the economy had to shut down, or at least people had to work from home, some folks still had to go to work. They went out there and they kept our economy going, supporting our quality of life. I want to thank them for that, especially those in my community, in Etobicoke Centre.

Last, I want to thank those in my community who stepped up to help others. A tremendous number of people in my community and in communities across this country are struggling. People in my community have stepped up, whether it is by volunteering at or donating to a food bank or delivering food to seniors or driving people to medical appointments or whatever the case may be. They have been there to help others, and I want to thank them for that. I have been really impressed with how our community and our country has come together.

Early in the pandemic, I imagine I faced what a lot of MPs faced, which was a tremendous number of phone calls and emails from constituents asking for help, asking for help to access health resources, asking for help because they wanted to weigh in on what government was doing, or asking for help because they were struggling, they had lost their jobs or their incomes had been cut or had declined significantly.

I got a particular phone call, one that was very memorable to me, from a constituent asking for help. Before she got into what her ask was, she asked me how I was doing. I shared with her the fact that we were receiving a tremendous number of calls and emails, and that people needed a lot of help. I said to her that I had run for office to help people, and then she cut me off. She said that I was certainly getting my opportunity.

I share that story because to me it underlines an important point for us that I think we should all remember today, that we are at a critical moment in time and that we all have an opportunity, especially those of us in elected office in positions of decision-making or responsibility, right now. We are at a critical time where Canadians need us and we have an opportunity to support them, and to make our country stronger in the years to come.

I hope that we seize this opportunity. It is on that note that I turn to the throne speech, because when I think about what we need to do, I think about supporting Canadians, I think about making sure that we protect them from this virus, and I think about building back better. The throne speech focuses on those things.

What I would like to do is just highlight a few of the items in the throne speech that I think are particularly important. First off, on protecting Canadians, there are a number of measures that have been taken, starting with controlling the epidemic by encouraging social distancing, travel restrictions, border closures, and tracing and quarantining of people who have tested positive. We have also increased health system capacity, made tremendous investments for the provinces so that they can boost their health system capacity and cope with the COVID-19 cases. We have been very active in investing significantly in treatments, specifically in vaccines.

We have done a tremendous number of things to make sure that we have contracted for vaccines, that the manufacturing capacity is in place, that we have contracts with the various folks who are researching these vaccines, so that when a vaccine is ready, Canadians will be able to access it.

There is also the \$19-billion safe restart agreement. It is interesting to hear the members of the opposition ask what the government has done to support provinces and their health care budgets in this difficult time. The \$19 billion seems awfully significant to me, and a lot of that money went to health care. It went for testing and contact tracing. There was \$2 billion for the safe return to class fund to make sure that when provinces opened their schools, they had our support in making sure those schools were opened safely, and that children and families were protected.

These are some of the things that have been done to protect Canadians from the virus from a health perspective.

• (1400)

**The Deputy Speaker:** We will now go to Statements by Members.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### FOOD SECURITY

**Ms. Julie Dzerowicz (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every day, one in eight Canadians struggles to put affordable, nutritious food on the table. During COVID-19, that number increased to one in seven.

To address this issue, our federal Liberal government took urgent action during the pandemic by introducing a \$100-million emergency fund, \$50 million for the surplus purchase fund and \$25 million to nutrition north Canada.

Community Food Centres Canada, located in my riding of Davenport, is dedicated to addressing food insecurity and its root causes and is doing vital work across the country. According to a new report it published, 81% of food insecure people say it takes a toll on their physical health, 79% say it impacts their mental health and 53% say it is a barrier to finding meaning in life.

Community Food Centres let me know how excited it was to hear a commitment in the throne speech to specifically address food insecurity in Canada. It is time to build a stronger, more equitable Canada. I look forward to working with all my colleagues in the House to implement our government's commitments in the Speech

### Statements by Members

from the Throne and to make sure all Canadians can have access to affordable, nutritious food.

\* \* \*

### JOCK OSLER

**Mr. Len Webber (Calgary Confederation, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this summer we said goodbye to a giant in the Calgary community: Jock Osler. Most first knew Jock as a reporter for the Calgary Herald and later as senior editor for the Financial Times, but he was also a public relations legend in the Alberta oil patch. He served as press secretary to former prime minister Joe Clark, and later, Brian Mulroney appointed him to our Canadian embassy in Washington, D.C.

While he lived in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Montreal and Washington, Jock proudly called Calgary home. He was a tireless volunteer, a dedicated supporter of the arts community, the voice of the Calgary Stampede grandstand show and a lifelong Calgary Stampeders football fan.

He and I corresponded numerous times on organ donation. He was so grateful for that life-saving kidney transplant in 2005, which extended his time with us for another 15 years. Jock loved his family more than anything and will be deeply missed by his wife Diana, his children and his many grandchildren.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### TWO BUSINESSES IN LAC-SAINT-JEAN

**Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on September 28, two businesses in my riding unexpectedly won four awards at the virtual Gala des Mercuriades. The Coopérative forestière de Petit Paris in Saint-Ludger-de-Milot was honoured in the workplace health and safety SME category, while Serres Toundra in Saint-Félicien scored a hat trick with three wins, including SME of the year.

I want to congratulate these two flagship companies of the Lac-Saint-Jean economy, both of which showcase local talent and expertise. I am very proud to share their success with you, Mr. Speaker, because these two companies are examples of resilience in the face of adversity, as well as proof that it is possible to develop our resources in a way that is both responsible and profitable, without the benefit of international capital, and that Quebec can successfully work toward food self-sufficiency.

Congratulations to the Coopérative forestière de Petit Paris.

Congratulations to Serres Toundra.

*Statements by Members*

**The Speaker:** Before we continue, I would like to remind everyone, especially the men, that in order to be recognized in the House, whether in person or virtually, male members must wear a jacket and tie.

I see this member is wearing a tie but no jacket. Since the hon. member was sharing good news, I did not interrupt him.

The hon. member for Laval—Les Îles.

\* \* \*

**CANADA POST**

**Mr. Fayçal El-Khoury (Laval—Les Îles, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all of Canada Post's employees from the bottom of my heart. From the beginning of the pandemic, they have demonstrated an exemplary determination to serve all Canadians across the country. They risked their lives and those of their families, and they continue to do so by moving around the country to ensure that we can all receive our parcels at home safely.

• (1405)

[*English*]

I would also like to thank Canada Post for taking the necessary measures to respect Health Canada guidelines and ensure the health and safety of their employees, which is an extremely important element in fighting the pandemic and allows them to perform their tasks in a very secure environment.

[*Translation*]

I commend them for their excellent work, their dedication, their co-operation and the assistance they have provided to all Canadians during these challenging times.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**BLACK ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**Mr. Ramesh Sangha (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the fourth foundation of the Speech from the Throne creates a more inclusive Canada for indigenous, racialized and Black communities. It is a great pragmatic step and in need at this hour.

My riding of Brampton Centre represents a significant proportion of Black business owners who have faced tremendous economic barriers to business success. During one of my interviews with Mr. Robert of FEVA Nigerian TV, I found a wave of optimism and elation for the first-ever Black entrepreneurship program, in which the government, along with other partners, invested \$221 million. This fantastic program will economically empower the Black community to bring lasting transformative changes, not only in my riding but across Canada.

\* \* \*

**RETIREMENT CONGRATULATIONS**

**Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to honour Pastor Ray Matheson, who is retiring after a lifetime of service to Jesus Christ.

Wherever there was a need or a want, Pastor Ray could be expected to act and make miracles happen. Ray would find beds for new Canadians, arrange food for the sick and the grieving and offer a spare bed in his own home for those who remained homeless. He also had a sixth sense for knowing people. People could expect a call at any hour of the day asking them to help a stranger out or what they were in need of. My own story is that on the night that my youngest daughter passed away two years ago, somehow Pastor Ray knew at midnight that something had happened. He gave me a call and asked whether I needed anything. Then, at 1 a.m. in the morning, he showed up at the hospital and stayed with us for hours until we were better.

Ray is like the Yellow Pages, Uber Eats and a chief warrant officer all rolled into one. I wish Ray and his wife Dee a very happy retirement. While his salary may be retired, we know that Ray remains the guardian angel of Calgary.

\* \* \*

**URBAN PLANNING**

**Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over the last few months, I have heard from the residents of Whitby about how they want to see bold action on addressing climate change as we move toward economic recovery. I want to take this opportunity to highlight and congratulate Whitby town staff for their Herculean efforts over many months to develop the Whitby green standard.

Whitby town council just last week voted unanimously to pass this standard, becoming the first town outside of the city of Toronto to implement such a standard, a standard that raises the bar on all new development in Whitby. We know that, nationwide, buildings account for 21% of our emissions, and in the GTHA, buildings make up over double that amount.

As our cities and towns continue to expand and grow, we need to ensure our buildings are built to 21st-century standards. There is so much we can do when we hold ourselves to the highest standards and work together. Whitby town council has shown leadership, and my hope is that communities across Canada will follow suit by putting sustainability at the centre of urban planning and development.

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**COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE**

**Mr. Pat Finnigan (Miramichi—Grand Lake, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the people of Miramichi—Grand Lake for their strength and support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Public health asked those who could stay at home to do so to minimize the spread of the virus, and I would like to thank everyone who did. I also want to thank the front-line workers who have kept us going through this pandemic.

[Translation]

I would like to thank grocery store employees, doctors and nurses, food processors, delivery people, first responders and all the other Canadians who have worked hard to help us get through this difficult period.

• (1410)

[English]

New Brunswick has come together and diligently followed guidelines in order to make our province one of the safest places to be in North America.

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#### LAKE SIMCOE CLEANUP FUND

**Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable. It has been 362 days, almost an entire year, since the Deputy Prime Minister announced the reinstatement of the Lake Simcoe cleanup fund here on the shores of Lake Simcoe, and we are still waiting. After years of Conservative investment, the Liberals cancelled the cleanup fund in 2017, putting Lake Simcoe at risk. Sadly, the Liberals' pledge to bring back the cleanup fund seems to be just another broken promise from a government that cannot deliver.

The cleanup is needed now, but it does not stop there. More needs to be done on the environment. Canadians are also looking for meaningful action on plastic waste. For too long our country has been sending away its garbage for other countries to deal with. All too often it ends up being disposed of improperly and eventually winds up back in our water, including lakes such as this.

It is time for action on Lake Simcoe and for all MPs to support my private member's bill, Bill C-204, to ban the export of plastic waste.

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#### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in 2002, I spoke at a press conference with former member of Parliament, Irwin Cotler, to denounce the abduction and unlawful detention of Dr. Wang Bingzhang by the Communist Party of China.

Dr. Wang is the founder of the overseas Chinese democracy movement. A former Ph.D. student of medicine at McGill, he was inspired by Canada's democratic values and dreamed of a China where they could flourish.

Dr. Wang has languished in solitary confinement for more than 18 years for his peaceful efforts at democratic reform, following a trial behind closed doors that lasted half a day, to set an example for others. At 72 years old, his physical and mental health are seriously deteriorating after a number of debilitating strokes.

I would like to highlight the work of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights and the Wallenberg Advocacy Group at the McGill faculty of law.

#### Statements by Members

Please, enough is enough. Along with members from all five federal parties, I put my voice forward in calling on the Communist Party of China to immediately release Dr. Wang and reunite him with his family in Canada.

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#### SUKKOT

**Ms. Nelly Shin (Port Moody—Coquitlam, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to join the Jewish community in my riding, across Canada and around the world in celebrating Sukkot.

Last Friday night, Canadian Jews marked the beginning of this joyous, eight-day festival. The festival commemorates the 40-year period during which the ancient Israelites wandered in the Sinai desert while living in temporary dwellings. Traditionally, during the festival, many families build temporary outdoor shelters, sukkahs, to inhabit during this important feast.

Sadly, the reality of anti-Semitism continues to threaten the peace and freedom of Jewish people. The Jewish community in Canada remains the most targeted group for hate crimes. We know from history that scapegoating and slanderous narratives against Jews incited a Holocaust that led to the murder of nearly six million Jews. Today and always, I express my solidarity with the Jewish people in standing against all acts of anti-Semitism.

On behalf of my Conservative caucus, I wish all Jewish Canadians celebrating Sukkot a *Chag Sameach*.

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#### INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Inter-Parliamentary Union is an international organization of national parliaments. One of its key initiatives is advancing gender parity among legislatures, so when Senator Salma Atallahjan, a strong Canadian woman, put her name forward to become the president of this organization, I cheered.

However, something curious happened. Part of this organization, the IPU, are trying to bully her, the only woman on the ballot, to withdraw her candidacy. As a female parliamentarian, I find it offensive that an international organization that purports to stand for women's participation in politics and that Canada sends a lot of tax dollars to support would entertain discussions to remove a female option from consideration.

Senator Atallahjan embodies a spirit of collaborative multilateralism that the world sorely needs right now. I call upon the Canadian government to publicly support her in her endeavour, to publicly denounce efforts to prevent a strong, Canadian woman from being on the ballot, and to remind the IPU how much Canada contributes to the organization.

### Oral Questions

• (1415)

#### HOUSING

**Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canada's housing crisis is rooted in the Liberals' cancellation of the national affordable housing program in 1993.

There are 230,000 Canadians who experience homelessness each year, and 1.7 million households live in substandard and unaffordable housing. Despite declaring housing a basic human right in 2017, the Prime Minister has failed to back it up with meaningful action. The Liberal plan only aims to build 150,000 units of affordable housing over 10 years, effectively saying that it is acceptable to leave close to 100,000 Canadians without homes. The housing strategy was a planned failure from the start. A rapid housing initiative of building 3,000 units is not enough when, in Vancouver alone, over 2,000 people are homeless.

Government failures have real consequences. People are living in encampments, like in Strathcona, and indigenous families are losing their children because they do not have safe, affordable housing.

No more recycling announcements. No more excuses. Canadians need real homes now.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, every year on October 4, vigils are held to commemorate many missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

In my riding, the seventh Sisters in Spirit Vigil was held virtually via the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre's Facebook page. The centre chose to turn to the arts to honour the memory of these women and girls. In particular, we commemorated Joyce Echaquan, the young indigenous woman who died last week under unacceptable circumstances.

The day's events included a book launch for *Elles se relèvent encore et encore* by Julie Cunningham and a screening of *Rustic Oracle*, a film directed by Sonia Bonspille Boileau, at the Cinéma Capitol in Val-d'Or.

For the sake of all the missing and murdered women, we need to move forward with solutions, such as immediately implementing the recommendations set out in the report from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### NATIONAL UNITY

**Mr. Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC):** Our country is at a crossroads, Mr. Speaker. We are going through a significant economic crisis, a health crisis due to the pandemic, but also a crisis of national unity. Something is not right when millions of Canadians feel they are not fairly represented in this place.

Is this the Prime Minister's fault? Not really; he just exploits it. This is an issue as deep as Confederation itself. I ask Canadians if they really think we are better off with fewer provinces in the country. Do they really think we are better off? The answer is unequivocally no.

This is a massive country. This is a beautiful country. This is a country made better because of its people. This is a country that is the envy of the world. This is a country worth fighting for, and I will always fight for Canada.

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#### ARTS AND CULTURE

**Mrs. Brenda Shanahan (Châteauguay—Lacolle, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today I stand to recognize the resilience, the generosity and the creative work of artists, artisans, technicians and cultural workers across Canada.

The COVID-19 pandemic has completely shaken the cultural world and yet our artists have continued to reinvent a universe that allows us to dream and that contributes to our well-being during this difficult time.

[Translation]

Organizations, artists and artisans in the riding of Châteauguay—Lacolle got creative to help keep members of the community entertained during the lockdown.

Take, for example, the Société du Musée du Grand Châteauguay, the Arts and Noise Festival, and the Coeur de Village cultural bistro in Saint-Isidore.

I want to congratulate painter and sculptor Louise Page from Sainte-Martine for being the first woman to win the Reynald Piché award, which was recently presented to her by the Beauharnois-Salaberry RCM's cultural council.

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## ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

#### PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday La Presse reported that less than 3% of the ventilators ordered by the government have been delivered. In the meantime, several local equipment makers are still waiting for certification. Vexos obtained a contract for 10,000 ventilators in May. It only just received its certification.

Why is the government dragging its feet during a pandemic?

• (1420)

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government is taking the pandemic very seriously. That is why we have been working day and night to procure the necessary supplies to combat the pandemic.

*Oral Questions*

When it comes to ventilators, I must thank all Canadians who have worked very hard to manufacture these ventilators here in Canada and in my riding.

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, she said “day and night”.

In May, the Prime Minister said it was important to prepare for the second wave. In May, the Minister of Industry announced that we would have tens of thousands of ventilators by fall. It is now fall and we have received only 3% of what was promised.

Why does the Liberal government always fail to keep its promises?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but that is not true.

The reality is that our government has procured a lot of ventilators both domestically and abroad. Now we have enough ventilators across the country to deal with the second wave. We will continue to procure ventilators, drugs and testing kits in order to be ready to help Canadians fight coronavirus.

[English]

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 3% of the ventilators the government promised have been delivered. That is a failure.

Last week, the Canadian Medical Association raised the alarm that health care workers were going to run short of gowns, masks, gloves and other PPE. The author of the SARS Commission report said that the government got it wrong in the first wave.

We know the government has been late on rapid tests. We know it has been slow and late on ventilators. Is the government going to come once again short for our nurses, our doctors, our PSWs as they prepare to help us in the second wave?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our nurses, our doctors, our personal support workers are not just preparing to help us, they are helping us. They are fighting the second wave right now. That is why I am so grateful to all the Canadians who have thrown themselves into the manufacture of ventilators, who have thrown themselves into procuring ventilators.

The reality is that we can be confident going into the second wave that we have the ventilators we need. When it comes to other forms of PPE, the reality is that we have been so busy purchasing it that additional warehouse space had to be found.

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**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago, the government laid out an agenda that failed to mention energy workers even once.

Last night, workers were informed that Come By Chance Refinery in Newfoundland and Labrador could be closing permanently, 500 families and communities in eastern Newfoundland and Labrador whose livelihoods are hanging by a thread because the government does not value their jobs.

Why is the government abandoning the families of Newfoundland and Labrador?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I take the jobs of energy workers across the country very personally and very seriously. That is why just two weeks ago our government provided \$320 million directly to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in order to support its work in supporting energy workers. That is not rhetoric. That is action to support the energy workers in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Come By Chance is just the latest in a long line of Liberal failures when it comes to energy workers.

On Friday, we learned that 2,000 Suncor workers were going to lose their jobs. In one week, almost 2,500 paycheques from Alberta to Newfoundland and Labrador could disappear in the energy sector. That is 2,500 workers who will have to look for work in a pandemic. That is 2,500 working families wondering how they will pay for groceries.

When is the government going to have a real plan for energy workers and their families?

• (1425)

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government absolutely understands the importance of the energy sector in providing high-paying jobs across the country and being truly an engine of our economy.

Let me disabuse the members opposite of the notion that somehow our government does not care for Alberta and Albertans in this crisis. During this pandemic, over one million Albertans have received the CERB. In a population of 4.3 million, that is nearly a quarter of Albertans. Over 102,000 Alberta businesses have received the CEBA. The wage subsidy has supported 5.6—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for La Prairie.

*Oral Questions*

[Translation]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, 73% of Canadians say they want the federal government to spend more on health, 81% of Quebeckers say they want more money for health, 100% of the members of the National Assembly say they want more money for health, and 100% of the provincial premiers say they want more money for health. However, for every \$100 in pandemic spending, the government has put only 15¢ into health. Provincial governments are waiting on \$28 billion, but the government has earmarked less than 2% of that for health.

Why is this government abandoning health in the midst of a pandemic?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we will never abandon health care, and we will never abandon Quebec or Quebeckers.

The fact is that Quebec has received over \$3 billion thanks to the safe restart agreement. In addition, two million Quebeckers have received the CERB. That is nearly one in four Quebeckers. Over 157,000 businesses have used the Canada emergency business account and the wage subsidy.

**Mr. Luc Thériault (Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, that is the real question.

Why do the Liberals oppose Quebec and all of the provinces? The public widely agrees that health transfers should be increased.

Why do the Liberals refuse to increase health transfers in the middle of the worst pandemic in a century?

Why are they ignoring the fact that the second wave is starting to fill up our emergency rooms?

Why?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree that the second wave has started and I agree that our country needs to work together to fight this pandemic. That is why we gave the provinces \$19 billion for a safe restart, another \$2 billion in support for a safe return to school, \$500 million at the beginning of the pandemic and, of course, \$40 billion every year for health care.

That is real support.

\* \* \*

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we know that ordinary Canadians and small businesses alike have faced major challenges during this pandemic. Meanwhile, the ultra-rich made record profits.

It should therefore not be up to ordinary Canadians to pay for the recovery. The ultra-rich must pay for it.

What will this government do to make sure the ultra-rich pay for the recovery?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as we said in the Speech from

the Throne, we are going to find additional ways to tax extreme wealth inequality, including by limiting the stock option deduction for wealthy individuals at large corporations, and addressing corporate tax avoidance by digital giants. We all need to pay our fair share, especially in times of crisis.

\* \* \*

[English]

**HEALTH**

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, speaking of profits, we have learned that private clinics are charging between \$50 to \$250 for private tests for COVID-19. This is the exact opposite of what our public health care system believes in, where everyone has access. We heard from a Toronto mother, Caroline McIsaac, who waited four hours for a test. She was asked whether private testing was a solution. She said no, of course not, that “all people should have equal access to testing”.

What will the Prime Minister say to Caroline to make sure we have a public health care system that works for everyone, not just for those who can pay for it?

• (1430)

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, that is a great question.

I would like to say to Caroline that I agree with her wholeheartedly. One of the great strengths and prides of Canada is that we have universal access to our health care system. Everyone is treated the same.

When it comes to testing, let me say how delighted I am that today Canada has approved its first antigen test, the Abbott Panbio. We have an advance purchase agreement for 20.5 million of these tests. That is in addition to the ID Now tests, which were announced last week.

**Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, many workers in the tourism industry, people who are servers, flight attendants, hotel cleaning staff and more, are worried about their jobs. When I talk to leaders in these industries, they say a widely made available rapid test could significantly reduce the mandatory quarantine period for travellers and help these workers keep their jobs while keeping our communities safe.

Countries around the world are already ahead of us in doing this. Why has the Prime Minister not done the same?

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member opposite that the more tools, including testing options, that we have as a country, the more options we have for employers and Canadians all across this country. That is why today's announcement about the Abbott Panbio COVID-19 antigen test is good news for employers exactly like the one the member opposite is talking about.

We look forward to ensuring that we continue to provide a variety of testing options to Canadians as they become available.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, only this minister would pat herself on the back for a failure to deliver tests, on the same day that Ontario has to send its samples to California for processing. It is disgusting, actually.

This year, many people will not be able to travel or will not be able to see their ailing family members because they cannot afford to take the quarantine. That is the reality for many people across this country, and rapid testing could be the solution.

Why has the Prime Minister not provided this tool as a way to augment quarantine requirements?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the House we all have to rise above personal attacks and focus on what matters most, which is being there for Canadians during their incredible time of need. That is why on this side of the House we remain focused on ensuring that the provinces, territories and, indeed, Canadians have the tools they need to fight this pandemic.

As the member opposite knows, we have been approving rapid tests. In fact, for a very long time we have had the GeneXpert test. We have 70 of those deployed in rural and remote communities across the country, including indigenous communities.

We are going to continue to work hard on this side of the House and stay focused on what Canadians need.

\* \* \*

**AIRLINE INDUSTRY**

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, on May 29, the Minister of Transport confirmed he is aware that it is his responsibility to help Canada's airlines survive the pandemic. "It is so essential for this country," he said, "and we expect and need an airline industry in this country." That was over five months ago, yet the minister and the government continue to ignore this essential industry, with rapid testing still not widely available.

I have a very simple question. Has the minister brought a plan for the airline industry to the Prime Minister, and, if so, will we hear about it soon in Parliament and will Canadians hear about it?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for bringing up a very important point. I would also like to remind her that in the throne speech we fully acknowledged the fact that we need to address some challenges that exist within the air sector. That is exactly what we are doing at the moment.

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the tests they are talking about today will not be in the hands of Canadians until the end of the year. The Liberals had months to do this, and they failed.

Right now there are people travelling abroad and entering Canada who have exemptions. Would it not be better if everybody had access to rapid testing? When will the Prime Minister provide Canadians with the ability to rapid test and see their loved ones again, especially for people who cannot afford to take 14 days of quarantine and need to see loved ones?

• (1435)

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite is forgetting the announcement we made just a few days ago about another rapid-test approach. That is in addition to the other two rapid tests we have approved over the last several months.

Testing is one component of maintaining and containing COVID-19 in our communities. In fact, we have been working with the provinces and territories on a suite of tools they need, including support for additional contact tracing and isolation housing and supports for Canadians who are travelling within the country.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**AIRLINE INDUSTRY**

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister made another one of his vague promises in his throne speech.

He said that the government would support the industries that have been the hardest hit in the tourism sector.

However, Canada's airline industry maintains that the Prime Minister's inaction regarding access to rapid tests is putting the industry on a trajectory of irreparable losses.

Did the Minister of Transport present a plan? Did the Prime Minister ignore it?

**Hon. Marc Garneau (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is pushing on an open door.

*Oral Questions*

We clearly indicated that we are working on a plan for the airline industry, which was hard hit. In fact, we mentioned it in the throne speech. We are working on this important issue so that Canadians can continue to travel using our country's airlines.

\* \* \*

[English]

**HEALTH**

**Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 14 days away from work in one place that might not be safe, away from family, away from children with shared custody and away from people who depend on someone for care does not work for most Canadians. This is a sacrifice Canadians are making right now because the Prime Minister has failed to deliver rapid tests. They are not coming anytime soon, and this is making travel a sacrifice that most Canadians cannot afford.

Christmas is coming. Why does the Prime Minister not have a plan to let people see their loved ones by using rapid testing to keep our communities safe?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the 14-day quarantine is an important tool to reduce transmissions in Canada, which I am sure the member opposite agrees is an important part of maintaining and containing COVID-19 in all of our communities. We work closely with the provinces and territories as we look at other countries and jurisdictions that have tried a variety of approaches to reduce the 14-day quarantine.

We will make sure that whatever we do to protect Canadians includes ensuring that they are safe from importations of COVID-19, and we will stop at nothing to ensure that we have turned over every stone.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in March, the Bloc Québécois demanded support for businesses' fixed costs. On April 11, the Bloc got the government to vote in favour of a motion to help with fixed costs. Six months on, we are still waiting.

Another lockdown began on October 1. More than 12,000 SMEs are in jeopardy. The very next day, Quebec announced assistance for fixed costs. Meanwhile, radio silence on Ottawa's end.

Six months have gone by. When will the Liberals take action?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question.

The Bloc member is well aware that we promised to help SMEs with fixed costs in the throne speech. That is absolutely necessary, and it is even more necessary now because of the second wave.

Our government agrees. This is an essential program. We are working with businesses and the provinces and territories to set up a program.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this has been essential for six months now.

Roughly 12,000 SMEs currently in red zones have been forced to shut down to combat COVID-19. Meanwhile, fixed costs continue to pile up, including rent, first and foremost.

The commercial rent assistance program is a disaster. Landlords refuse to apply, and tenants do not qualify because the criteria are so restrictive. Right now, the program is useless. When will the government finally adjust it?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, I agree with the Bloc member that the program does need to be adjusted to help SMEs. We are currently discussing the matter with the provinces, including Quebec.

I spoke with the Quebec finance minister about this very topic yesterday and I can assure the member that Canada will always be there for Quebec and for Quebecers. For instance, nearly one in four Quebecers have received the CERB.

\* \* \*

● (1440)

[English]

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, last week, the Alaska-Alberta Railway Development Corporation received the necessary American permit to move its project forward. This \$17-billion private-sector initiative is a true nation-building project that will connect the Yukon and the Northwest Territories with the rest of Canada, all while creating 28,000 jobs.

Could the government confirm that it supports this initiative to open up Canada's north?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are firmly committed to ensuring that sustainable projects get built in this country and that they are assessed in a timely, fair and rigorous way.

With respect to this specific project, we have not yet received an initial project description, but as with all projects, if and when we receive it, we will assess it.

**Mrs. Stephanie Kusie (Calgary Midnapore, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, we know the Prime Minister loves to kill projects in western Canada. The Alaska to Alberta railway project is a \$17-billion private-sector initiative that will connect western Canadian resources to international markets. However, the Prime Minister has already hinted that he will use his old friend, Bill C-69, to kill this project.

For the sake of the west, for the sake of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, for the sake of all Canadians, will the Prime Minister put aside his own selfish ideology and say yes to this project?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know how many other ways I can say it. We have not yet received an initial project description on this project. As soon as we do, we will certainly assess it in accordance with the processes that are in place.

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#### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Mr. Pat Kelly (Calgary Rocky Ridge, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Suncor announced 2,000 more layoffs in the energy industry. This industry supplies the world with ethical energy and creates the wealth underpinning our social programs. The workers have had enough: enough of the rhetoric that has sent jobs and investors fleeing to other countries, enough of job-killing laws like Bill C-69 and Bill C-48, and enough of the project cancellations.

When will the government admit that it is responsible for destroying thousands of jobs, dividing the country and enriching foreign energy suppliers?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me start by saying that we are all thinking about the workers at Suncor who are facing uncertainty and worrying about their jobs and their futures.

Across the globe, oil and gas producers are coping with two crises: a global pandemic and the aftershocks of a global price war. Companies in Canada, the U.S. and around the world are reacting. They are shifting operations. However, it is workers who are bearing the brunt of it.

In the face of these shifts in the oil sector, our government is working with workers and their communities. We will support them. We will continue to support them. Workers are at the heart of everything that we do.

**Mr. Greg McLean (Calgary Centre, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, 2,000 jobs lost at Suncor is devastating, and equally devastating is the non-answers we continue to get on these matters. This is five years of indifference from the government toward an oil and gas sector that has been the heart and soul of this country for decades.

We need the government. Our industry deserves to have the government actually commit to this. What we need is a regulatory system that works for Canadians. We need a taxation system that works for the industry. We need a commitment to deliver our products to market.

Where is the support that had been promised, not within hours or days or weeks, but over six months ago?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as Suncor said, the sad news of layoffs are a direct result of “the unprecedented drop in oil prices, the continued impact of the global pandemic and economic slowdown, as well as continued market volatility”. This is painful news for workers here in Canada and around the world, but there has hardly been rhetoric. We have taken unprecedented action to support oil and gas workers through the emergency wage subsidy, through our \$1.7-billion or-

#### Oral Questions

phan and inactive wells program and through our supports to upgrade facilities offshore.

We will keep it up. We will keep supporting our oil and gas workers.

\* \* \*

#### HEALTH

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians are experiencing the worst public health crisis in a century, one that will only end with an effective treatment or vaccine. Yet, without a public pharmacare system, they have no assurance that they will have universal access to these life-saving medications.

Yesterday, the NDP government in British Columbia announced that any COVID-19 vaccine will be provided at no cost to British Columbians. Will the Government of Canada ensure that all Canadians receive free vaccinations against COVID-19 once they are developed?

● (1445)

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is important that all Canadians have access to a vaccine when the vaccine is available. I will be working with my colleagues at the provincial and territorial level to ensure that vaccines are available to Canadians to help combat the pandemic.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, while the Liberal government's own COVID vaccine task force appears to be riddled with conflicts of interest from the pharmaceutical industry, Canadians continue to languish at the prospect of an even more severe second wave. In British Columbia, Premier John Horgan has committed to providing free vaccines once approved and available.

Instead of helping its friends in big pharma, will the Liberal government finally take the profits out of the pandemic and utilize publicly owned agencies, such as the National Research Council's facility in Montreal where it just put \$44 million, and immediately begin the development of a publicly available COVID-19 vaccine?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Navdeep Bains (Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear about investing and supporting made-in-Canada solutions. The member opposite highlights the important investment that we made at the NRC Royalmount facility. This will enable us to produce up to 24 million doses annually.

We will make sure that we continue to work with the provinces and territories and determine the best path forward to ensure Canadians have access to safe and effective vaccines when they are available.

**Mr. Majid Jowhari (Richmond Hill, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne, our government announced increasing access to mental health resources and a distinction-based mental health strategy. As the chair of the all-parliamentary mental health caucus, our priority is to explore funding models for community-based initiatives, while addressing the intersectionality of mental health wellness applications.

My question is for the Minister of Health. Could the minister kindly expand on the specific distinction of this funding and how will she ensure there is an intersectional approach to the funding, so marginalized communities like the indigenous community and Black community can be supported?

**Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his hard work on the issue of mental health.

We know that there are significant and unique challenges faced by Black Canadians and other racialized populations, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the mental health for Black Canadians initiative, we are investing \$10 million to support 16 community-based projects across Canada. However, within this fund, we are actively looking for projects related to addressing the unique needs of Black LGBTQI+ Canadians.

Through these projects we hope to help improve culturally focused mental health supports for Black Canadian communities throughout the pandemic and well into the recovery.

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**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**Hon. Tim Uppal (Edmonton Mill Woods, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly a month since Mohamed-Aslim Zafis was murdered in front of the IMO mosque in Toronto by an individual with apparent links to neo-Nazi groups.

Studies have shown that since the government took power, the number of white supremacist groups in Canada has increased by over 300%. A letter to the Prime Minister from dozens of multi-faith and anti-hate groups has called for much more action to combat white supremacist organizations in Canada.

When can these groups and all Canadians expect further actions from the government to prevent attacks like this from happening again?

**Hon. Bill Blair (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to advise the hon. member that I have had the opportunity to speak with the leadership at

IMO to express not only our condolences, but to discuss appropriate actions.

All Canadians have an expectation that their government will keep them safe. We are all concerned about growing right-wing extremism, hatred and purveyors of hatred and violence online in particular. That is why we have quadrupled the funding for security infrastructure programs and have reached out to the IMO to make sure they know that it is available. We have invested in research and support programs to—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Kildonan—St. Paul.

**Ms. Raquel Dancho (Kildonan—St. Paul, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the anti-racism action plan was announced to much fanfare over one year ago. Since then the minister has not provided a single community group with promised funding and Black, indigenous and other cultural groups are still waiting. Now dozens of anti-hate and multi-faith groups are calling on the Liberal government to deliver results in combatting hate groups that are putting Canadian lives at risk.

The Liberals are dragging their heels when it comes to getting funds to racialized community groups. This is another example of talking a good game, yet failing to deliver. What is the holdup?

• (1450)

**Hon. Bardish Chagger (Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to answer this question and to provide the House and all Canadians more information. It was our government that brought back an anti-racism strategy, the strategy that was actually forgotten about and let go by the previous government.

We recognize that diversity is our strength in Canada and we have to have a plan forward. Yes, we set up the anti-racism secretariat and we are grateful to have the leadership of Peter Flegel on that file. He is working with community groups from coast to coast to coast.

Since 2018, we have officially recognized the International Decade for People of African Descent. We have also provided \$25 million—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Chicoutimi—Le Fjord.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Mr. Richard Martel (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, as I already mentioned, U.S. protectionism continues to knock at the door. It makes no difference whether the Democrats or the Republicans are in power.

Today, we learned that a U.S. trade representative is calling for an investigation into whether their farmers are affected by imports of Canadian blueberries.

I would like to know if the government will protect our workers in the blueberry industry or leave them in the lurch.

[English]

**Hon. Mary Ng (Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our government will always stand up for Canadian producers, farmers and the agri-food industry.

Canada is concerned by the U.S. decision to launch a global safeguard investigation on fresh and frozen blueberries that could eventually lead to tariffs on imports from Canada. Canadian agricultural exports of fresh and frozen blueberries are not contributing and are not harming the U.S. market, and Canada expects that the U.S. will respect the CUSMA safeguard provisions. Canada will actively participate in the safeguard investigation.

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#### INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

**Mrs. Cathy McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, Sisters in Spirit vigils were held across Canada to honour murdered and missing indigenous women and girls. This is an ongoing and devastating tragedy.

It has been 16 months now and the government has been sitting on the results from the national inquiry's final report. The Native Women's Association gave it a resounding fail and stated that we did not have an action plan; we had a lack of an action plan.

When can we expect a plan or is this just another failure to deliver?

**Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, our hearts are with the survivors and the families of the missing and murdered indigenous women, girls, two-spirit and gender-diverse people.

In response to the first-ever national public inquiry on the ongoing national tragedy, our government is working with all provincial and territorial governments in order to ensure we have consultations with indigenous leaders, survivors and families to develop a national action plan that sets a clear road map to ensure indigenous women, girls, two-spirited and gender-diverse people are safe.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### SENIORS

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, this evening we will be voting against the throne speech because we see that seniors are unfortunately not included in the government's plans. It is negligent to not agree to increase old age security starting at age 65 to support their buying power when we want to get the economy going again. It is negligent to not give Quebec the health transfers needed to protect and care for seniors during the

second wave. The throne speech is supposed to reflect the government's vision for the future.

Does it believe that those who built Quebec no longer matter?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what is negligent is wanting to send Canadians to the polls. Last week, the Bloc leader said he had lost confidence in the government, that he wanted an election immediately or next spring at the latest. Meanwhile, cases are on the rise, people are losing their jobs, everyone is worried.

The government is focused on helping all Quebeckers and Canadians and the Bloc should do the same instead of thinking about an election.

**Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the member answered my question on seniors by talking about an election. This is nonsense. The real question is, why?

Why refuse to help Quebec's health system provide the best possible care to seniors by increasing transfers? Why deny seniors between the ages of 65 and 75 an old age security increase that they deserve? Why create two classes of seniors? Why refuse to commit to raising the pension by \$110 a month?

Their purchasing power has been steadily declining for 45 years. That is 45 years!

Right in the middle of a pandemic, which affects mostly those 65 and over, why is the government abandoning seniors and keeping them waiting until age 75?

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government is not abandoning seniors, quite the contrary. We have been there for them all along, through various programs, providing direct assistance and providing support to the Government of Quebec. If there is one group that has abandoned seniors, it is the Bloc Québécois.

Last week it swore that it would trigger an election this week, if the others agreed, or else in April, if it could be done—essentially as soon as possible.

We, on the other hand, want to help our seniors, help all Quebeckers and help all Canadians.

\* \* \*

● (1455)

[English]

#### NATURAL RESOURCES

**Hon. Erin O'Toole (Leader of the Opposition, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, earlier today, I asked the government what it was going to do for energy workers in Newfoundland and Labrador, and Alberta who were worried about losing their jobs. The Deputy Prime Minister responded with the number of people who had collected CERB in those provinces. That is not a plan. These Canadian workers want hope. They want a plan. They do not want more CERB.

*Oral Questions*

My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. I would like him to come off mute in this session and come off mute in the federal cabinet. I would like him to start standing up for workers in the Burin Peninsula, in Argentina, in Alberta and in Saskatchewan. They need a plan, not more talk.

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me repeat what I said when the Leader of the Opposition asked about our support for the energy workers of Newfoundland and Labrador. I pointed out that our government was very proud, thanks very much to the hard work of our Minister of Natural Resources, to have supported Newfoundland and Labrador with \$320 million. When it comes to Alberta and our energy sector, let me just point out that it was our government that bought TMX and our government will get it built.

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, I am really not sure why a minister from Ontario has to take questions from a minister from Newfoundland and Labrador about an industry in his own home province. Last week, the Minister of Natural Resources showed up in his home province with an announcement that included no details, no timeline and nothing that would support the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. Last night we learned the Come By Chance Refinery may soon be on its last legs, potentially devastating 500 families in eastern Newfoundland.

When is the Minister of Natural Resources going to realize that those 500 families need a jobs plan, not silence from him and not another IOU from Ottawa?

**Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every one of us is thinking about the workers in Come By Chance and the uncertainty that they are facing. As for the offshore, let me remind members opposite that this side continues to clean up the mess that the Conservatives made for Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore. I am proud of the fact that one of the things that we have done is to make sure that environmental assessments conducted here are down to 90 days, which allows us to compete with Norway and the U.K. That side of the House, when they were in government, increased it to 900 days through sheer neglect. We will not fall down on our job to look out for workers in Newfoundland and Labrador.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. Alain Rayes (Richmond—Arthabaska, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Canada has the highest unemployment rate and the highest per capita spending in the G7. Canada is the only major country in the world that does not have an economic recovery plan. Stores across the country are closing. Restaurant owners are at the end of their rope and businesses are having trouble finding workers. According to the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal, hundreds of businesses will not survive and tens of thousands of jobs are in jeopardy in Quebec.

When will the government table a real plan to manage these job losses in Quebec and across the country?

**Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, every day, Canada is working

hard to get the economy going and to keep Canadians across the country healthy.

With regard to the economic recovery, I would like to quote TD Economics, which said that Canada is ahead of the United States in the race to recover the jobs that were lost because of the pandemic. Canada has recovered approximately two-thirds of the lost jobs, compared to 55% in the United States, so clearly we are doing our job.

\* \* \*

● (1500)

[English]

**JUSTICE**

**Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, supporting women's rights is key to creating a better and more prosperous Canada for all Canadians. Sexual assault is a crime that more often affects women, and it is known that women are almost four times more likely to be sexually assaulted than men.

Could the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada please advise the House how Bill C-3 will ensure that sexual assault victims will have greater confidence in the criminal justice system?

**Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Don Valley East for her commitment to advancing women's rights. Our government is committed to addressing all issues of violence against women, including sexual violence. Bill C-3 will help ensure that newly appointed judges participate in continuing education in sexual assault law and social context, all while respecting the principle of judicial independence. Through this bill we will help enhance the confidence of survivors of sexual assault and the Canadian public more broadly in our criminal justice system. I look forward to working with all members of the House to get this bill through quickly.

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**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, three years, \$35 billion and zero projects completed is the legacy of the Liberal Infrastructure Bank, and another funding reannouncement by the Prime Minister is just as useless. What my constituents need is access to reliable broadband, improved trade corridors and support for municipal infrastructure priorities.

When will the Liberal government scrap that useless Infrastructure Bank and deliver real results for Canadians?

**Hon. Catherine McKenna (Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are delivering real results for Canadians. We have delivered on thousands of infrastructure projects across the country, creating good jobs for Canadians, moving forward on tackling climate change and building a more inclusive Canada.

In terms of the Infrastructure Bank's announcement last week, let me give some of the positive feedback. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities says that this growth plan "sends positive signals to rural communities across the country. We especially welcome significant financing opportunities to improve high speed Internet service nationwide." Clean Energy Canada says the plan will "help build a more competitive and resilient economy, creating jobs for Canadians while tackling climate change." I could go on—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Battlefords—Lloydminster.

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#### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Mrs. Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the digital divide between rural and urban Canada. Whether it is to work from home, to access government services or even to call Telehealth, the pandemic has only made Internet and cellular service more essential. However, my constituents living in rural Saskatchewan are being left behind. David, who lives in the Alcurve area just kilometres from Lloydminster, has no cell service.

The Liberals committed to connecting all Canadians. Why does David have to keep hearing promises but still has no cellular service?

**Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak directly to David and others like him through you.

There are a million households that have access to high-speed Internet because of our government's investment. Over five years, we were able to deliver three times more connectivity to communities compared with the Conservatives' plan. We are not done yet. We have more work to do and we will connect every household to this essential service.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Généreux (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, Cindy Asselin has three children. She lives in the sixth range of Sainte-Lucie-de-Beauregard in my riding. It is a lovely little village. Unfortunately, there is no high-speed Internet there and if the schools have to close again the school year could be compromised.

Following last week's warmed-over announcement regarding infrastructure, can the Prime Minister guarantee Ms. Asselin that high-speed Internet will be available in the sixth range of Sainte-Lucie-de-Beauregard in my riding? If so, when will that happen?

[*English*]

**Hon. Maryam Monsef (Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has been a particularly difficult time for parents who have kids in

#### Oral Questions

school. I want to let my colleague know that, as per our conversation, I am committed to working with him to connect his communities. The universal broadband fund will be opening soon.

Under our plan, the number of households in Quebec that have been connected in the last five years is five times greater than the number of households in Quebec that were connected under the Conservatives' plan. We have done that in half the time. We are not done yet and I look forward to his support.

\* \* \*

● (1505)

#### IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP

**Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this year has been hard for many of my constituents who have been separated from their loved ones due to this pandemic and border closures. Can the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship please update the House on how our government plans to reunite them while also maintaining the safety of Canadians because of COVID-19?

**Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for her hard work.

One of the ways in which we are going to overcome this pandemic is by keeping families together. That is why I announced that my department would process 49,000 family sponsorship applications before the end of this year. It was why we announced last Friday that we would expand family reunification in consistency with our restrictions at the border, and why we announced yesterday that the parent and grandparent program would see 40,000 families approved this year and next. Our government will continue to reunite families while keeping Canadians healthy and safe.

\* \* \*

#### CHILD CARE

**Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, women-led businesses are a key driver of our economy in London and across Canada, and women are more likely to own newer and smaller businesses. From a lack of universal child care, to failing small business supports like the commercial rent assistance program, for all their talk about feminism the Liberals are not actually getting anything done. The failed program is gone and Liberals are telling small business owners to wait longer. Women are tired of waiting for Liberals to keep their promises.

*The Address*

When will they deliver the help women who own small businesses need to keep their shops open?

**Hon. Ahmed Hussien (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are committed to setting up a national system of early learning and child care that emphasizes quality and affordability for parents. We recognize the gap between men's and women's participation in the labour market. That is why child care has been a priority for our government. We have created over 40,000 spaces since 2015, we are on track to invest an additional \$7.5 billion, and I want to remind the hon. member that the last time a Liberal government tried to set up a national, fully funded child care system, it was the NDP that joined the Conservative Party to sink it.

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## THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Paul Manly (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, GP):** Mr. Speaker, from the fracking wellhead, through processing and transportation, to end consumption, fracking gas releases fugitive methane emissions every step of the way. Methane is 80 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> as a greenhouse gas in the first 20 years after it is released. This means right now, during this short window, we have to avert catastrophic climate change. Real climate action cannot succeed while we allow fracking in this country.

Will the government ban fracking across Canada?

**Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we certainly agree that action needs to be taken in the very near term to address the catastrophic effects of climate change.

As the throne speech committed, we will be moving forward in the very near term with an enhanced climate plan that will enable Canada to exceed its 2030 targets. Certainly, methane is an important component of that. As the hon. member likely knows, we put in place regulations with respect to reducing methane emissions a couple of years ago, and those are moving forward. We certainly will need to look at other measures for methane emissions going forward.

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[Translation]

## JOYCE ECHAQUAN

**The Speaker:** There have been discussions among representatives of all the parties in the House, and I understand that there is unanimous consent to observe a moment of silence in memory of Joyce Echaquan.

[English]

Today we pause to mourn the tragic, senseless death of Joyce Echaquan.

[Translation]

Seven children have lost their mother.

[English]

May her family and friends take some comfort in the sorrow of all members, who wish to demonstrate their respect for Joyce Echaquan.

I now invite hon. members to rise.

[A moment of silence observed]

## SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

• (1510)

[English]

## RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

**Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just before question period, I was speaking about some of the elements of the throne speech that are particularly important and will be impactful to members of my community. I had spoken about how the throne speech proposes measures to protect Canadians and now I want to talk about how we are supporting Canadians through the pandemic.

We all know very well that countless people across Canada, and in my community of Etobicoke Centre, are suffering economically as a result of the pandemic. Many have lost their jobs and incomes have been impacted and declined. There are a number of measures that we have implemented and will be implementing through the throne speech going forward to address these challenges.

The first category is supporting workers and their families. That is why we created the CERB, so Canadians could continue to pay their bills. We are also transitioning to a redesigned EI program, one that allows people to qualify more easily, one that will allow self-employed workers to qualify. A number of other programs we are launching shortly will support Canadians who need help through this pandemic.

Through the throne speech, we are also taking measures to create jobs. There is a plan to create one million jobs and part of that is an extension of the wage subsidy to help those companies that continue to struggle to keep their workers or hire their workers back so those people continue to have incomes and jobs.

*The Address*

Supporting businesses is another important component of this is. To those businesses that employ folks in my riding and across Canada, an extension of the wage subsidy is a big component of that. Many businesses have taken advantage of the wage subsidy and of course we will continue to provide that through to next summer. We are also improving the business credit availability program because providing credit is one of the key mechanisms in which we support businesses trying to get through this difficult period.

I often hear from some of my constituents saying these are great programs, but what about their finances and fiscal sustainability of this plan. One of the things the throne speech speaks to is that very issue. Obviously, these are costly programs, but I believe it is true and many economists believe it is true, that we would be much worse off fiscally and economically if we had not taken the steps we are taking and if we do not take the steps proposed in the throne speech. It is incumbent upon those members across the aisle who continue to talk about fiscal sustainability, who continue to talk about our economy, if they are going to support that, to vote for—

**The Speaker:** I am just going to interrupt the hon. member for a moment to remind other hon. members that there is someone speaking in the House. I appreciate members want to practise social distancing and that is why they are far apart and raising their voices a bit. I am sure they do not realize they are interrupting the hon. member who is speaking.

The hon. member for Etobicoke Centre.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Mr. Speaker, in the throne speech, we also talk about continuing to fight climate change and put in place policy measures to do that. One element I am most excited about is our commitment to put in place legislation that sets legally binding targets to reach net zero by 2050. That is incredibly important for this generation and the next.

I also want to talk about seniors. There are a number of measures to support seniors in the throne speech. One is the commitment to increase the old age security once someone turns 75 and to boost the Canada pension plan survivor benefit to take action to allow seniors to stay in their homes longer.

I am most proud of the government's commitment to work with the provinces and territories to implement national standards for long-term care. In Etobicoke Centre, we are mourning the loss of 43 residents taken by COVID-19 at the Eatonville Care Centre. In May, we received a report from the Canadian Armed Forces that documented horrific conditions in a number of long-term care homes across Canada, across Ontario and Quebec, and one of those was the Eatonville Care Centre.

Four of my colleagues and I initially wrote to the Prime Minister and Minister of Health, and other colleagues have joined to support the call for national standards for long-term care. In the speech from the throne, the government has committed to that very thing.

I have been advocating for national standards because I believe this is a crisis that touches every province across Canada. National standards are the only way to ensure that the necessary resources are invested and reforms are made to make sure our seniors in long-term care get the care they deserve.

I started my remarks by talking about my constituent who called me and talked about how I had an opportunity as an elected official to make a difference for my constituents, particularly now in a moment of crisis. To me, that means protecting Canadians, supporting Canadians through this and building back our country even better in the years to come. To me, the Speech from the Throne articulates policies that will allow us to achieve those three goals. I hope opposition members support the Speech from the Throne so we can seize that opportunity together.

• (1515)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question relates to some of the member's comments on the throne speech.

He talked about numerous solutions introduced to transition from the CERB to a more flexible employment insurance system or to the three new economic recovery measures. He and I both know that these measures are temporary because they are only going to last a year.

Here is my question. Will the government commit here and now to completely overhauling our employment insurance system? It is Canadians' primary social safety net, and it failed during this crisis.

[*English*]

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Mr. Speaker, the government has committed to make changes to the EI system to adjust to the challenges that Canadians are facing to ensure that Canadians can pay their bills.

We have demonstrated our ability to be responsive to the needs of Canadians throughout this crisis, and I am confident that we will continue to do so. We see that already through some of the changes that have been proposed to the EI program and some of the other programs we have introduced to provide income support to Canadians who are struggling. They can count on this government to continue to be responsible and continue to support Canadians as they try to manage through this crisis and in the years beyond.

**Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend talked about seniors and what was in the throne speech, and how good the CPP survivorship pension would be. That is a good thing, but it does not cost the government a dime as that is not its money, it is the workers' and employers' money. I do not know why the Liberals want to take credit for that.

Also, people at 75 and over would be getting that raise. If a person at 68 years old is receiving the same amount of money on OAS and GIS as a person at 75, then can the member please explain to me why the person at 68 does not need that kind of bump up?

*The Address*

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the member has asked about the income supports for seniors.

As the member may recall in the prior government, this government took steps, along with the provinces, to increase the amount of CPP pensions going forward; increase the contributions and therefore increase the amount that seniors would receive. This is meant to impact all of those who are collecting CPP, including those who are 68 that the member alluded to. In addition, in the throne speech, the government has committed to increase the old age security once a senior turns 75 and boost the survivor benefits.

We are helping everybody. We have taken steps already, and we are taking more steps to help those who are 75 and over. This demonstrates the government's commitment to provide the income support to seniors that they need.

**Mr. Darrell Samson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I really appreciated how my colleague was able to link the many programs with the people in his riding. I also want to thank him for his leadership on the long-term care national standards, which are so important to help seniors right across this country.

I would like the member share how, throughout the pandemic, he was able to communicate some of the challenges that his community was facing with our government programs, and how those changes or tweaks and the many projects helped the people in his community.

• (1520)

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his very kind words. I would like to thank him for his support, along with all of the members on this side who have been so supportive on the advocacy for national standards for long-term care. This is truly a demonstration of a team effort.

On the question around how I was able to articulate those things, I think all of us on this side have had opportunities over the course of the summer to meet with ministers, the Prime Minister and other decision-makers to make sure that the concerns of our communities are heard. It is thanks to that kind of advocacy that—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** Resuming debate, the hon. member Lethbridge.

**Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC):** Madam Speaker, this is a time when Canadians are looking for stability, safety and comfort. Ultimately, they are looking for a plan. They deserve more than simply a show, which, unfortunately, is what they got. They are looking for answers, for a solid plan, for a way forward, for more than simply the empty pages that they received.

Instead of working collaboratively with opposition parties to come up with a solution, the Liberals made the decision to shut out those on the opposition side. In years past when there have been wars, it has been common that there would be a war cabinet. Individuals from different parties got together and were given the opportunity to contribute their thoughts and ideas to the policy that would bring us forward.

What resulted from the team Liberal approach were significant delays in the delivery of support for Canadians. Tens of thousands of Canadians got left behind.

Earlier in the year, provincial governments across the country pushed for temporary shutdowns so that plans could be created to get up and running in a very safe capacity. Parliament was also shut down, businesses were closed and people stayed home for long periods of time. Everyone assumed that it was simply a provisional pause that would allow us to put a plan in place to move forward within a framework of safety. Months have passed and still there is no economic recovery plan present. It begs the question: Why not?

On August 18, the Prime Minister had the Governor General prorogue Parliament. He justified this extreme action by saying that he would deliver a Speech from the Throne, and within it he said that he would deliver, “a “bold” agenda for [Canada's] economic recovery”.

After the shutdown, many speculated that this was not in fact going to be the case, that really he prorogued Parliament in order to bring a stop to the scandal with respect to \$912 million being rolled out the door and given to the WE Charity Foundation, a foundation that has benefited his friends and family. Those were the speculations; however, the content of the speech would prove that perhaps the speculations are in fact true.

There were three parliamentary committees that were starting to get to the bottom of the WE scandal. Documents that would bring light to the government's involvement were on their way to the committees, just when the Prime Minister pushed the big red stop button. Is it a coincidence? I think not.

A throne speech is an opportunity for the government to outline a vision and a plan, a way forward for the people of Canada. My colleagues and I were hoping the Prime Minister would use this as an opportunity for a reset. He would have prioritized the approval for rapid test kits, the acquisition of vaccines and support for local communities across this country. We were expecting a detailed economic recovery plan that would emphasize the importance of two economic engines that are necessary for our recovery as a nation: namely, energy and agriculture. We anticipated a message of unity that would cast a grand vision to bring the people of this great country together from coast to coast toward a common goal called “recovery”.

There was no leadership taken. There was no vision put forward. There certainly was no plan presented. It was an absolute disappointment. The throne speech instead was filled with fluff, visions of rainbows and the promise of unicorns. Rather than presenting a concrete plan, the speech contained platitudes and regurgitated, recycled promises from Liberal platforms of old. There was nothing new, only a repackaging of what had previously been stated. There was no leadership, no vision, no plan.

What we can expect now is millions and millions of dollars to go out the door. Do not get me wrong: Millions and millions and billions have already left. There was no plan to balance the budget, but the money continues to roll out. Where is all the money coming from? No one seems to know. Following the speech, in his address to the nation, the Prime Minister said, "I don't want you or your parent or your friend to take on debt that your government can better shoulder." The fact of the matter is there is no money tree and governments can only get their money from one source: taxation, Canadians.

The Prime Minister is spending the next generation's paycheques. He wants our children, our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren to pay for his spending long after he is gone. Programs will be cut. Essential services will be cut. Taxes will skyrocket.

● (1525)

Individual Canadians will be left on the hook. They will have to pay the bill for the Prime Minister's spending, which comes at a significant cost to Canadians, simply for his political gain.

Again, there is no plan, just a lot of money rolling out the door.

No other conclusion can be drawn, except that the Prime Minister prorogued Parliament to distract Canadians from his massive ethical breach within the WE scandal. He shut everything down to protect himself. Once again, the Prime Minister proved that he is more about protecting his image than serving the well-being of Canadians by presenting a concrete way forward.

He keeps saying that we need to build back better. What he really means is that he is taking his time to choose which sectors he believes are worthy of resurrection and which deserve to die. He is picking winners and losers based on his ideological agenda. Those in the west are entirely shut out. It is shameful.

The Prime Minister has turned a blind eye to energy and agriculture, never mind that the need for energy grows day by day, or the fact that food is essential to life. These two industries do not make the cut when it comes to the current Prime Minister and his political agenda, so they just get left out in the cold.

The worst thing about having an activist prime minister is that he rarely focuses on the things that are good for everyone, that are good for the whole and that would unify this country. Instead, sub-groups, pet projects and ideological agendas are what take the cake. They reign supreme, while entire parts of the country and key responsibilities of the government are shelved. They are completely ignored.

The Prime Minister often speaks about clean growth and a green future, but what he fails to mention is that Canada's oil and gas industry has some of the highest environmental regulatory schemes of anywhere in the world. It has leveraged technology and Canadian ingenuity to continuously reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We are leading in carbon capture and storage technology worldwide. By punishing Canada's energy sector, the Prime Minister is indirectly boosting production in other countries, such as Saudi Arabia, where human rights atrocities are common and where environmental protections do not exist.

### *The Address*

The Prime Minister is standing for that type of energy development, instead of basing it right here at home, and that is wrong. A responsible government would insist on developing energy ethically. A responsible government would insist on taking care of the environment, and we can do that right here in Canada.

Here are the facts. Millions of Canadians are still unemployed and eager to return to work, but instead of showing leadership and presenting Canadians a clear path forward through the pandemic, the current government continues to let Canadians flounder. There was a time, not so long ago, when countries around the world were looking to Canada to help them navigate the 2008 recession. They were looking to us for leadership, but now we are at the bottom of the G7, and certainly not being looked to as an example.

What we have witnessed over the last several months is akin to a play where actors are delivering rehearsed lines to an audience that has been forced to watch and forced to pay. Trained actors give grand performances on a large stage, trying their best to tickle the ears of their audience members as they offer dramatic monologues in hopes of eliciting applause. As the evening show comes to an end and the curtain is drawn, the audience members leave with a massive bill in hand. Some feel wowed. Some are disappointed, and others feel utterly exploited. This show was not as advertised. Meanwhile, the actors gather backstage, patting one another on the back and going out for beers. They are excited to come back tomorrow and take centre stage once again. Meanwhile, the audience members return home, fighting for their very existence.

Canadians are full of ingenuity, hope and a vision for the future. They have the ability to help bring this country back. They simply need a prime minister who will empower them to do so. When will the Prime Minister recognize that leadership of a country is more than just a show?

● (1530)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, there is a great deal in the throne speech that clearly shows a vision and the way in which the government has and will continue to work to fight COVID-19, along with re-establishing and supporting Canadians in all regions of the country.

My question for the member is in relation to when she spoke about the need for support and working together. Would the member reflect on the safe restart agreement? It was achieved by the federal government working with provinces and territories, and it is worth approximately \$19 billion. This demonstrates just how, and to what degree, the country is coming together during this pandemic.

*The Address*

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Madam Speaker, this is the problem. This is Liberal logic 101. The Liberal government thinks that if it continues to cut the cheques, continues to put money out the door and continues to throw dollar bills at it, then it cannot be accused of doing anything wrong and that it has somehow acted in the best interests of this country.

Since when is success based on how many dollars roll out the door? Would it not be better to measure success based on what is accomplished? Sure, the Liberal government can spend \$19 billion, but what is it accomplishing?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech.

I agree with several things she said, including the part about spending. We have indeed reached the point where we must carefully consider every expense, and that bears repeating. Some kinds of spending can be more productive than others.

Unlike the hands-off approach to tax havens and taxing web giants, some spending is justifiable, such as spending to help our seniors more. The Bloc Québécois thinks the government should increase pensions permanently by \$110 per month. These people do not have much income. That money would be reinvested in society. These people need that money so they can improve their quality of life.

I would like to know my colleague's and her party's thoughts on that.

[*English*]

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Madam Speaker, certainly two groups within Canada that were very much left out by the Liberals' plan were our seniors, who live on a fixed income and find it difficult to make ends meet during this time, and those who live with a disability, who also live on very tight budgets, often with a fixed income of sorts that is provided to them through supports.

It is a shame. The government has had months to roll out a benefit with regard to people who live with a disability, and it still has not.

My question to the Liberals is this: Why? Why is there a holdup? Why the lack of care for people who live day in and day out with a disability? Why are they not being prioritized in this country?

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, one thing in the throne speech was the Liberal's plan to deal with firearms in this country, which is not at all popular where I am from.

Would the member have any comments about the Liberal firearms plan? What did her constituents have to say about it?

• (1535)

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Madam Speaker, when it comes to firearms regulations within this country and what the current government has done, we again see that common sense is lacking.

We see the Prime Minister putting forward a plan that is simply about putting on a show. He wants to tell Canadians, in particular

moms and dads and the individuals who are concerned about the safety and well-being of their communities and their children, that they are safe, they are okay, and he is making provisions for them. It is a noble goal. Governments should absolutely be concerned about the safety and security of their citizens.

However, here is the problem. To do that, the Prime Minister is going after the women and men who lawfully own their firearms, who lawfully use their firearms, and who have gone through the necessary training and background checks in order to possess the licence to acquire and use their firearm and ammunition.

The Liberals are going to go after those individuals while turning a blind eye to the gang-related activity that is taking place in downtown Toronto and Vancouver, and ignoring the illegal firearms that are coming—

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier.

**Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be back in the House.

Once again, this is proof that what we said in the spring is feasible. It is realistic to sit in a Parliament that is adapted to COVID-19 conditions. Of course, we need to follow public health guidelines. Once again, the Conservatives were right.

In my riding, much like in Canada's 337 other ridings, things got turned upside down. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier for their solidarity and resilience. Canada responded to this unique, special situation with an outpouring of mutual support. We are writing the manual as we go. As the Premier of Quebec so aptly put it, we are building the plane in flight.

The second session of the 43rd Parliament will be nothing like other sessions. We are in a crisis, and it is important to say that. On March 13, Parliament was prorogued. I think it was to be expected. We have adapted. Faced with the unknown, we reacted. In my opinion, some good things were done.

Parliament reopened two weeks ago. However, the Prime Minister of Canada had decided to prorogue Parliament when Canada was in the midst of a crisis. This meant that the administrative process and committee meetings, among other things, were on hold. Furthermore, parliamentarians' rights were curtailed.

I remind members that the Prime Minister decided to prorogue Parliament six weeks ago to get the Liberals out of a jam. The government served its own interests instead of serving the interests of Canadians. This summer, we were talking about WE Charity. The Prime Minister's wife had received money from WE Charity. It was public money. Recently, the Liberals stated that we cannot do indirectly what we cannot do directly.

The Prime Minister's wife received money, the Prime Minister's brother received money and the Prime Minister's mother received money. Nearly \$300,000 made its way into his family's pockets. That is unacceptable. This all happened just before Parliament was prorogued. That organization paid for trips taken by the former finance minister. He has since stepped down. His daughters were part of or associated with WE Charity.

Rumour has it that WE Charity helped draft the framework to ensure that it would be able to participate in the government tendering process. That is just a rumour, but where there is smoke, there is fire. WE Charity was awarded a nearly \$1-billion contract without any competition at all. On top of that, they forgot to include rules for francophones in Quebec and across Canada. They were forced to subcontract to a bilingual company, one that was able to serve francophones but could not bid on the whole project. That was the situation.

Remember, this is a time of crisis. Today, Quebec reported the highest number of new cases since the pandemic began. More than 1,360 cases were announced. This is serious. We need to act.

• (1540)

Canadian workers are desperate to work. Support organizations that help people in need are ready on the ground. I met with them in Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier. We need to help people and businesses get through this unique and unforeseen situation.

I must admit that some measures made sense. Some of the measures brought in by the government were logical. A responsible government takes that kind of action. It helps people and businesses. Some programs that were brought in were good. I am not afraid to say it.

However, programs must evolve. The problem with this government is that it was unable and unwilling to advance and improve the programs. I am thinking about the CERB and the CESB, which disincentivized work. As the member for Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, I get up every morning to make sure that we have a good society that values work. That is the future and potential of a society. We have to value work and hard-working people. We cannot lower our standards.

I would remind hon. members that we are in a crisis and that the Prime Minister decided to shut down Parliament. When Parliament resumed, we were treated to a Speech from the Throne.

Since the government had six weeks to prepare it, I was anticipating a unique Speech from the Throne for a unique situation. I was expecting the Speech from the Throne to announce immediate measures for finding solutions to help workers, businesses, seniors, and persons with disabilities in our country. There is nothing like that, nothing concrete. It announced that money had been given to the provinces for school re-entry. That had already been announced two weeks prior.

I was expecting to hear about a test deployment plan. Testing is a problem right now. People do not know whether or not they have COVID-19, and what is more, they cannot get a test. The Prime Minister and his government are supposedly in the process of ap-

### *The Address*

proving tests that will arrive next week, from what I hear. The tests will arrive in Canada next week, but when will they be distributed?

I was expecting to see a clear plan in the throne speech for rolling out testing. The Prime Minister's friend, the Governor General, was given this pre-election platform to read. Then, since this is a serious crisis, the Prime Minister asked the national networks for air time to address Canadians and deliver a clear public service announcement. I will call it that since I cannot remember the right term. Unfortunately, I learned nothing from it.

I watched the Prime Minister provoke the provinces, his allies, in a time of crisis. He looked into the camera and said that things needed to change and were going to change for long-term care homes and seniors. What has changed since? Nothing. It was all lip service, empty words.

I was expecting to see a plan for economic recovery. France, Germany and South Korea have presented practical plans. I want to be proud to be Canadian. I want to be a leader. I want to emerge from this crisis with my head held high. Yes, it is a crisis, and yes, we need to help people, but we need to find a way through this crisis as quickly as possible. When he was facing an economic crisis, Prime Minister Harper implemented measures to ensure that we would be the first to emerge from it. I am proud of this fact.

I look forward to my colleagues' questions. I expected much more from the Speech from the Throne.

Members will have understood from my speech that I will probably be voting no this evening.

• (1545)

[English]

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, since day one this government has been working with Canadians, different levels of governments and non-profit organizations, understanding and appreciating the difficult times this pandemic is putting all of us through.

When I look over the last six to eight months, I have seen a great deal of co-operation from the individual to the group to different levels of government. We can see that with the restart program. The federal government has worked with the provinces to ensure the interests of Canadians are being served in all regions of our country. The throne speech provides very strong and clear action and a vision going forward to deal with the pandemic and minimize the negative impact to the economy.

Has the member actually read through the throne speech? If he has read it, he may want to reconsider some of his previous statements.

[Translation]

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Madam Speaker, before I answer my colleague, the term I was looking for was "address to the nation", and it was my colleague from Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup who helped me think of it.

*The Address*

Yes, I did read through the Speech from the Throne, and yes, I did watch the address to the nation. My Liberal colleague says that his government collaborated with the provinces and territories. Please excuse me, but I will ask him the question: Did he read the Speech from the Throne? Does collaboration mean interfering in provincial and territorial jurisdictions, talking about a pharmacare program, professional training and a day care program?

Furthermore, in his address to the nation and throne speech, the Prime Minister provoked the provinces by saying that things must change and that he would put things in place to protect seniors in long-term care. What has he done since then? We are in a crisis right now.

That is my answer to my esteemed colleague.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, at the end of his speech, my colleague brought up the 2008-09 economic recovery. Don Drummond, a former TD Bank economist and a professor at Queen's University, said that the measures were drafted quickly and that the country derived no long-term benefit from that recovery.

In light of this assessment, I would like to know if my colleague has suggestions for ensuring that the economic recovery has long-term benefits this time.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Madam Speaker, we are in the midst of a crisis and we need to respond quickly. To do that, we need real answers.

Even if some people are saying it had no impact, at that time, we were the first country in the G20 to get our heads above water. Now, I do not understand what my colleague is saying because, when we left office and the Liberals took power, we left them a country with no deficit. There were debt arrears, but we balanced the budget in 2015. Why is she saying that there were no long-term benefits?

It is very difficult to turn an economy around. When the Minister of Canadian Heritage came out of the cabinet retreat just before the House resumed sitting, I was concerned to hear him say that it would take another three or four months before the Liberals had an economic recovery plan but that he was not going to lose any sleep over it. That is the issue, right there.

• (1550)

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am very surprised at my Conservative colleague's speech. He seems to want to dismiss proposals that would actually help people, such as the new social and pharmacare programs.

Like me, he is a member from Quebec. I would therefore like him to answer the CSN, the Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec, the Centrale des syndicats du Québec and the Union des consommateurs who are all calling for a universal public pharmacare program.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Madam Speaker, my colleague from Quebec needs to understand that pharmacare is a provincial responsibility and that it is up to the provinces to work on it. The federal government will probably contribute financially, and there will be compensation for Quebec.

Sadly, whenever I talk to NDP members, I feel disappointed that they have sold their souls to the Liberals.

[English]

**Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am thankful for this opportunity to reply to the Speech from the Throne.

I will be splitting my time with my good friend from Humber River—Black Creek.

Like other members, I have been out and about with constituents and others. The general pattern of the conversation is to lament the progress of this pandemic and then the conversation tends to move toward how we will pay for this. The programs the government has put in place are generally well received, very welcome and are life rests to people in real desperation. It is quite right to say that the government has made its balance sheet available to Canadian citizens. Nevertheless, there will be a day of reckoning.

I will focus a bit on the necessity of fiscal anchors, but before I do, I want to point to the central truth of the Speech from the Throne, and that is that we need to do all we can to restore the nation's health. This is the pre-eminent priority of the Government of Canada and should be the pre-eminent priority of the Parliament of Canada. Without the restoration of the nation's health, there simply will not be any restoration of the nation's wealth. The saying that the first wealth is health has never been more true than it is today.

In 1993, The New York Times nominated Canada as an honorary member of the third world. Our debt and deficits had risen to unsustainable levels, vulnerable to inflation, runs on the dollar and other economic shocks. In 1997 through to 2006, the Chrétien and Martin governments paid down the national debt by something in the order of \$100 billion, taking the debt-to-GDP ratio from north of 65% to somewhere in the order of 25%. Fiscal discipline and a robust economy allowed Canada to exit its honorary status as a third world nation and become the envy of the G7, the G20 and other OECD economies. We have been living on that legacy ever since.

The emergence of COVID-19 has driven our debt-to-GDP ratio much higher and it is now in the range of 49%. Recently the Parliamentary Budget Office issued a fiscal update. It has made three sobering assumptions: first, that there will be no widely available vaccine for the next 12 to 18 months; second, that current response measures will be withdrawn on schedule; and third, that the Bank of Canada will maintain a prime rate of 0.25% through to 2023 and further maintain its program of quantitative easing.

Between December 2019 and June 2020, Canada's real GDP collapsed by 13.4%, and the PBO does not expect it to recover to the December 2019 levels until March 2022. As the GDP goes, so also go the revenues of the government.

I appreciate the PBO's candour and recognize that all projections, whether they are from the Department of Finance or the PBO, are subject to some very significant caveats.

*The Address*

Canada is a trading nation. It is both a strength and a vulnerability. Our most significant trading partner has been in turmoil for the last four years. We might all hope that November 3 might bring a more stable and predictable relationship, but we cannot count on it.

• (1555)

Our number two trading partner, China, seems to be determined to turn Canada into a vassal state, kidnapping Canadian citizens, making arbitrary trade decisions, practising a hectoring diplomacy and introducing mass surveillance, all of which make the Chinese Communist Party an unreliable partner. The pandemic has woefully exposed our dependence on any supply chain that runs through China. In addition, our third-largest trading partner seems to be consumed yet again by Brexit discussions.

In this gloomy context of unreliable trading partners, an unpredictable virus and unsustainable spending, what is a finance minister to do? Ultimately, the finance minister is the Dr. No of cabinet. However, it is helpful when saying no to attach the no to a stated rationale.

I, for one, would like to see a joint statement from the Department of Finance and the Parliamentary Budget Office giving their best projections on the GDP of the nation. In addition, I would like to see some effort to reconcile any differences. It would be in the national interest to have a common understanding of our fiscal and economic picture.

Second, I would like to see a fiscal anchor or series of fiscal anchors. If there is no fiscal anchor, the ship of state will inevitably go in dizzying circles. There are plenty of anchors to choose from. A stable debt-to-GDP ratio has the advantage of being widely accepted and easily understandable. The disadvantage is in the short run: It will deteriorate very quickly, as both the numerator and the denominator are going in opposite directions.

Another fiscal anchor is a balanced budget. At this point it is an unrealistic fiscal anchor, as implicitly acknowledged by my friend, the Leader of the Opposition, who recognized that balanced budgets may be more than 10 years away. By the way, I was pleased to see him in the House and look forward to his being Her Majesty's leader of the official opposition for many years to come.

Another fiscal anchor is inflation. Some say we should let inflation be the only anchor, or otherwise simply let programs expand. Still others propose a cap on spending. The disadvantage of a cap on spending is that it is entirely arbitrary and lacks flexibility.

David Dodge, the former deputy minister and former governor of the Bank of Canada, suggests a fiscal anchor tied to the cost of the national debt. He suggests that the cost of servicing the national debt should not exceed 10% of government revenues on an annual basis, and that, in addition, we should eventually reduce annual deficits to no more than 1% of GDP. Mr. Dodge also wants all government investments, all programs, tied to an increase in productivity. Canada has for quite a number of years now been a laggard in productivity.

My purpose here is to urge the government to pick a fiscal anchor or anchors to recognize that the Government of Canada is not the economy of Canada. At some point Dr. No has to say no, be-

cause to say otherwise would be to cut the ship of state from "wise and prudent management".

Canada is not like the U.S. It can do wild and crazy fiscal things and get away with it because it is the world's currency. The Canadian dollar is a small currency in a very large pool. If either inflation or a run on the dollar occur, all the presumptions of cheap money are out the window. At this point we do have cheap money. Let us hope that it continues, because a number of the assumptions are based upon this.

With that, I hope the government will commit to fiscal anchors and we can have a realistic conversation about the program mix.

• (1600)

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for a shockingly sensible speech, a speech I would not have expected to hear from any member of the government caucus.

He made a lot of very good points. He quite rightly gave credit to the Chrétien and Martin government for adopting balanced budgets and reducing our debt. He quite rightly pointed out that in the early 1990s this country literally ran out of money when finance officials went to lending markets and could not find a single person on earth willing to lend a dollar to the Government of Canada for fear it could not pay the money back. At that time, our debt-to-GDP ratio was 66.6%. A half-year ago, it was 30%. In other words, we had about a 36% buffer of space between where we were and where we could expect to go bankrupt.

Today, it is at 50% of GDP. In other words, the government has more than eliminated half of the buffer that existed between where we were and where we go off the cliff. That means the trajectory we are on is not sustainable. The problem with cliffs is that while one approaches them gradually, one falls off them suddenly, and once off the cliff, it is too late.

Does the hon. member agree with Her Majesty's loyal opposition that a firm and clear fiscal anchor is necessary and necessary now?

**Hon. John McKay:** Madam Speaker, one always has a degree of trepidation when one is being complimented by the member for Carleton. However, his numbers are accurate, and I was trying to make the case that we need to articulate a fiscal anchor or anchors. Without fiscal anchors, we will simply pile up debt.

We have seen this movie before. When the Chrétien government took over in 1993, we were in an unsustainable position. We need to get back to some position whereby we can sustain the necessary programs.

*The Address*

The government rightly put the government's balance sheet in the service of desperate Canadians. However, in the words of the great philosopher Wayne Gretzky, we need to know where the puck's going, not where the puck is.

• (1605)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, our Conservative colleague raised a rather important point about spending levels and the need to start considering the repercussions of that spending.

In his speech, our Liberal colleague pointed out that the government was helping Canadians. However, one thing that Bloc members find particularly disturbing is that the throne speech created two classes of seniors because it is not increasing pensions starting at age 65.

I would like to know if the member has been putting pressure on his party to change that. How does he feel?

How can he justify this unacceptable position?

That is one example of smart spending. People need that money. They will spend it to improve their quality of life, and that will keep our system going. That is how the government should be spending.

[*English*]

**Hon. John McKay:** Madam Speaker, I agree with the general proposition of trying to put money in the hands of the people who will stimulate the economy the most. Certainly, whether it is seniors or poorer people with families, it is probably the best spending the government can do.

My own riding of Scarborough—Guildwood is the number one recipient of the Canada child benefit. All that money goes directly to food, clothing and transportation, and goes directly into the local economy. I am in favour of any program that generates funding to go directly into the hands of poorer Canadians.

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is great to see you again in the chair.

It was very interesting to follow my colleague. He pointed out some of the finance challenges the country is going to face. I want to talk about my constituents and the people of Canada who are benefiting as a result of those investments.

As members have heard, we are experiencing unprecedented times around the world. The pandemic has been a true test for all Canadians, from the public health measures keeping us from our loved ones to the widespread business closures and layoffs threatening our livelihoods. We are in the fight of our lives and are not out of the woods yet. The last six months have shown just how important it is to come together to support each other through these trying times. Now that the second wave has arrived, we must do everything we can to flatten the curve and help bring this virus to an end. We flattened the curve once and we can do it again, because we are all in this together.

It is clear to me that the impacts of COVID-19 are going to be felt for generations. To rebuild a stronger Canada and ensure the

safety of Canadians, we must look to the future and take some bold actions to protect everyone.

The Speech from the Throne is an opportunity for our government to step back, take stock of where we are and set out the priorities of where we want to go to come through this in a positive way. It is an opportunity for parliamentarians to discuss and debate the role and direction of the government. I know this government will help Canadians across the country. That is what we are committed to doing.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few aspects of the throne speech that clearly will help assist the residents of Humber River—Black Creek.

We all know, and continue to lecture, to wear a mask, wash our hands and keep our distance. These are not easy things, but they are inevitable if we want to save ourselves from the epidemic. Most importantly, we must make sure Canadians will be able to get a vaccine once it is ready.

It is going to take all of us working together to keep each other safe and beat this virus. I have had to make requests for multiple test sites in my riding, as unfortunately it is a hot spot. I was pleased we were able to set up temporary sites at the Humber River Hospital, at Church Street and at the Gord and Irene Risk Community Centre, as well as at several other places, to get testing done. Until we can ensure that everybody gets a test when they need it and gets results in a timely fashion, with timeliness being key, we are not going to be able to end this pandemic. Contact tracing and testing are paramount, and I know that our government is committed to working with municipalities and the provinces to achieve this goal. I do not want anybody who needs a test to be turned away.

I know my constituency staff have done a wonderful job and have received a number of positive calls from constituents and business owners expressing their gratitude for the various programs our government has created. Without them they would have never been able to make ends meet. The CERB program has provided immense assistance and relief to the constituents of my riding. Frankly, I am immensely grateful to the government for creating programs that were very much needed.

Let me give the House a few examples.

My office staff helped a young single mother with two kids under five. She was laid off in March because of COVID-19, living on her own and managing everything without help. When my office first spoke to her she really did not have any faith that the government would help her.

She applied for the CERB and waited for it to come through. It came through just in time for her to pay the rent. My office was able to assist this young woman to successfully receive her CERB payment, a true success story at that particular moment. In the last conversation I had with this constituent, she said it had restored her faith in government and she thanked us very much. The woman has gone back to work and remains grateful for the assistance she received from my office staff every day.

*The Address*

There are a number of cases like this where constituents are hopeless and if it were not for the CERB they would never have been able to survive. Everyone I have spoken with who has lost their job during this pandemic, which is a lot of people, would not have known what to do if it were not for this benefit and the many others our government has created that are helping Canadians every day.

Before I continue to highlight more of the positive benefits of our government's assistance for Canadians, I would like to take a minute to acknowledge the hard work of my staff and the staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially the member for Don Valley West, who is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He is a true leader with a caring heart.

• (1610)

During the start of the pandemic, he was an immense help to my office as we successfully repatriated numerous constituents and their family members from around the world. This amazing work should not go unnoticed. The repatriation of Canadians during these difficult times is heartwarming.

The reason I am so aware of the repatriation process of Canadians is that my office worked closely with a local travel agency, which is the heart of the riding. Lina Matturro, a small business owner, operates Islington Travel in the Humber River—Black Creek riding. She has experienced many ups and downs during this pandemic.

I would like to share some excerpts from a piece of correspondence my office recently received from Lina. She wrote, “The travel industry has undergone severe trauma, and while we are strong and resilient, we are definitely dealing with new experiences in unprecedented times. I have owned and operated a small travel agency in a local community for just over 43 years, and clearly was not prepared for COVID-19. Even before the Canadian government declared a state of emergency, our office was already working 24-7 to rearrange flights for our clients. We frantically worked on getting passengers back to Canada. The financial hardship has been unbelievable. I have zero income coming in and still have a ton of expenses. The rent relief program has been a lifesaver. Without that program, I would have had to close the door months ago.”

Small businesses in Canada, like Islington Travel, have been hit especially hard. We know this. Forced closures, reduced capacity, supply chain disruptions and reduced revenue are just some of the challenges our resilient small businesses have faced. We all know that small businesses are the economic backbone of Canada. We know that it will take some time for their businesses to return to pre-COVID-19 performance levels. That is why we have taken, again, decisive measures to help keep Canadian small businesses operational, such as with the extension of the Canada emergency wage subsidy to the summer of 2021. We have expanded access to the Canada emergency business account and made improvements to the business credit availability program, and that is just a sample.

We are working hard to ensure that small business owners, like Lina, will have quick and easy access to meaningful financial support so that they can get through this tough time.

I have been advocating, alongside several of my colleagues, for national standards on the issue of long-term care. I was appalled at what happened with the long-term care home in my riding, Hawthorne Place, and many others. I have worked with my colleagues to push forward the request for us to have national standards of care. We have national standards for everything else in this country. Why would we not have national standards for something as important as how we treat our elderly in long-term care?

I am pleased to say that the government, in the throne speech, and the Prime Minister, in particular, heard that call. He was appalled at what he saw and heard through that process. We will see the long-needed implementation of national standards for long-term care as soon as possible, and I am talking about actual implementation, not just a commitment, not just words on a piece of paper or a report.

I know that people will say that the federal government has no right to be into this as it is a provincial issue. I have said it myself, but that did not stop me and my colleagues from pushing forward. This is an issue for all Canadians. We have to improve on this area, and we are going to start now. It is an issue that will soon see progress with the implementation of much-needed standards of care across the board.

We are building back better. As the Prime Minister said, this is not necessarily the time for austerity. We are here to help Canadians. Ensuring that Canadians are supported through this health crisis is the best thing we can do for the economy. Canadians should not have to choose between their health and their jobs. We will continue to help Canadians to put food on the table, keep businesses open, create jobs, support women in the economy and ensure our fiscal sustainability.

• (1615)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Madam Speaker, my colleague said at the end of her speech, “this is not necessarily the time for austerity”.

I am trying to understand what the government's working definition of “austerity” would be, because every day, every week, we see new expanded spending announcements push the deficit up higher and higher. At what point would that spending be too much?

If the government were spending a deficit of \$500 billion, \$600 billion, \$700 billion, at what point would the member say to hang on a second because we need to slow down that spending? If we were spending a little less than we are now, say, a \$300-billion deficit instead of \$343 billion, would that be austerity? Would spending \$250 billion in deficit be considered austerity? Where are the actual cut-offs in terms of the member's concept of what would be too much spending, and what would qualify as austerity?

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Madam Speaker, it is great to see my colleague back in the House.

*The Address*

Let me say that I wish we did not have to spend one cent of this money. I wish we never had this coronavirus pandemic, but we have it. I am so proud of the fact that the Government of Canada took on the task to meet the needs of Canadians. We did not turn our backs on people and say that we spent \$100,000 and cannot spend anymore. None of us wants to be spending all this money, but the reality is that if we do not help Canadians now, then when do they need a government? They need a government now when we have a pandemic and that is exactly what we are doing. We are going to do whatever is necessary to help Canadians survive this terrible pandemic.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for her fine speech. I heard her talk about what she and her team have done for people during the pandemic. It seems to me that if we all did our jobs properly, what she has described likely represents what the other 337 members of the House did as well.

If she listened carefully to her constituents, she must have learned that while the CERB did indeed help many people, it also hurt businesses because it did not encourage people to go back to work. Businesses called on us to include incentives. However, the government did not listen to the opposition parties or to the suggestions made by the Bloc Québécois.

I must also talk about seniors. If my colleague did indeed listen to her constituents, I am sure that seniors shared their grievances with her. They surely told her that 75 is too far in the future and that they need pensions to be adjusted as early as age 65. In fact, seniors who need their stipend adjusted are already vulnerable by the time they turn 75.

I would like to hear what my colleague has to say about that.

• (1620)

[*English*]

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Madam Speaker, let me say that of course we had given all seniors approximately \$1,500 of extra support, which they needed through this difficult time. When we are trying to balance out what we can do with a reasonable amount of money, trying to increase the pension from age 65 and on in a way that would help many of those seniors, we utilized the GIS program to the best of our ability. We did make a commitment. We know that when one gets to be 75 years old, for many of these seniors, it becomes very difficult for them. There is an increased number of expenses at that time. We want to make sure that we help them to the extent that we can.

The goal is to help as many Canadians get through this pandemic as possible with as little damage as possible. We are trying to be there to help everybody as much as we can and trying to keep our eye on the balance sheet, because we are very aware of that as well.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member's speech sounds as though it would be a speech at the beginning of a pandemic, not seven months later, when they talk about the positions they are going to have for creating a national standard of care. Members will recall that, as New Democrats, we called for this and many Liberals said we were absurd, yet here

we are seven months later with 10,000 deaths, 80% of which are tied to long-term care facilities.

Why will the government not commit to taking profits out of health care as it relates to seniors in long-term care?

**Hon. Judy A. Sgro:** Madam Speaker, I am glad to hear his enthusiasm. I am sure he will work with us and the provinces and territories throughout Canada to ensure that, sooner than later, we get national levels of care so that we can all be proud of how we treat our seniors.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

Before I get into the substance of my remarks, I would like to remind all of my colleagues that the pandemic we are facing has prompted a renewed focus on scientific studies and the mobilization of the entire scientific community around links that may exist between zoonotic diseases, pollution, climate change and the emergence of pandemic phenomena.

Hundreds of specialists were already conducting research into this credible and well-documented area of study. In October 2019, the Canadian Public Health Association released its recommendations on the human health implications of climate change and the urgency to act on climate change.

Publications that have come out over the past few months point to an increased risk of pandemics with the loss of biodiversity. Global warming is altering temperate zones. Other zoonotic diseases are expected to emerge as did Lyme disease. Protecting biodiversity is not a pipe dream. It must be done. Biodiversity is the cornerstone of an effective strategy to address the impacts of climate change.

By giving environmental issues the importance and prominence they deserve, we can take concrete action to prevent zoonotic diseases from becoming pandemics.

I now want to talk about the environmental aspects of the throne speech, found in the section entitled "Taking action on extreme risks from climate change". I have been the Bloc Québécois's environment critic since mid-March, and I want to point out that it is extremely important for the government to understand that a fair economic recovery and a green economic recovery can easily happen together. There is no doubt that we can work on economic recovery and protect the environment at the same time. However, investing in fossil fuels is not the way to go.

We appreciate that the government realizes pollution requires immediate climate action, as it showed in its throne speech. However, I encourage members to read the Bloc Québécois's recovery plan to learn how we can quickly get moving on climate action.

*The Address*

The Speech from the Throne states, “The Government will immediately bring forward a plan to exceed Canada’s 2030 climate goal. The Government will also legislate Canada’s goal of net-zero emissions by 2050.”

Madam Speaker, do you know what the problem is with that statement? Canada is not even close to achieving its objectives. Environment Canada’s projections show that we may reduce greenhouse gases by 19.5% at most by 2030. This represents a shortfall of 77 megatonnes. We are certainly going to need meaningful action.

Let’s begin with legislative measures. The Bloc Québécois, through the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, proposed framework legislation that would require the federal government to meet its own targets. There were promises, targets and projects, and we also see that the international community is critical of Canada’s climate inaction with regard to its Paris agreement commitments. Canada’s current environmental position is unenviable. It is high time that the government did something about it.

Given the decisions that the government has made since 2015 and all the deregulation that has occurred since the pandemic, it seems urgent and necessary to us that the House support the bill introduced by my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

The throne speech indicates that the government “will ensure Canada is the most competitive jurisdiction in the world for clean technology companies”. Clearly, the government will have to put words into action and stop turning a blind eye to environmental issues.

Creating thousands of retrofit jobs? We support that. Investing in reducing the impact of climate-related disasters and figuring out how to adapt? We support that too. Reducing the impact? We agree. We understand that we need an emergency plan in case of disaster. That goes without saying. However, why not start by recognizing the need for prevention?

We must do whatever we can to mitigate climate change and recognize new discoveries from around the world. That would help us move faster.

● (1625)

The throne speech talks about modernizing the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Is that not what hundreds of organizations, researchers and reports have been saying we need to do for years?

The 87 recommendations in the 2017 report of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development gave Environment Canada an exhaustive look at what needs changing. This is no small task. The mountain is high, but we must climb it. It would be a very bad idea to modernize the act by making a few superficial changes of no real consequence.

The Bloc Québécois certainly welcomes the announcement about the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, but we want to be sure that this mission will really be taken seriously.

When the report came out, the authors clearly indicated that thousands of people in Canada who are exposed to toxic substances die prematurely and that millions more get preventable diseases. Ideas evolve. The Canadian act has not kept pace with scientific progress.

With the emergence of COVID-19 and concerns about human health and vulnerability to the virus, I implore all my colleagues to recognize the intersectional nature of environmental issues, especially in relation to human health. The challenges of our time demand it.

Another possible path forward would be to pass a zero-emission law modelled after California’s legislation. This is a very serious avenue that is having significant, positive effects on human health in relation to pollution levels caused by greenhouse gases. A bill was passed unanimously in the Quebec National Assembly recently. This could serve as a catalyst to increase the availability of electric vehicles in Canada. That was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, but companies need to get up to speed and start producing more electric vehicles.

On a slightly different note, it should come as no surprise to anyone, incidentally, that I denounce the elements in the Speech from the Throne relating to the environment because, as they are currently written, they encroach on the jurisdictions of Quebec and the provinces.

The Bloc Québécois supports protecting nature and green spaces in municipalities as it supports water management. However, it is up to Quebec and the provinces to determine how they want to address these matters. The federal government needs to take care of its own jurisdictional responsibilities, not those of Quebec and the provinces.

In addition to the carefully crafted legislative measures that absolutely must be passed swiftly, there will also be an unavoidable cost to begin the transition to a zero-emissions future. The speech outlines supports, programs and federal funding earmarked for consolidating climate goals. There are similarities to the Bloc Québécois’s recovery plan starting with research incentives for developing electric heavy-duty and commercial vehicles. Given Quebec’s enviable sectoral development in the field, it definitely needs to benefit from some of that support.

Quebec’s SMEs proved to be ingenious, bold and resilient when they got into this industry 15 years ago, when this sector of the economy was emerging. Now, Quebec is North America’s transportation electrification hub. A green and fair recovery must recognize the different expertise and strengths the various regions have to offer. We cannot pit one region against another. We must focus on how they complement each other.

I will close by quickly saying a few words about the state of the country’s finances. There has indeed been some deficit spending as a result of the pandemic in order to provide help to our constituents. Is it not obscene to carry on with the fantasy of the Trans Mountain project? Who would argue that \$12 billion has to stay in this project? Nearly 100 signatories, including Canadian economists, experts and scientists wrote the government on September 16 to say no.

*The Address*

The Bloc Québécois traditionally stands in support of workers. Workers take a lot of flack for the endless aid that is given to the oil sector. In the Bloc Québécois recovery plan, we propose taking this money and allocating it to renewable energy projects in Alberta.

• (1630)

The Speech from the Throne sets out admirable ambitions, but contradictions as well. There is many a slip 'twixt cup and lip.

[English]

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, there are two things I want to ask.

The first is a question I asked of the leader of the member's party a couple of days ago. The member mentioned the oil and gas sector, and I think she and I would both agree that the oil and gas sector is going to play a reduced role in the Canadian economy in the days ahead, as we transition to a low-carbon economy.

Would she recognize that this sector has benefited Canadians from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland, and in particular Quebec, in terms of equalization payments, and the fact that a lot of revenue from the oil and gas industry has helped to support Quebecers?

My second question is on provincial jurisdiction, which the member mentioned. Does she see the federal government as a key contributor in terms of the fight against climate change, or is that best suited to the provinces?

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question as it lets me dispel a potential myth about Canadian policies. Oil revenues in no way fund equalization payments. That is not how equalization works. I can dispel this myth. These revenues belong to the provinces.

As for the federal government, we know that the environment is a shared responsibility. The federal government has a role to play, as do the provinces.

[English]

**Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member talked about Trans Mountain and the commitments made in the throne speech. The government has given away billions of dollars in fossil fuel subsidies. It bought a pipeline for \$4.6 billion, and it has committed to spending an additional \$12 billion.

I am wondering what the member thinks these billions of dollars could be better spent on, if we were to invest in a just and sustainable recovery.

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé:** Madam Speaker, it will come as no surprise to my colleague that we believe it is time to put an end to all fossil fuel subsidies.

I am not the one saying so. Canada has the highest per capita greenhouse gas emissions of all G20 countries. It is time to act. We can see that. There have been fires in British Columbia. There are also fires south of the border in California. Other parts of the world are experiencing flooding. Fossil fuels must stay in the ground. We

have heard that repeatedly from most well-known environmentalists and climate change activists around the world.

• (1635)

**Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my esteemed colleague, the member for Repentigny.

We have worked together at COPs on climate change negotiations. We are absolutely on the same page when it comes to not only the urgency of climate change, but also the fact that the government did not make the necessary commitments in its throne speech to reduce greenhouse gases in order to protect our civilization from the worst-case scenario.

I would like to ask my colleague and friend about the throne speech and how it says all the right things about climate but fails to include any obligation or commitment to a new target.

**Ms. Monique Pauzé:** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and friend from Saanich—Gulf Islands.

The throne speech is full of big ideas, but there is no specific plan. We are calling for specific plans. I have been a member here since 2015. We have been calling for a meaningful, binding plan since 2015. My hon. colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia introduced a bill to force the government to meet its own targets and fulfill its obligations under the Paris Agreement. Other countries are doing this. People are not fooled by the government's rhetoric. They want action. They see Canada's climate inaction and know that we have a long hill to climb.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, when he was the federal industry minister, the late Jean Lapierre said that the aerospace industry is to Quebec what the auto industry is to Ontario. That is true, because we are talking about 40,000 direct jobs, 100,000 indirect jobs, 220 businesses, including 200 SMEs, and \$18 billion in sales, of which 80% are exports. It is the leading exporter in Quebec. With 12% of manufacturing exports, Quebec accounts for 50% of jobs, 60% of sales, and 70% of research and development in Canada's aerospace sector. The sector funds 55% of industrial R and D in Quebec. The greater Montreal area is the third-largest aerospace hub on the planet after Seattle, with Boeing, and Toulouse, with Airbus. It is an integrated industry. There are only three places on earth where we can find suppliers capable of providing all the components to build an aircraft from nose to tail. The greater Montreal area is one of them.

Continuing with the statistics, the number of times that the term “aerospace” or “aviation” appears in the Speech from the Throne is zero. This industry is in trouble. It was already struggling, but COVID-19 has made things worse. Certain economic sectors will be affected for longer than others and will need special assistance. The aerospace industry is one of them.

The Speech from the Throne mentions culture, tourism and agriculture. We will see how that goes. We will see if rhetoric becomes reality, but at least they got mentioned.

*The Address*

The aerospace industry is probably one of the most important parts of Quebec's industrial landscape. Airlines are the primary clients of the civilian aerospace sector, and they are struggling. We know that planes have been grounded. There is no maintenance and no replacement parts. Orders for new planes are few and far between, and it will stay that way for years to come. Airlines that submitted orders are postponing taking delivery of the aircraft to avoid having to pay the balance.

Since the spring, 4,000 aerospace jobs have been lost. The industry resigned itself to creating ties with the construction industry so it could send workers there, at the risk of losing expertise and the ability to bounce back. That also means that there are SMEs that might end up closing their doors.

We have always advocated for an aerospace policy. What exactly is an aerospace policy?

I often talk about this, as did several of my predecessors assigned to this file. The government says it has already provided help. However, a real policy means more than providing sporadic help. It means more than providing funding here and there, no matter how much.

I will take the risk of explaining what a real aerospace policy is, in the Parliament of a country that is rather foreign to the concept of economic nationalism. Very few sectors are protected and supported and have a real strategy dedicated to them. The aerospace sector should be one of them.

Of all the countries with a significant aerospace industry, Canada is the only one without a policy to support its development. That is why the Bloc Québécois plans to raise this issue before the standing committee on industry in order to identify the challenges and the vision needed, thereby forcing the government's hand.

An aerospace policy means, first and foremost, a space where all stakeholders, including companies, workers and governments, have a seat at the table to convey their realities and needs. Ottawa already does this for the auto industry. It also means specific programs tailored to the reality of the sector. It means predictable support that allows stakeholders to anticipate and commit to longer-term projects. Of course, it requires a comprehensive vision that encompasses all the links in the chain, including a military procurement policy that strengthens the entire cluster. It means sharing the risks associated with the biggest projects. It means reviewing R and D support programs to ensure they are better adapted. It means credit for purchasers that buy aircraft from us.

Now, what do we want?

I want to suggest some ideas that we could put forward and debate. However, we would have liked to have seen some initial thoughts on this in the throne speech.

For example, there is recycling. To reduce the cost of keeping its planes airworthy, Air Canada removed 80 planes from its fleet. They are going to be sent to an aircraft boneyard in the Arizona desert. However, there is a company in Mirabel that dismantles and recycles planes. It is the only such company that is certified in North America.

• (1640)

The accelerated removal of aircraft presents an opportunity if Ottawa decides to place environmental conditions on its assistance to airlines. This is in keeping with the very appropriate proposal put forward by my colleague from Repentigny. Hundreds of technicians could continue to work in the field rather than having to seek work elsewhere until things take off again.

With regard to climate change, France put a condition on its seven-billion-euro bailout for Air France. Air France was told that the assistance was conditional on the preparation of a plan to make its fleet greener. If Ottawa had a similar program, it would guarantee sales of the A220, which is built in Mirabel and is the most fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly aircraft in its class. In Quebec, going green pays off.

I also want to talk about maintenance. Over the years, airlines have outsourced most of the heavy maintenance on their aircraft. The closure of the Air Canada maintenance centres in the late 2000s cost this country 3,600 jobs, 2,500 of which were in Quebec. Members will recall the Aveos saga. Today, those same airlines are knocking on the government's door looking for an aid package. We could take advantage of that to rebuild our industrial sector.

Of course, they need cash flow too. We can expect major buyers to slow their activities during the crisis but to get through it eventually. Unfortunately, for the 200 SMEs in this sector that supply parts and components, the future is much less certain. If a supplier goes out of business, the part it supplies will not be available for planes. We are in danger of losing our ability to build an aircraft from nose to tail, which is something we are proud of and known for.

As I was saying, only three places in the world have that ability, and the greater Montreal area is one of them. The sector is highly integrated, so only an integrated policy will properly address its unique characteristics.

We need loans for buyers too. Airlines that have A220s are pretty much flying only those planes. Not only are they more fuel efficient, making them cheaper to fly, but they are also well suited to the pandemic. The A220 is the only plane that can replace the cabin air in flight. Other planes recycle their air. I am sure we can all agree that that is a priceless advantage during a pandemic.

Airlines with no cash flow are not accepting delivery of the aircraft they ordered so that they do not have to pay the balance. The yard next to the plant in Mirabel is full. There are 16 aircraft parked there, ready for delivery, because the buyers cannot yet take possession. If they had credit, there is a good chance that they would do so. That would be a solution.

We must also consider the defence sector. A number of businesses in the aerospace industry supply to both the civilian and defence sectors, in the areas of manufacturing and maintenance. Logically, the defence sector is less dependent on economic cycles than many other sectors. It provides more stable revenue, which helps companies through crises. Ottawa is preparing to replace its aging CF-18s. Strict local content requirements would give our industry a much-needed boost.

*The Address*

I also want to talk about research and development. The aerospace industry is very technology intensive. Designing an aircraft can take 10 to 15 years. The research and development of an aircraft is paid off in the years the aircraft is on the market. Under this business model, revenue pays for the previous research project, but what company is going to go into more debt to work on the next project? To reap the technological spinoffs, SMEs need to get in on a project during the early phases to design the part they will supply to the contract givers once the aircraft goes to market. They also need to incur debt in order to participate.

In times of crisis, research is the first thing a company will cut, since there is no immediate return on investment. This business decision makes complete sense. No one would disagree that the research and development tax credit is a good thing, but it does not generate cash flow in times of crisis. Direct assistance is required if we want to keep our companies from being downgraded once we emerge from this crisis.

• (1645)

Of course, better tailored programs are needed. The research and development tax credit provides assistance for the development of a new product, but it is not available to those who want to improve an existing product. It should also be noted that this credit does not cover everything. For example, it does not cover costs such as—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** I am sorry, but your time is up.

The hon. member for Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie.

**Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech.

For years, the NDP, just like the Bloc Québécois, has been calling for a pan-Canadian aerospace and aviation strategy. I believe that my colleague was going to discuss this. We must understand that Canada is at a disadvantage compared to other countries such as France, the United States and Brazil, whose governments invest heavily in the aerospace and aviation industries through their military expenditures. That is not the case for Canadian companies. In those countries, the entire research and development process falls under military spending. Here, we do not have a level playing field, which puts us at a disadvantage.

In fact, all the research and development credits are currently inadequate. We do not have the government support needed to keep this flagship of Quebec industry or the province's good jobs.

I would like my colleague to continue talking about research and development and the government's support.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question since it allows me to pick up where I left off. I was on a roll and now I can keep going.

In the aerospace sector, adjustments are constantly being made throughout the entire life cycle of an aircraft. Credit for research and development is not adapted to that.

As I was saying, credit for research and development does not cover everything. For example, obtaining a patent and certification and the cost of precision devices that are needed for product development are not covered. In short, the credit is ill-suited.

The emergency wage subsidy is also ill-suited. In June, the finance minister had to adopt it by an order in council. That was done at the very last minute. It is just another sign that the program is ill-suited to our sector.

• (1650)

**Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am sorry, but I forgot to put on my tie. If you want me to put it on now I will do so right away. This can be part of the blooper reel.

With regard to protecting aerospace businesses, the broader issue is that businesses in general need to be protected.

Would the hon. member like to add anything about the Investment Canada Act?

Are our businesses being adequately protected by the current actions of the federal government?

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague and I hope he is not featured on *Infoman* this week. He had a very nice tie.

With respect to the Investment Canada Act, that would obviously be another aspect to watch closely. It is not particularly well suited, although it is already in effect, so when a transaction occurs, it does carry some weight. The Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry must comply with it.

Is the threshold inadequate? Probably, and it certainly warrants further study. I am sure my colleague, who is the industry critic, will do so brilliantly in the near future.

We do not have to look far for a model of national aviation support policies that has proven to work very well. Of course I am talking about the Quebec model. Quebec has established all the tools needed to support—

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Peace River—Westlock.

[*English*]

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I am quite frustrated with the throne speech, as I am sure the member is, since the Bloc is not supportive of it. The most frustrating thing for me was the time in which the House of Commons was prorogued. The timing of it was very suspect. Then when I saw the Speech from the Throne, there was nothing new in it.

I told my constituents back home that I expected a big bold vision. I did not expect that I would agree with all parts of it, but I did expect something new and bold. None of that was in the speech from the throne.

Could the member comment on the boldness of the Speech from the Throne and the timing?

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot for a very brief response.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Madam Speaker, brief answers are not really in my nature, but I will try.

During a speech last week, I had an opportunity to speak out against that approach, which made no sense at all. When our work here is adjourned, we can come back a few days later and restart the House. Instead, we waited three months for an empty throne speech. Well, it was not exactly empty; it was full of interference in areas under Quebec's jurisdiction, so I suppose it did have some content. Basically, we agree that the approach was unacceptable.

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès):** It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, Foreign Affairs; the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, Aerospace Industry; the hon. member for Vancouver Kingsway, Seniors.

**Mr. Andy Fillmore (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time today with the member for Fleetwood—Port Kells.

While this is not the first time I have spoken in reply to a Speech from the Throne, it is certainly the first time I have done so from Halifax, my hometown, the place that I love and fight for and the community that I am so humbled to represent in Canada's House of Commons. Today I am more proud of my hometown than ever.

Over the last six months, the strong sense of community that has propelled our city's success over the last decade, with neighbours brought together by a shared purpose and pride of place, has been our strength and reassurance in a time of great uncertainty.

At a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted our way of life, where we work, when we see our families and friends, how we enjoy our city's shops, restaurants, recreational sites and attractions, I have found great comfort and inspiration in Haligonians' commitment to one another. Heeding the calls from our trusted public health officials, though not without sacrifice, Halifax has weathered the storm of the pandemic together.

I come to the House from a province that has seen, at different points during the spring, consecutive weeks at a time of no new cases, including today. Together with our Atlantic Canadian neighbours, we have come out of the first wave of the pandemic as one of the safest places in the Americas and as an example for the world. The key factor in our successful response has surely been our people: health care professionals who care for the sick, essential workers who put themselves at risk to keep the rest of us going, and neighbours helping neighbours.

During the lockdown, I received many letters, calls and emails from constituents who wanted to recognize the kindness of their neighbours. With their permission, I would like to read a couple:

*The Address*

Lauren Hutton wrote of her friend Ann Marie Danch:

Ann Marie has made many, probably a hundred by now, cloth masks and surgical caps for friends and family, some who work at Northwood [Seniors Centre], run small businesses or work in essential services, and she's still going!

Susan Smith wrote of her brother-in-law, Ron Griffiths:

I am the caregiver of my 92 year old mom and was very nervous about going out as I was scared I'd bring COVID-19 home to her. Ron ran all my errands, shopping, did work in my yard and was here for us 100%.

Katie Ells wrote of Graciella Clarone:

Miss Graciella brings me fresh vegetables every week. She checks in on me every couple of days, knowing I am alone and high risk. I know she does this for many people. Without Miss G, I don't know how I would get through this "stay home" order.

Of course we have not been entirely spared this terrible virus. Sadly, we mourn the loss of 65 Nova Scotians who succumbed to COVID-19. This number is too high. One person lost is too many. I want those families to know that our city holds them in our thoughts and in our hearts.

We also know that we need to do better in our long-term care system in Nova Scotia. The province is actively working, with support from the federal government, to ensure that we have the equipment we need to protect the seniors who live in these facilities. After all, as governments rely on the hard work of everyday citizens to get through this crisis, citizens are relying on us, as government and parliamentarians, to lead.

That brings me to the government's agenda, as laid out in the Speech from the Throne. It is difficult to believe it was only 10 months ago that we gathered in the red chamber to hear the speech that kicked off the first session of this 43rd Parliament. The world feels like a much different place than it did on that day last December and, in fact, very different from this time a year ago when I, and all of us, were on the campaign trail, asking Canadians for their trust. At the end of that campaign, Canadians re-elected our Liberal government for its strong record and our bold, hopeful plan for the future of this country.

In that election, Canadians looked at our achievements as a government, from creating a million new jobs, to enacting the strongest climate plan of any government in Canadian history; to our historic investments in community infrastructure, transit, and housing; to our important work on reconciliation, restoring Canada's place on the world stage; and to the advancement of gender equality in all sectors of our society.

*The Address*

Canadians looked at our record and they re-elected a Liberal government. They looked at our vision for the future: a net-zero-emissions future, ambitious conservation goals, national pharmacare, more affordable child care, more support for our seniors, lower taxes for clean tech, and continued investments in the communities that we call home. Canadians looked at our plan and they re-elected a Liberal government.

Yes, times have changed. Priorities have shifted, and new challenges have risen to the top, but I want all Canadians to know that we are that same government. We are the government with a strong record of results and a bold plan for the future. Now we are the government that has led Canada through the depths of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are also the government that will see us through to the other side, to a strong recovery and to brighter, sunnier days. In March, at the outset of the pandemic, we promised we would be there for Canadians. We have kept that promise.

● (1655)

We put workers first with the Canada emergency response benefit, ensuring people had money to put food on the table and cover their bills. We provided small businesses with quick access to capital through the Canada emergency business account. We made sure people could keep their jobs and keep their businesses running with the Canada emergency wage subsidy.

We topped up the GST credit, OAS and the Canada child benefit to help Canadians get by. We are helping people with disabilities with a special one-time payment. We have stepped up for charities and non-profits, and for cultural and heritage organizations. We have provided much-needed relief for the provinces and municipalities.

Now, we find ourselves at a critical juncture, not only in the timeline of this pandemic, but in the history of Canada. Our next steps will determine the kind of Canada in which our parents will live out the rest of their lives, and the kind of Canada in which our kids will grow up.

We are at a crossroads, and the Speech from the Throne illuminates the path that leads toward progress and prosperity for Canada. It seeks to build a fairer Canada, where no one gets left behind or falls through the cracks; a more resilient and sustainable Canada, one that is clear-eyed about the challenge of climate change and what it will take to fight it; and a healthy Canada that protects and cares for its citizens, as we persevere through a deadly global pandemic.

The Speech from the Throne lays the foundation for a once-in-a-generation, transformational shift in Canada to build toward a Canada-wide early learning and child care system; to set new, national standards for long-term care; to introduce a new Canadian disability benefit, invest more in housing and commit to entirely eliminating chronic homelessness in Canada.

We are making the largest investment in Canadian history in training for workers, and making a commitment to create one million jobs. We are moving forward with the clean power fund, including projects like the Atlantic loop, which will connect surplus clean power to regions transitioning away from coal. We will modernize the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. We will contin-

ue the fight to dismantle systemic racism in our country through measures like law enforcement reform, including enhanced civilian oversight, modernized training and a shift to community policing. We promise all of this and more, on top of critical investments in public health to support our provincial partners through the COVID-19 pandemic.

I mentioned earlier that Canadians put their trust in our record and in our plan when they re-elected the Liberal government last October. Of course, it is also true that we were returned to Parliament as a minority. The message to all parties was clear: Canadians want us to work together.

I hope Canadians see that, on this side of the House, we have heard their message loud and clear. As a government, we have worked respectfully and meaningfully with opposition parties on areas of shared interest. We have shown that we are a collaborative, flexible government that works with any party in the House that puts Canadians first, ahead of posturing and politics.

Sadly, the Conservative opposition has chosen a different approach. They have chosen a self-serving agenda that seeks to tear down rather than build up. They would rather play games, and try to score political points, than work in the interests of Canadians. We have seen the Leader of the Opposition push a divisive narrative that does nothing to bring our vast nation together in this time of crisis, choosing instead to disrespect the Canadians who sent us here to find common ground. He is choosing instead to begin his tenure as leader by planting seeds of division all across our country. He is choosing instead to leave the millions of hard-working, middle-class Canadians who voted for his party in the lurch as they have called out for help. He does this all because it served his party better to play politics.

However, we have seen this cynical trick before, and Canadians will see through it. Instead, they will find pride in a Liberal government that is working hard for them, in partnership with other willing parties, to put their health first. We are working hard to keep families afloat, to fight climate change, to bring joy back to our streets and to build back better.

That is the plan we have outlined in the Speech from the Throne, and it will be a privilege to cast my vote on behalf of the good people of Halifax in favour of the hopeful vision it lays out for our country.

● (1700)

**Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I noticed that the Speech from the Throne talked about phasing out particular jobs, specifically jobs from my neck of the woods.

*The Address*

Could my colleague lay out his record on whether he thought that oil field workers' jobs should be phased out? I can tell the people back home that I will be working hard to phase out all the jobs of all the Liberal MPs.

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Madam Speaker, I can assure the member that the throne speech and the government are laying out a plan to make sure Canadians have jobs through the recovery of the pandemic period and through the transition to a low-carbon economy. We are undertaking the largest upskilling and retraining of Canadian workers in the history of our country, and no one will be left behind as we move to a cleaner, smarter future.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am about to side with the Conservatives. This is a big day.

In his speech, my colleague said that the Conservatives are not team players. He accused them of refusing to work as a team. That makes me wonder. Does my colleague think teamwork means encroaching on other people's jurisdiction when the government should actually be handing over funds so those people can manage that money themselves?

Ottawa decided to hang on to health transfers and not transfer that money despite repeated requests and consensus on the part of Quebec and the provinces. Is that his definition of teamwork? I would like him to clarify what he means by teamwork. On this side of the House, we have not really been seeing much of that lately.

● (1705)

[*English*]

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Madam Speaker, I am very sorry to hear that my colleague feels he needs to speak in favour of the Conservative position on this throne speech. We will be able to show him and his party many great reasons to support the throne speech and to win his admiration for the plan going forward.

In terms of provincial jurisdiction, the Prime Minister was extremely clear that he chooses to partner with provinces in areas of mutual interest to advance recovery, grow the economy and create jobs, without treading on the jurisdiction of provincial governments. Given time, I am sure all members in the House will see that our intention will be played out in our actions.

**Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my hon. friend mentioned many times, and I have heard this many times in the House from the Liberals' side, that nobody is to be left behind. I find I am having difficulty with this, because it has been seven months now and people are still waiting for disability payments. They have been left behind, and they have had increases also. This is something that was supposed to happen in June.

The Liberal government talks about seniors and how much work it has done, but it wants to give them an increase in benefits for those aged 75 or older. What do we do with the seniors who are over 65 and only get the OAS and the GIS? Could my hon. friend tell me why these people are being left behind?

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Madam Speaker, I share the member's deep concern both for people living with disabilities and for seniors in Canada. I am very proud of the fact that the throne speech an-

nounced a new Canada disability benefit. It is going to have a major impact on people living with disabilities in Canada.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have helped seniors in a variety of ways, with no fewer than two one-time boosts to their benefits and, as the member mentioned, an increase to benefits for those who have reached the age of 75. We are focused, as this government has always been focused, on helping those who need it most first. That is what the throne speech sets out to do.

**Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member for Halifax is a champion for urban areas across the country. I would like to ask him about the impact we have seen in urban communities and what the safe restart agreement means for support for municipalities, as well as what some municipal leaders may be saying about it.

**Mr. Andy Fillmore:** Madam Speaker, we have seen in urban, suburban and rural communities that their main streets have been devastated by the economic fallout of this COVID-19 pandemic. Our government is committed to helping businesses, employees and individuals to recover economically from this fallout and put our main streets back into the powerful position they have held and deserve to keep in the economies of our communities and provinces rolling forward.

**Mr. Ken Hardie (Fleetwood—Port Kells, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, our government's throne speech and this debate come at a time when Canadians, and certainly those of us in Fleetwood—Port Kells, are paying more attention than usual to their governments. Of course, this is because these are exceedingly unusual times. These are times when we are experiencing a great reunderstanding of the role of government in the lives of our citizens.

Starting about 50 years ago, people in western Europe and most of the Americas looked for a new balance of influence, one that leaned toward smaller governments. This was after a long period during which those living through the Depression, the world war and recovery had seen national governments calling the shots on how the human, material and financial resources of the nation would be directed.

Now we find ourselves here, at a time when flaws in the free market and the weakness of globalization have shaken the ability of governments to maintain the resiliency needed to deal with the social and economic shocks of the pandemic. These have all combined to have us once again looking to government for leadership, ideas, the willingness to act and hope. That is what our government's Speech from the Throne intended to deliver.

*The Address*

We in Canada have certain advantages that have helped us manage the challenges this year has thrown at us. One of them is that, by and large, Canadians tend to believe in the power of the common good. We are generally prepared to set aside self-interest and assume some duty to act selflessly to help our neighbours. We know that when it is necessary, we draw lines in the sand and stand up for our values, principles and ideologies, because we honestly believe they represent the best direction for the country, but we have also demonstrated the good sense to set that all aside and pull together when efforts toward a common cause are needed.

Our colleagues in the opposition have disagreed with some of the steps this government has taken in response to the social and economic damages inflicted by the pandemic, but when it really counted, the whole lot of us have worked to make our national response to the pandemic better. When so many countries have been torn by partisan political conflict, which stalled action in the public interest, Canadians have been able to count on us to act quickly. They understand the need to make course corrections as we go.

Another advantage we have is the lessons history has taught us in supporting Canadians in times like this. The economic shock we experienced this year looks very much like the sudden and drastic shock of the collapse of the stock markets in 1929, but our response this time is different. In the early 1930s, prime minister R. B. Bennett looked to Conservative ideology and decided that austerity was the right strategy. That served only to deepen the breadth and depth of the misery Canadians experienced in the so-called Great Depression. My parents lived through it and, believe me, there was nothing great about it.

In 2008, unchecked excesses in our financial markets had the world teetering on economic collapse. This time, though, the Canadian government and prime minister Stephen Harper reacted in an un-Conservative way, going into deficit to stimulate the economy and take up some of the economic slack.

There are, however, some things to learn from that experience, too. While Canadians escaped the kind of suffering experienced by our neighbours to the south, the malaise was not cured. Indeed, by the summer of 2015, Canada was still technically in a recession and unemployment was stubbornly high. Mr. Harper had reassumed his conservatism and believed that balancing the budget was what the country needed. His stimulus was too little, and it ended too soon.

This time, the government has had the benefit of those experiences, and what we have learned, we have applied, but more than that, the strategies we brought to government in 2015 have served as a major advantage for Canada. Those deficits we recorded from 2015 to 2019 were not a response to an economic emergency. They were funding investments and, like all good investments, they delivered dividends. The total deficit in the first term was about \$60 billion. Canada's GDP grew by just over \$180 billion. If we like, we could claim a 300% return on that investment.

Unlike the Conservative stimulus package in 2008-09, which funded projects across the country, the deficits in our first term were divided between infrastructure expansion designed to increase Canada's productivity and the economic well-being of Canadian families.

Our income-tested Canada child benefit delivers help to the families that need it the most, the families that shop at the local stores and boost the local economy. We should not overlook what the Canada child benefit has meant to families in these tough times.

• (1710)

Our economic performance from 2015 to 2019 included the creation of over a million new jobs, real wage growth for the first time in a decade or more, hundreds of thousands of people lifted out of poverty and, by the way, a lift in government revenues, all without raising taxes and the program cuts that define the Harper years.

Something else we learned coming into the pandemic is that growing the economy and working to share the wealth more equitably means families and governments alike can do more. The things we learned, the things we proved prior to and after the pandemic shutdown in March, are now helping Canadians through another round of tough times, so let us recap them.

First, from the response to the stock market crash in 1929, we know this is not the time for austerity. Members may recall this being mentioned in the throne speech. From the response to the financial collapse in 2008, we learned we have to commit to doing what it takes to help Canadians and to take the country through recovery and beyond.

We have proven that support focused on helping middle-class families and the families struggling to get to the middle class does more to deliver well-being, confidence and hope than tax cuts for big business and the wealthy. A strong middle class is good for everybody.

All of us in this place have proven that when the welfare of the country is on the line, we are all team Canada, where a good idea does not care who has it. The quick delivery of benefits is critical. We cannot let perfection be the enemy of good. We have learned that while globalization has done much to lift the prospects of people across the world, we cannot count on it when nations act in their own natural self-interest and fail other nations that depend on them for vitally needed products, such as masks, gowns and gloves. Sovereignty means self-reliance.

We knew that ignoring the problem of conditions in long-term care facilities would come back to haunt us. Some lessons are hard to learn and come too late. As a government, we know that our ability to fund the support Canadians need at historically low interest rates is far better than the ability of families that would have no alternative to credit card debt.

*The Address*

Even adding on the borrowing for pandemic supports, low interest rates today mean Canada's annual debt servicing costs are billions of dollars lower than they were last fall. We can and have locked in these historically low rates for decades, and this makes sense for the nation when families would pay 19% interest on credit card balances.

We know that, with some notable exceptions, Canadians will do what is necessary for the sake of their neighbours and the good of the country. Social distancing, wearing masks and not holding big parties are not onerous gestures.

There is one other thing we know. We have an opportunity, one that this government believes we must take now, to reformat our post-pandemic economy. We are wasting too many valuable human resources in Canada with so many of us working precariously in the so-called gig economy. We can do better than re-establishing those conditions. We cannot pass on the opportunity to build and bolster in a number of sections.

That includes the low-carbon economy. The major oil companies get it. They are leading the transition in many cases. Our government's support for Canada's energy sector must build on that for the sake of good jobs in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and northeast B.C., and for the sake of our climate and the future of life on this planet. This too was incorporated into the Speech from the Throne.

Help will be on the way for our tourism and hospitality sectors. Our commitment to a national pharmacare program still stands. Family reunification is a priority, more important than ever in such an uncertain world.

Like all throne speeches, the one we heard last week provided the country with a strong commitment to deal with the challenges of the day and a high-level vision for where we think the nation needs to go. Day by day, the details are emerging on programs that signal our commitment to do what it takes to protect the health of Canadians, our communities and our economy.

The next step is to build on the foundation we have laid over the past five years to realize the full value of our natural national advantages. If members listened carefully they would have heard the essential elements of leadership, creativity, collaboration, flexibility, resiliency and thoughtfulness. These are not the exclusive property of the party in power. This is what Canadians have a right to expect from all of us in this place.

Yes, we will have different ideas about what to do and how to do them. Canadians will benefit from a healthy exchange of ideas, but the signals we send to our citizens must unfailingly give them not just the hope but also the confidence that their Parliament will work as a community of purpose for their common good.

• (1715)

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I have a very simple question. Unemployment in Canada is three points higher than the OECD average. Today it is the highest in the G7, of all our major competitors. The member waxes with a lovely monologue about all the spending, but the results are not there. Why?

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Madam Speaker, one statistic does not tell the whole story. We have recovered two-thirds of the jobs we lost. Most of the jobs that have not been recovered are in the gig economy. These are precarious jobs and the investment needed right now will mean turning many of these jobs into something that will be more fulfilling and more rewarding for the individuals working at them and their families. We do not want to go back to where we were in January and February where people were working at part-time jobs, with minimum wage, no benefits and no future. We can do better than that for those people. That is what we have to focus on.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ):** Madam Speaker, my question is simple.

With all due respect, in the umpteenth version of the throne speech, the member said that, if we want sovereignty, we need to be independent. I completely agree with him. That is why Quebec wants to be fully independent as a nation.

I therefore want to ask a question about the vision, or lack thereof, in this throne speech when it comes to national standards for long-term care facilities.

How can the federal government impose standards on the provinces? For example, is it up to the federal government to decide how many health care providers work in our long-term care facilities? Is it up to the federal government to dictate delivery of care to the provinces? No. In our opinion, the federal government's role is to transfer in a sustainable way the money needed to meet these health care needs.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member needs to realize that we are truly in this together. We are a nation. We are all Canadians. The fact is that the Canadian Armed Forces went into health care facilities in Quebec because that system collapsed to the detriment and suffering of many seniors. We should work together. This is not just a matter of "let us do your thing and go on your own merry way". No, we went into this together and we need to work our way out of it together. That is the best way forward.

*The Address*

**Mr. Scott Duvall (Hamilton Mountain, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my friend mentioned, and there are many people on his side who have mentioned, that no one be left behind and we on this side agree with him 100%, that no one should be left behind. However, we realize that the people aged 75 or older also need help as mentioned in the throne speech. What we do not agree with is the people who are aged 65 and older have the same problems as the people who are 75 and older, but the government wants to leave them behind. What is it? Is it just a certain group that are allowed to be left behind? Is that what Liberals want or is it that no one be left behind?

**Mr. Ken Hardie:** Madam Speaker, I like that question because it highlights a challenge that emerged as a result of the pandemic and that is the fact there are many foundational systemic problems that were laid bare by the suffering of the pandemic. There was a huge temptation to try to address those at the same time that we were delivering emergency help to people in many sectors. That would include our seniors. We have to do better for our seniors, there is no doubt about it.

That is what we do next. That is something that we should not lose. We should not lose the fact that our seniors are suffering, that they need more support and that the investment necessary to lift them up with all Canadians is definitely necessary. I would invite my friend across the way to collaborate with us on the best ways to get that done because it does need to be done.

**Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC):** Madam Speaker, the government has had some foreign policy accomplishments. It has continued Operation Reassurance in eastern Europe and Operation Unifier in Ukraine, both military missions that we support. In trade, the new USMCA was concluded, a mostly defensive outcome that will see drop of 0.4% in real GDP relative to NAFTA, as outlined by the C.D. Howe Institute. A trade agreement with the European Union was also concluded, but, it must be said, it was largely negotiated under the previous government. The Trans-Pacific Partnership, also largely negotiated under the previous government, was concluded, but it was almost upended by the Prime Minister, who failed to show up at a meeting for 10 heads of government at the APEC summit in Vietnam in November 2017.

However, whatever hope Canada had in starting trade talks with India was lost in the embarrassing antics of the Prime Minister during his eight-day trip to the world's fifth-largest economy. So, too, it was with trade talks with China, when he opened with a progressive proposal on the environment, labour and gender rights, all non-starters for China. The deal was over before it had even begun.

In general, the government's foreign policy has been a disappointment. The Speech from the Throne does nothing to change that.

The government came to office with a big commitment to resurrect Canadian peacekeeping.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

It sent hundreds of peacekeepers and hundreds of millions of Canadian dollars to Mali. As in many other cases with this govern-

ment, these efforts were made for only a short time, barely a year. The government then lost interest in helping this country, as well as the political will to do so.

[*English*]

Now, just one year after the mission has ended, there has been a coup in Mali, with the government replaced by a military junta.

The previous foreign minister mentioned the rise of populism and distrust of the global economy as one of the two big challenges in foreign policy. She pointed at her government's economic plan as a solution. After five years in power, we can judge.

The Canadian economy was in trouble before the pandemic had hit, with record-high levels of household debt. The OECD and the IMF predict that we will have a deeper recession and a slower recovery than our economic peers, an economy with the highest unemployment in the G7 and a middle class that is further behind today than it was in 2015. Under the current Prime Minister, Canada has become less prosperous, less united and less respected on the world stage.

The government came to office in 2015, telling the world that Canada is back, but the facts say otherwise. Canada lost its vote for the UN Security Council seat last June. It got 108 votes, six fewer than it got a decade ago. That is six fewer countries in the world today that see Canada as a leader on the global stage. That is a quantitative and identifiable indictment of the current government's foreign policy.

The government came to office saying it was going to make Canada a global leader in helping the poorest around the world. The opposite has happened. Under the current government, official development assistance has declined. Under the previous Conservative government, ODA averaged 0.3% of GDP for the 10 years that government was in office. During the current government, it has averaged 0.27%, a 10% decline.

Bob Rae called out the government on its failure in foreign aid in a damning indictment. About Canada's ODA target number, he said, "Canada has never come close to that number, and if our rate this year looks slightly better than last year's, it is only because the GNI number is stagnant, if not declining. Despite this record, Canadians think of their country as generous, and deeply engaged on the international front."

On climate change, the current government has been a disappointment. It came to office promising to do better, but the facts say otherwise. In 2016, the first full year the current government was in office, emissions were 708 megatonnes. In 2018, the last year for which we have data, emissions jumped to 729 megatonnes. Canada's emissions are increasing, yet the government said in the Speech from the Throne that it will not only meet the Paris targets, it will exceed them. Yet again, another yawning gap between rhetoric and reality.

The Liberal government's foreign policy has been incoherent and inconsistent. For example, China is not upholding its responsibility to the rules-based international system. It is ignoring its condition of entry into the WTO. It interferes through its state-owned enterprises. It infringes on intellectual property, and it engages in cyberwarfare. It violates human rights in international treaties in its treatment of Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, the Uighurs and the people of Hong Kong. In short, it is threatening our interests and our values.

In that context, it is really important that the government speak with a consistent, coherent voice. Unfortunately, that is not happening.

In July, the foreign affairs minister told this House that he was looking at sanctions on Chinese officials, and a day later the government told Reuters that is off the table. Just two weeks ago, the foreign affairs minister told the Globe that trade talks with China were off the table, the same day Ambassador Barton said that we should expand trade and do more in China.

These are some of many examples.

The government acknowledges its China policy is broken. That is why it is supposed to come forward this fall with a new framework, but I am not confident it is going to address the problem. Here is why. Foreign policy starts with who we are. It is about our projection abroad of what we are all about. The problem is that the Prime Minister has said that Canada has no core identity, that we are just a collection of different groups, that we are the first post-national state.

I could not disagree more. Canada is not simply a collection of different groups with no common identity or common purpose. We as Canadians are some 37 million citizens who live on the north half of this vast continent, who share together a common identity and common purpose, a shared citizenship, rooted in our two official languages, our shared history, our collective institutions and our future together. That is who we are as Canadians.

The problem with the Liberals' foreign policy is, if they do not know who they are, then their foreign policy will reflect that.

Let me finish by saying this: foreign affairs matter. I know this first-hand. At the start of the Second World War, a young Chinese boy was defended by Canadian soldiers in Hong Kong. Half of them died or were wounded. At the end of that same war, a young Dutch girl was liberated by Canadian soldiers in the Netherlands. Some 7,500 of their comrades never came back home, and died in the canals, the fields and the villages of the Netherlands. That Dutch girl and that Chinese boy were my parents.

### *The Address*

They came to Canada in search of a better life. They believed in Canada. They believe in our nation's ability, generation after generation, to look beyond a person's colour or their creed, to harness their ambition to build a better Canada.

● (1730)

[*Translation*]

That is also true of the millions of Canadians who came to Canada over the past few decades or in the more distant past to make this country our home and native land, to build a better life for themselves and their children, to build a better Canada.

[*English*]

This is a nation whose founders, just 150 years ago, came together to build a new country. They built a Constitution and a democratic system that endured to this day, a Constitution that has enshrined timeless values and principles of democracy, freedom and the rule of law.

[*Translation*]

They made Canada a free, prosperous and united country that was able to overcome divisions based on language, religion or ethnicity.

[*English*]

This is the Canada we must stand for, here and abroad. This is the Canada the government must stand for, here and abroad.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I enjoyed listening to the member's speech, which as always is very thoughtful.

The member was negative on Canada's ability to meet its Paris targets. I was wondering if he was aware of the report that came out of Queen's University this week, out of its Institute for Sustainable Finance, that concluded that we can reach our targets with about \$120 billion in investment, of which about half could come from the private sector.

When I read that, it made me think of the throne speech which mentions that the government will be creating a clean energy fund, and will be using the Canada Infrastructure Bank to leverage private capital towards achieving a greener future.

I think this report offers a lot of hope, and a bit of a path forward. I would like to hear the member's comments vis-à-vis that report.

*The Address*

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, climate change is one of our biggest foreign policy challenges. I read the report that came out of Queen's University, but we are a long way from our Paris targets. Our target is 523 megatonnes and we have nine short years to reach that.

With the path we are currently on, with all the measures that have been implemented to date, all the analysis demonstrates that we are not on track to meet those targets. Therefore, I am skeptical about the rhetoric in the Speech from the Throne that Canada will not only meet its Paris targets, but in fact exceed them. I will wait for legislative and other measures the government brings forward, but the track record does not suggest a lot of optimism.

• (1735)

[Translation]

**Ms. Monique Pauzé (Repentigny, BQ):** Madam Speaker, in his speech my colleague spoke a great deal about international organizations.

However, unless I missed it, I heard nothing about the WHO, the World Health Organization. We know that the United States has withdrawn from the WHO and that Canada has received a request from the European Union to increase its contribution to the WHO. I would like to know the position of my colleague and his party on this.

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, we support the WHO. I believe that this organization is very important in a world currently in the throes of a major pandemic.

We also support the role of Taiwan in this organization. I spoke with my Taiwanese counterpart here, in Ottawa, to tell him that the Conservatives support Taiwan's inclusion in the WHO because, in my opinion, Taiwan did a good job dealing with this pandemic.

[English]

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. colleague on his appointment as the foreign affairs critic.

Unless I am mistaken, I am not sure I heard my colleague's views on Canada's relationship with Saudi Arabia. He mentioned some of the very serious transgressions of human rights in the world. With Saudi Arabia, we have an absolute monarchy. Not only is it not a democracy, it does not even allow its citizens to vote. It is a known misogynist country. It is interfering in neighbouring Yemen, where we have maybe the largest humanitarian catastrophe on the planet, with children starving and civilians being bombed. We know that the Saudi Arabian government was responsible for murdering a journalist in Europe.

Does my colleague have any comment about what his party's position is on what Canada's relationship should be with Saudi Arabia? Does he agree with me that we should be putting sanctions on a country like Saudi Arabia, which is violating human rights so egregiously?

**Hon. Michael Chong:** Madam Speaker, the government needs to uphold its obligations under domestic law, under the law concerning export and import permits for military exports and imports, and it needs to uphold its international obligations under the arms

treaty. The government has been inconsistent in upholding those obligations.

The member mentioned Saudi Arabia, but there is another present example this week of Turkey. A year ago, the government halted exports of military equipment to Turkey out of concern that it was failing to uphold its obligations as a NATO member. Last April/May, it reinstated the approvals for those permits, and exports have allegedly gone to Turkey. These are being used in Azerbaijan in the conflict currently unfolding in the Caucasus. Then several days ago it reversed course yet again and put another halt to the export permits.

It seems to me that the government is not upholding its obligations under domestic and international law.

**Mr. Todd Doherty (Cariboo—Prince George, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to give a shout-out to my colleague from Wellington—Halton Hills. I congratulate him on his fantastic speech. I have had the honour of serving with him for over five years now.

This is a unique situation. We are in a hybrid situation. I am speaking from my hometown of Williams Lake, where I am very proud to be from, in my riding of Cariboo—Prince George.

I could comment a lot on the Speech from the Throne, but as October 4 to 10 is Mental Illness Awareness Week, it has provided us a unique opportunity to view this global pandemic through the mental health lens. Now more than ever we need to turn our focus and see mental health in parity with physical health. Looking at COVID, the Speech from the Throne fell short in many ways, and I will focus my speech on that.

I want to take members back to January 27 when I first raised the issue of COVID-19 with the government, and I was summarily dismissed by the Minister of Health. I was told that it was not an issue. I and my Conservative colleagues and other colleagues from the opposition were fearmongering. I was wrong to suggest that we needed to do more as a country. I was wrong to suggest that we needed to really focus. We were taking a non-partisan approach and we were challenging the government to look at and prepare us for what was eventually to come. The warning signs were there. The opposition saw it. I am not quite sure why the government did not see it coming.

We know that prolonged isolation and physical distancing have a detrimental effect on mental health. From personal experience, the effects of this pandemic have been extremely detrimental. Our colleagues on all sides, and who are speaking all across our country, are hearing heartbreaking stories. They are talking with their constituents who are losing their businesses. Not only do they have their financial stressors, they also have their health stressors that are adding to increased anxiety. We need to be better.

A very serious issue with COVID has been raised, and it is our seniors. My father-in-law has been diagnosed with cancer. Early in May, we moved him to our home for palliative care. The end is near for my father-in-law. COVID has been both a blessing and a curse. We have the chance to spend an increased amount of time with him, time that most Canadians do not have. However, the stress on everyday Canadians and what we have seen in seniors care facilities across our country is shocking.

It is not the case for a majority of Canadians. We know that many Canadians are not as fortunate as we are, for example, for me to bring my father-in-law into our home. We have seen cases on social media as well as in the news where loved ones have had to watch at a distance. They have not had the opportunity to spend those final moments with their loved ones who are in senior care facilities.

Unfortunately, we know that seniors 50-plus are at a higher risk of COVID as well as mental illness and mental injury. Those who are 60 and 70 years of age are even at a higher risk. We are failing this important community in our nation. Underlying medical conditions put seniors at a higher risk. As high as eight out of 10 deaths related to COVID are seniors over 65.

Another important segment are those people who are living with deadly illnesses such as ALS. I had the honour to meet with one of my constituents, Deane Gorsline. Deane was a young man serving in our Canadian Armed Forces. At the age of 29, he was struck with ALS. Just a couple of weeks ago, I met with him and his group, the ALS Action Canada organization.

● (1740)

The group shared with us that those who were living with these deadly diseases were suffering devastating impacts because of COVID. Some members in the chamber will remember our colleague, Mauril Bélanger, and the speed at which the disease wracked his body. It quickly took away his ability to communicate and it quickly took him from us.

We have all suffered through this pandemic, but those suffering life-threatening diseases are at a greater risk of physical and mental illness. Without access to hospital services, chronic health problems can worsen. Changes in sleeping and eating patterns can be detrimental to their mental health. Isolation, loneliness and increased anxiety are all factors in someone's mental well-being. We know that increased isolation and physical distancing leads to increased anxiety and high stress. It also leads to substance abuse, increased domestic violence and suicidal crises. We need to be better.

When I looked at the Speech from the Throne, I was hopeful. The Prime Minister prorogued Parliament for six weeks. I was hopeful that it really was a reset. Instead we saw much of the same that had experienced over the first year of last session and the four years previous.

There was not much in the Speech from the Throne on mental health. Essentially, it was two lines. The first was that the government would further increase access to mental health resources for all Canadians. If they have the care they need when they need it, we will all be stronger for it. We need to ensure that whether it is some-

### *The Address*

body struggling with mental illness or injury in Newfoundland or British Columbia, we need to have consistent care.

It is shocking for me to hear comments from ministers of the Crown, such as the Minister of Employment, who make light of PTSD. That further minimizes and stigmatizes those who are struggling and suffering silently in the shadows.

The second mention in the Speech from the Throne about mental health was, "Expediting work to co-develop distinctions-based Indigenous health legislation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation, and a distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategy." We all need to ensure we build awareness, but we also need action. I was looking for that. The stakeholder groups that I have met with in the last few weeks since the Speech from the Throne all say the same thing. It is not enough to create hope; we have to create action. That was missing in the Speech from the Throne.

This is really shameful. Now more than ever we need a plan for recovery. We did not see that. We saw more platitudes in the over 7,000 words in the Speech from the Throne. I think Canadians across the country were looking for an economic plan and a recovery plan, and that has to include mental health. Right now more than ever we need that. We need a plan that will not leave seniors behind. We need a plan that will not further alienate those living with deadly illnesses.

The Liberals are talking a good game, but are not doing enough. The Speech from the Throne is a failure. Seniors, like my father-in-law, will drop through the cracks if we do not change course very soon. What happens to seniors who do not have families like ours? What happens if families do not have the opportunity to move their loved ones into their homes for end-of-life care? What happens to a family who cannot afford to take on that extra responsibility?

Those suffering with ALS and diseases like it need special care and consideration when developing plans for second and third waves of COVID. We are well into the second wave at this point, or just entering it, but we need to be thinking about that third wave. We need to do better and we must.

We also know that two to three years after a major crisis, such as the wildfires in Fort McMurray or in B.C., there is an increase in suicides, domestic violence and socio-economic issues such as alcohol and substance abuse. We need to have a plan to combat that. We can do better and we must do better.

*The Address*

• (1745)

**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 listened to the member talk about the importance of our seniors. That is something the government has been very much aware of from listening to members of the Liberal caucus, ministers, opposition members, governments at different levels and seniors themselves. The support given has been very real and tangible. We can talk about the increases to the OAS and GIS, or about the GST rebates, but something that often gets overlooked is the millions of dollars that have been given to non-profit organizations. Many of these are committed to supporting our seniors, ensuring that they do not become shut in and so forth.

I wonder if my friend could provide some thoughts in terms of how important it was that the Government of Canada, in co-operation with others, worked to support these non-profits that provide such critical services to our seniors.

• (1750)

**Mr. Todd Doherty:** Madam Speaker, whether it is this government or future governments, more is needed. We are seeing seniors fall through the cracks. We need to work with our provincial partners to make sure that we have a plan moving forward. We did not see that in the Speech from the Throne.

We will take no lessons from the Liberals in terms of how they are moving forward, in terms of their seniors' care or those living with serious illnesses. We know that the Liberals were not prepared. They did not heed the warnings and were left scrambling at the last minute, and people lost their lives.

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am very proud to be here from Hamilton Centre, and I want to tell the hon. member that his speech and his interventions earlier on mental health, quite frankly, were very touching and moving. They are compassionate, and of the likes that I perhaps have not heard from members of the Conservative caucus in talking about the need for expanded health care.

In his pleas for increased investments in mental health, would the member not agree that mental health ought to be part of our health care act, that it be included in a head-to-toe provision and provided free to Canadians across the country regardless of the benefits package that is tied to their work? We know that during the COVID pandemic, as people lost their jobs, any benefits for mental health were cut off. They need to be restored in a national health care effort.

**Mr. Todd Doherty:** Madam Speaker, I am deeply passionate about mental health, as is our leader, which is why he appointed me as special adviser to him and created this position.

I am not sure how many funerals my colleagues have attended due to suicide, whether of a teenager, a loved one, first responder or veteran, and I am not sure how many families they have sat with who were struggling to pick up the pieces, but we need to do more. We need to make sure that mental health is on parity with physical health. It is not enough to be just physically healthy anymore. We have to be mentally healthy as well.

Leadership starts at the top. It starts with the federal government and, sadly, we did not see that in the Speech from the Throne.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I share the same feelings and concerns as my colleague.

He talked about the mental health of seniors. I would like him to talk about those aged 65 to 75. Have they not been isolated and hard hit by the crisis? Do they not need a bit of breathing room, in other words an increase in their pension?

He talked about mental health services. He said that mental health should be as important as physical health. He is absolutely right, but sometimes in public systems there are emergencies. There is also a major lack of resources. Sadly we sometimes tend to take care of physical health before taking care of mental health. The idea is to have more resources. He very clearly mentioned that this is a responsibility of Quebec and the provinces.

Does he not believe that health transfers should be increased?

[*English*]

**Mr. Todd Doherty:** Madam Speaker, I think we need to make sure we have leadership from the top. We need to get together with our provincial colleagues to make sure we have a plan that spans from coast to coast to coast, and to make sure no one falls through the cracks regardless of their age or socio-economic background. We need to do better. That starts with us: the 338 members of Parliament. Mental health should not be a partisan issue, and we can work together collaboratively to find a solution as we move forward. Sadly, the Speech from the Throne fell short in this area.

• (1755)

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, before I begin I want to let you know that I will be sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg North.

It is a pleasure to be here today, virtually from Surrey, B.C., during these extraordinary times. I am honoured to have this opportunity to speak on the Speech from the Throne.

The coronavirus pandemic has changed the world as we know it. We find ourselves with the remarkable opportunity to make our country, and our world, a better place than it was before. We have the opportunity to build back better, to make sure Canadians have the support and resources they need to feel safe and to get through anything that may arise in the coming months and years. By making sure we support Canadians today and tomorrow, we are ensuring the success of our great country. The four pillars of the Speech from the Throne lay a road map for just that.

*The Address*

The last few months have been an incredible challenge in so many ways, but we have come far since the beginning of the pandemic. As we begin to see signs of the second wave in parts of the country, we need to remain vigilant. We must all continue to do our part by listening to the expert advice of our public health officials, keeping our social circles small, physically distancing from each other, wearing masks when keeping a two-metre distance from others is not possible, and practising good hand hygiene.

Canada fared well in the first wave. Our hospitals did not become overwhelmed, and individuals did their part by staying home. We were able to keep our case numbers manageable compared with many other countries around the world. We know so much more about the spread of the virus now than we did in the early days of the pandemic. We know how important testing and contact tracing are. My incredibly hard-working and dedicated colleagues and their teams have been working around the clock to make sure that Canadians have access to PPE, testing kits and, in the future, vaccines.

So far we have approved 36 tests, including two that are point-of-care, to help with rapid testing in specific populations, such as rural and remote communities. The Vaccine Task Force is helping the government with the procurement of new vaccine candidates. Just last week, Health Canada announced that it had received its first submission for authorization of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Half of our country's PPE needs are now being manufactured domestically, compared with nearly none a few months ago. We saw incredible resourcefulness and innovation across the country. Breweries and distilleries have restructured to make hand sanitizer, clothing companies are making gowns and face masks, and sporting goods companies are making face shields. In my own community, Surrey-based Central City Brewers and Distillers began producing hand sanitizer.

We have been working closely with the provinces and territories from the outset to acquire PPE, making sure Canadians and businesses had the support they needed to weather the storm. Over the summer, our government announced the \$19 billion safe restart agreement with the provinces, and an additional \$2 billion for the safe return to class fund.

We are working hard to restore employment levels to what they were pre-pandemic. We created one million new jobs before, and we will do it again. However, we know that, even with the continued positive news from recent labour force surveys and the return of many jobs, there are still a lot of Canadians without work who continue to struggle. Nearly nine million Canadians received support from the Canada emergency response benefit and 3.5 million were supported by the Canada emergency wage subsidy. I know from speaking with many of my constituents in Surrey Centre that these benefits, and the measures introduced earlier on, were vital to them.

To help Canadians return to the workforce, we will create direct investments in the social sector and infrastructure, immediate training to quickly skill up workers, and incentives for employers to retain workers. This will be vital to our energy sector workers as we transition to a greener and more sustainable economy so we are able to meet our environmental goals and slow climate change.

We also know that youth across the country have had a particularly challenging time, facing the loss of job prospects. We will scale up the youth employment strategy to create more jobs for young people.

While we work to return these jobs to address the continued needs of Canadians, we have begun transitioning many Canadians back to an expanded EI and have created the new Canada recovery benefit, Canada recovery caregiver benefit and Canada recovery sickness benefit.

● (1800)

We have also extended the wage subsidy until next summer so employers can keep their employees on the payroll. My community has many small and medium-sized businesses that have been relying on the wage subsidy, the Canada emergency business account and the business credit availability program to keep afloat.

To further assist small and medium-sized businesses, we recently announced \$600 million in addition to the \$962 million in funding already allocated for the regional relief and recovery fund. This funding will especially help industries related to events and tourism, including banquet halls, caterers and hotels in Surrey.

We continue to work with local organizations that know the needs of their communities best. Recently, the Surrey Board of Trade received \$50,000 in funding for business economic recovery services, and SurreyCares Community Foundation has been distributing thousands of dollars in grants to local organizations through the federal emergency community support fund.

The pandemic has shone a spotlight on the inequalities in our country. Women, especially low-income women and women of colour, have been hit hard by job losses. They have left jobs to care for their children or relatives, or are more likely to be working on the front lines in low-wage positions. We will be creating the action plan for women in the economy to make sure that the gains women have fought so hard for, socially and politically, do not reverse. We know the importance and benefits of having equal representation in our workforce.

Throughout the course of the pandemic, we have been assisting parents with child care support, including the additional \$300-per-child payment as part of the Canada child benefit. We will continue to give parents access to affordable, high-quality and inclusive child care. We know this is needed in order to make sure that women have the opportunity to get back to work.

*The Address*

We can no longer say we did not know. We know the struggles faced by Canadians. There has been grief and worry, and our government will continue to address the needs of our most vulnerable. These gaps in our social system need to be closed. In 2020, it is unacceptable that we continue to have members of our communities being left behind.

We will build our communities back stronger and more resilient than before by investing in infrastructure like public transit, energy efficient retrofits, clean energy, rural broadband and affordable housing, particularly for indigenous peoples and northern communities.

For seniors, we will continue to work with the provinces and territories to set new national standards for long-term care so seniors get the best support possible. We will also ensure those who mistreat and neglect seniors will be penalized, by working with Parliament to change the Criminal Code.

The disability inclusion plan will include a new benefit modelled around the GIS and create a better process to determine eligibility for government disability programs and benefits. Our government has been committed to achieving national, universal pharmacare and we will be working with the provinces and territories to ensure we move quickly to create it.

We also know the inequalities we are seeing in our society are not only a result of the coronavirus pandemic. They have much deeper roots in systemic racism and discrimination. Visible minorities in Canada are hurting, and have been hurting for years.

We are committed to walking the shared path of reconciliation with indigenous peoples by accelerating work on the national action plan and on the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, as well as continuing to close the infrastructure gap in indigenous communities and working on a distinctions basis with first nations, Inuit and the Métis nation to accelerate the government's 10-year commitment.

We will continue to support racialized Canadians. The Parliamentary Black Caucus has championed these rights, and their advocacy is reflected in the Speech from the Throne. The Black entrepreneurship program will ensure that those who face systemic racism and discrimination have access to tools for economic empowerment and increase the diversity in procurement. There is still a lot work to do, but we are moving in the right direction.

We have seen how coming together in the House and in our communities has benefited Canadians. We are still very much in the middle of the coronavirus pandemic, and now is not the time to let our guard down. Cynicism and fear did not get us through the first wave and it will not get us through the second. The only way forward is through working together.

Most encouraging, though, is all the organizations that have contributed to a team Canada style support for their neighbours. Here in Surrey, Kiran Saluja and her volunteers at the Sewing Army, an organization of 18 seniors, made over 15,000 masks from their homes and gave them to non-profits and those in need.

From—

• (1805)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The member's time is up. I am sure he can add more during questions and comments.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Carleton.

**Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Carleton, CPC):** Madam Speaker, I want to talk about the incredible resilience and courage of our entrepreneurs in this difficult time.

I was in Stittsville the other day, an Ottawa area community, where I met with a couple that just opened a brand new pharmacy and another group that opened a bar that employs local residents and serves local customers. One lady suffered through cancer and survived it, started a business and lost that business because of COVID-19. Just last week, she started yet another business. This is the kind of courage and relentless risk-taking that will bring back our country, stronger. It kind of reminds of the saying, "Good timber does not grow with ease; the stronger wind, the stronger trees."

Would the member share with me his view on the role that our courageous and daring entrepreneurs will play in bringing our economy back?

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Madam Speaker, it is the entrepreneurial spirit of Canadians that has built Canada. It is the entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized businesses and Canadians who have stepped up in this pandemic, whether it was to make PPE, to help neighbours or to help those who were quarantined by getting them necessary supplies, medicine and food. Seniors who wanted to help took out their old sewing machines and made masks for non-profits that could not afford them or avail themselves of them. Distilleries, as I said, stopped production to make sure that Canada had enough hand sanitizer.

The resilience of Canadian entrepreneurs is world renowned, and during this pandemic it was shown in flying colours. I want to thank all of them today.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Sylvie Bérubé (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Madam Speaker, since my colleague talked about racism, I will talk about indigenous communities. It is good to talk, but there also needs to be action.

*The Address*

Can we acknowledge the clear link between the spread of COVID-19 and the sanitary conditions of first nations? Can we pass a bill to give effect to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples? Can we adopt framework legislation to replace the first nations policing policy? Can we deploy resources to ensure this is carried on in the daily practice, languages, culture and traditions of indigenous peoples? Can we fix the way indigenous schools operate to address the education crisis?

[English]

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Madam Speaker, there is a lot of work to be done on the indigenous file. We have done a lot in the last five years, whether it was for language or water advisories. I think there are only five or so water advisories remaining, and over 140 have been taken away. However, there is a lot more work to do.

I live in a riding with one of the largest urban indigenous populations in the Lower Mainland, and I continue to see the challenges they face, including the residential school system's intergenerational trauma. There is a lot of work to be done there. We recently saw what happened to an indigenous person who was in a hospital awaiting treatment and how the individual was treated. This is unacceptable, and I will support any legislation and efforts we can make to improve their health, well-being, way of life and standard of living.

● (1810)

**Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP):** Madam Speaker, we heard good words about reconciliation, yet 45 minutes from my house, on Six Nations territory, Haudenosaunee land defenders are being criminalized by both the OPP and crown prosecutors.

Does the member believe that indigenous land defenders who are peacefully protecting their land claims are terrorists, as defined under Bill C-51?

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Madam Speaker, I will be frank. I have not looked at the legislation as it pertains to that or that situation in particular. I thank the member for raising it. I will definitely look into that in greater depth and detail.

However, I am sure our Minister of Justice and others are looking into that and ensuring their actions are taken as they are and not out of context.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** I want to remind the hon. member that I will have to unfortunately interrupt him at some point.

Resuming debate, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

**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, from day one, the Prime Minister and the government have been very clear in terms of what the priority is. We understand and appreciate the significance of the pandemic, and we have been there in a very real and tangible way for Canadians from coast to coast, whether it is protecting the health and well-being of Canadians, or looking at ways to ensure the damage of the pandemic is minimized. That has been a top priority from this government.

We recognize that the Government of Canada cannot do it alone, and it has been really encouraging to see virtually all sectors of society recognize the importance of what needed to be done and coming together in order to get that job done.

I want to start by reading a couple of specifics from a letter written by Brian Pallister, the Progressive Conservative Premier of Manitoba. This came after Ottawa invested \$19 billion into the safe restart agreement with the provinces and the territories. I will quote specifically from the letter from the premier:

This federal funding will help support work already undertaken by the Government of Manitoba to increase daily testing capacity from a baseline of 1,000 tests to more than 3,000 tests per day.

Another point states:

The Government of Canada will provide \$700 million to support health care system capacity to respond to the potential future wave of COVID-19. A further \$500 million will address immediate needs and gaps in the support and protection of people experiencing challenges related to mental health, substance use or homelessness. This investment will help keep Canadians safe and healthy with the health care supports they need.

The throne speech highlights many of the initiatives that the Government of Canada has taken with co-operation from a wide spectrum of society. Literally dozens of programs were created from absolutely nothing. We have some of the best civil servants in the world making sure that those programs were being administered, so we could get the necessary funds and supports into the pockets of Canadians in all regions of our country. It has been quite encouraging to see provinces, territories, indigenous leaders, municipalities, non-profit organizations and entrepreneurs came together.

We recognized the feedback provided by individual members of Parliament. Members of Parliament have worked day in and day out through these last eight months assisting their constituents through a wide variety of issues. They took some of those issues and brought them to cabinet, whether directly through a minister or indirectly through the deputy House leader, and there are many other ways which that was achieved.

That direct input was requested by the Prime Minister, who wanted to see members of Parliament, not only from Liberal benches, but also from all sides of the House, talk to their constituents and find out where the Government of Canada could continue to build the consensus necessary to deal with COVID-19. We are here today voting on a throne speech that encapsulates many of those initiatives, and puts a detailed plan on paper. I encourage all members to support and vote for this—

● (1815)

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** No doubt we would have enjoyed the rest of the member's speech. However, it being 6:15, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forth every question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

The question is on the motion.

*The Address**[Translation]*

Pursuant to order made on Wednesday, September 23, we will not call for the yeas and nays. As a result, if a member of a recognized party present in the House wants to request a recorded vote or request that the motion be passed on division, I invite them to rise and so indicate to the Chair.

*[English]*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I request a vote.

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** Call in the members.

• (1935)

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

*(Division No. 8)*

## YEAS

## Members

Alghabra	Amos
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Bachrach	Badawey
Bagnell	Bains
Baker	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bessette
Bibeau	Bittle
Blaikie	Blair
Blaney (North Island—Powell River)	Blois
Boulerice	Bratina
Brière	Cannings
Casey	Chagger
Chen	Collins
Cormier	Dabrusin
Damoff	Davies
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Duvall	Dzerowicz
Easter	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Ellis
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Finnigan
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fragiskatos
Fraser	Freeland
Fry	Garneau
Garrison	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gould
Green	Guilbeault
Hajdu	Hardie
Harris	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jones	Jordan
Jowhari	Julian
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lambropoulos
Lametti	Lamoureux
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier

Lefebvre	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
Masse	Mathysen
May (Cambridge)	McCrimmon
McDonald	McGuinty
McKay	McKenna
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod (Northwest Territories)
McPherson	Mendès
Menicino	Miller
Monsef	Morrissey
Murray	Ng
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski	Qaqqaq
Qualtrough	Ratansi
Regan	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota (Brampton North)
Saini	Sajjan
Samson	Sangha
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schieffe	Schulte
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sikand	Simms
Singh	Sorbara
Spengemann	Tabbara
Tassi	Trudeau
Turnbull	Van Bynen
van Koevorden	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Vaughan
Virani	Weiler
Wilkinson	Wilson-Raybould
Yip	Young
Zahid	Zann
Zuberi— 177	

## NAYS

## Members

Aitchison	Albas
Alleslev	Allison
Arnold	Atwin
Baldinelli	Barlow
Barrett	Barsalou-Duval
Beaulieu	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis)
Block	Boudrias
Bragdon	Brassard
Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Carrie	Chabot
Champoux	Charbonneau
Chiu	Chong
Cooper	Cumming
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	d'Entremont
Desbiens	Desilets
Diotte	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock)
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fortin
Gallant	Gaudreau
Généreux	Genius

*Adjournment Proceedings*

Gill	Gladu
Godin	Gourde
Gray	Hallan
Harder	Hoback
Jansen	Jeneroux
Kelly	Kent
Kitchen	Kmiec
Kram	Kurek
Kusie	Lake
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Liepert
Lobb	Lukiwski
MacKenzie	Maguire
Manly	Martel
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McColeman
McLean	McLeod (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo)
Melillo	Michaud
Moore	Morantz
Morrison	Motz
Nater	Normandin
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Rayes
Redekopp	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Rood	Ruff
Sahota (Calgary Skyview)	Saroya
Savard-Tremblay	Schmale
Seeback	Shields
Shin	Shiple
Simard	Sloan
Soroka	Stanton
Steinley	Ste-Marie
Strahl	Stubbs
Sweet	Thériault
Therrien	Tochor
Trudel	Uppal
Van Popta	Vecchio
Vidal	Viersen
Vignola	Vis
Wagantall	Warkentin
Wagh	Webber
Williamson	Wong
Yurdiga	Zimmer—152

## PAIRED

Nil

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

**Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved:

That the address be engrossed and presented to Her Excellency the Governor General by the Speaker.

(Motion agreed to)

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**ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC):** Mr. Speaker, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, or the IPU, is a

critically important international organization. It has been described as the United Nations of parliaments. Essentially, it is an organization of legislators that brings together parliamentarians from around the world. It plays an important role in helping to advance democracy and human rights through dialogue among different parliamentarians.

I am very pleased to share with the House something I think members already know, in large part, which is that Senator Salma Atallahjan, who has been involved in the IPU for a very long time and has used the IPU as a forum for advancing important human rights issues, is running for the presidency of that organization. I am very pleased that all members of our Conservative caucus are supporting her bid to lead the IPU. I know she has a great deal of support in other parties, including, for instance, within the government caucus.

The member for Beaches—East York told *The Globe and Mail*, “While we represent different parties, I’ve seen firsthand Salma’s thoughtful diplomacy at IPU conferences, and our Parliament would be lucky to have her represent Canada on the world stage”.

The Liberal member for Hull—Aylmer concurred. He told *The Globe and Mail*, “Salma would be a great leader of the IPU. It is good for Canada and for what our country represents.”

Senator Atallahjan was encouraged to run for the leadership of the IPU by delegates from Britain and New Zealand. I know she has substantial support around the world for this bid. It would be good for Canada to have this prominent Canadian senator, a strong advocate of human rights, representing Canadian values on the world stage, bringing together and strengthening the work of the IPU, and continuing to use that as a forum to advance important issues of justice and human rights.

Independent senator, Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia said that Ms. Atallahjan is a “beacon of human rights and inclusive values...and as a Muslim woman, she will raise the profile of Canada’s place in the IPU.”

I would just say as well that Senator Atallahjan has an extensive background in volunteering in various communities. She served on the executive board of the Canadian branch of the Citizens Foundation, an international organization that has built over 700 schools for Pakistan’s poorest children. Senator Atallahjan was appointed to the Senate by former prime minister Stephen Harper and was the first Canadian senator of Pakistani origin appointed.

Senator Atallahjan and I have had an opportunity to collaborate specifically on the issue of forced organ harvesting and trafficking. She put forward Bill S-240 in the last Parliament, which almost got passed but did not quite make it, and has since put forward Bill S-204 in this Parliament, another critically important human rights issue that just adds to a long list of the work of Senator Atallahjan.

This is a great opportunity for Canada to have a strong Canadian senator representing us at the Inter-Parliamentary Union in this important leadership role. It is important, therefore, for the government to get behind this bid and show its support because I know countries around the world are looking for that signal of support from the government, from our diplomatic representatives.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

It is very clear that the government has put the resources of government at the disposal of former finance minister Bill Morneau in his bid for a position within the OECD, and it is only right that Senator Ataullahjan have the support of government.

We disagree in this place on issues from time to time, of course, but we should be able to work together on the world stage to advance our national interests. Conservatives were supportive, as supportive as we could be, of the government's bid to get on the UN Security Council. We try to work together in these international fora, yet the government has been strangely silent around the bid of Senator Ataullahjan. The minister said he is going to wait, he is going to meet with future candidates later on, and so on and so forth.

It is important for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to send a clear signal of support for Senator Ataullahjan's bid for that strong Canadian voice on the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The minister and the parliamentary secretary have an opportunity right now to express that support, and I think it is very important that they do so.

• (1940)

**Mr. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is very important that we start out by getting some facts on the table here.

We are standing in the House, or speaking remotely as the case may be, as parliamentarians to discuss the Inter-Parliamentary Union: an international organization made up of parliamentarians like us, like you Madam Speaker, and all the members from 179 countries.

The IPU is an important international organization that I joined when I became a member in 2008. I am very disappointed that the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan is not a member of the IPU. I checked the membership today and was very disappointed that he does not have the confidence in the IPU that 85 people, senators and members of Parliament, have expressed by joining it.

The IPU is an interparliamentary association. It is not an inter-governmental association. It is very important to understand this is not a governmental organization. It is a long-standing practice that government does not interfere or intervene in our 12 parliamentary associations. This is very important to keep the independence of our parliamentary organizations.

I was the co-chair of one of our 12 associations for five years, and I appreciated our independence from government. I appreciated it, and in fact would expect or demand it.

This does not mean that the government does not wish the senator well in her campaign: in fact we do. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has spoken to her about her candidacy already, and will be doing so again. I have known Senator Ataullahjan for many years. I respect her greatly, both her work here in Ottawa and in the Greater Toronto Area, where we both come from.

I respect the work that she does and the issues she raises on human rights, equality, gender equity and anti-racism. However, the accusation that there is anything related to gender in the government following a long-standing practice on inter-parliamentary organizations is without any basis whatsoever. It is irrelevant.

What I would hope is that the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan would actually join the IPU, would recognize the importance of it, and also cherish the independence of it. Our government is proud of our inter-parliamentary associations and the work they contribute internationally and domestically. We will continue to do that while we continue to support gender equity, making sure that our cabinet and organizations are always treated with the utmost respect and ensuring that we have equality and justice.

• (1945)

**Mr. Garnett Genuis:** Madam Speaker, there might be something fair in that reproof in that I have been so busy critiquing the disastrous policy record of the government over the last five years that I just have not had time to fully engage in all of the parliamentary associations I might well have wished to.

If the government stops keeping me busy with all these flaws and problems in its legislative agenda, I might find time to get more engaged in some of these other areas, but that is really sort of beside the point.

The important point here is that it is very legitimate, and I think it is important, for our foreign affairs minister to send a clear signal. Without a doubt it is a signal that the government has been prepared to send in other cases, such as that involving the former finance minister.

I hope this is not about partisanship or about looking for excuses. It would not take much for the foreign affairs minister to send that signal and to work with our diplomatic representatives to say that we want to ensure strong Canadian representation, and a strong Canadian voice on the world stage.

Is that really so much to ask?

**Mr. Robert Oliphant:** Madam Speaker, this is about the independence and the integrity of our parliamentarians, and about the IPU, which stands for democracy and for Parliaments around the world to exercise their full rights.

We, of course, wish Senator Ataullahjan extreme good fortune in her bid to become its president. At the same time, we will stand and respect the independence of the IPU. This is completely different from the United Nations or the OECD, which are governmental organizations. I think the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan will understand the difference between a parliamentary organization and a governmental organization.

We will ensure that everything is done to support the candidacy of any Canadian seeking any role. However, we will make sure that we also guard and protect the independence of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and our parliamentary associations.

[Translation]

AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I hope that the adjournment debate will help clarify some things.

First, I would like to take this opportunity to commend my colleagues who are here in the House. The Bloc Québécois team is the biggest team in the House this evening. I am very pleased to see them here. They say it is always the best who leave first, but that is not true in this case.

Last Wednesday, during question period, I asked the government some questions about why there is no real policy in this regard. Of course, there has been some sporadic assistance, given at certain times, a little bit of money allocated on an ad hoc basis. However, the real question is, why is there no real policy?

Why is this industry not mentioned in the throne speech? It seems to me that a post-pandemic throne speech should mention the industries that are struggling. Unfortunately, the answers were completely unsatisfactory. The government said, among other things, that it was working hard for Canadians. However, we would like the government to make real commitments regarding the aerospace industry.

My humble opinion is that Canada could learn from Quebec when it comes to the aerospace industry. Quebec could serve as an inspiration, since it has had an aerospace policy for nearly 20 years. On top of that, it offers specialized workforce training, makes risk-sharing investments in major projects, offers a tax credit that is more appropriate for the sector than federal programs, and offers support to SMEs in the aerospace sector to help them integrate into their clients' supply chains. It has an integrated policy that has supported the development of the entire cluster. Since the sector is undergoing a radical transformation and is in a critical phase given the dismantling of Bombardier, Quebec is currently reviewing its policy, and consultations are under way. It is taking a proactive approach.

Still, there are certain things that a province cannot do alone. Ottawa needs to get on the same page. Sad to say, all we get now is radio silence. Any time we ask a question about it, we get no answer.

The aerospace industry is struggling, and it deserves real support. All members know that this is a massive and very important industry that includes 220 businesses in Quebec, 200 of which are SMEs. Since small businesses are the lifeblood of economic development in Quebec, we must give them all the support they need.

The context of the pandemic has come up often. A number of people have talked about planes being grounded and no orders being placed. This will probably not change for a long while. During the pandemic, 4,000 jobs were lost in the aerospace industry. In some cases, the federal support, such as the research and development tax credit or the Canada emergency wage subsidy, were not in tune with the reality. We, of course, fully supported the Canada emergency wage subsidy.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

All of this shows that the aerospace industry has completely fallen off of Ottawa's radar. This major, crucial industry tends to be left out when the government is developing programs that should be adapted in a pandemic.

• (1950)

[English]

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry (Innovation and Industry), Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond to comments made by the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot regarding aerospace.

We all know and fully recognize that great Canadian industries have been disrupted.

[Translation]

We know that Canadian workers and businesses have all been facing economic uncertainty and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[English]

Our government recognizes the importance of supporting the sectors that have been hardest hit by the current global pandemic, including, of course, the aerospace industry. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight our support to all sectors.

Our COVID-19 economic response plan includes broad measures to help Canadian businesses, small and large, weather this unprecedented storm. This includes the business credit availability program, the Canada emergency business account, the Canada emergency wage subsidy and, of course, the large employer emergency financing facility.

Let me be clear. Our government remains fully committed to supporting the aerospace sector and its workers in both the short term and the long term.

[Translation]

We have always gone to bat for Canada's aerospace workers, and we will keep doing so.

[English]

The aerospace industry in Quebec and across Canada is an extremely important industry for jobs, innovation and technology developments in Canada. In fact, as I am sure the member is fully aware, green aviation is an area where Canada is truly a global powerhouse. To be more specific, the two aircraft in the world that have environmental product designations are assembled right here in Canada.

*Adjournment Proceedings*

We know that aerospace is one of the most innovative and export-driven industries in Canada. It contributed over \$25 billion in gross domestic product and more than 210,000 jobs to the Canadian economy in 2018. The aerospace industry is also the number one research and development player among all Canadian manufacturing industries, with an R and D investment of \$1.5 billion in 2018, representing, I might add, approximately a quarter of all manufacturing R and D undertaken in Canada. The industry is national in scope, with important aerospace clusters in each region of the country, comprised of maintenance work, suppliers or large manufacturers.

Canada, in other words, is an innovative global leader in the aerospace industry, and we know that Quebeckers, and indeed Canadians across the country, rightfully take enormous pride in this sector. Our government has provided significant funding since 2015 to support the aerospace and space industries through innovation programs, including of course the strategic innovation fund. These key investments are driving ongoing advancements in this sector as it transitions to be cleaner, more innovative and more competitive.

Our funding, in turn, has leveraged significant private sector investments to better position the aerospace industry in Canada. Throughout this process our government has engaged with industry partners and has been extremely proactive in promoting Canada's aerospace sector. We are working closely with our partners on various issues that have arisen since the onset of the pandemic. We appreciate this ongoing—

• (1955)

[*Translation*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Madam Speaker, unfortunately, that answer confirms what I feared. The member said the aerospace industry is important, but then he just repeated many of the statistics I included in my own remarks. I appreciate that, and I thank my colleague, but there is still the matter of turning that into a policy.

The hon. parliamentary secretary replied that the government has invested money and that there are broad programs for struggling companies. We know that, but this industry deserves a specific program.

Why not do what Ottawa did for the auto industry and come up with a proper policy? Why not start by sitting down with all the stakeholders, including workers, companies and the Government of Quebec, which is a very important stakeholder and partner, and designing a real policy?

There are also a lot of programs that should be targeted, and we need a cohesive vision around that. Basically, the government needs to treat this as a truly strategic industry because, quite honestly, Canada is one of only countries in the world that has a real aerospace industry but does not treat it as such.

[*English*]

**Mr. Ali Ehsassi:** Madam Speaker, as our government moves forward with Canada's COVID-19 economic response plan, we will continue to work with affected sectors such as aerospace to ensure

that Canadian businesses and workers have the support they need. A smooth economic recovery will, of course, require an unprecedented level of collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Our government is fully committed to supporting the aerospace sector to create good, long-term jobs for its workers in Canada and help Canada's world-class aerospace industry weather this unprecedented COVID-19 storm. Our government will be there to help create a better future for Quebeckers and, indeed, for all Canadians.

SENIORS

**Mr. Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, Canada failed to protect long-term care residents from the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 840 outbreaks were reported in long-term care facilities and retirement homes across Canada, accounting for more than 80% of all COVID-19 deaths in the country. This represents the worst record of all comparable countries.

The situation was so dire that Canadian Forces had to be called in to long-term care facilities in Quebec and Ontario. Residents there were found underfed, abandoned and afraid. In some cases, they had been left to die alone in bed covered in their own urine and feces. These stories shocked our conscience and challenged our self-image as a compassionate and humane society. However, they were entirely foreseeable and avoidable.

Experts and advocates have been raising an alarm over the state of Canada's long-term care sector for many years, but successive federal governments have failed to act. Indeed, decades of research have demonstrated that insufficient staff-to-resident ratios and the reliance on precarious working conditions have led to hurried, dehumanizing care, high staff turnover and workforce instability in the Canadian long-term care sector.

British Columbia's long-term care system entered the pandemic with several advantages because the NDP provincial government had made progress on these issues prior to the outbreak despite the void of federal leadership. This included implementing measures to promote better coordination between long-term care, public health and hospitals; increased funding for long-term care; fewer shared rooms; and more comprehensive inspections.

Moreover, Premier Horgan acted early in the pandemic to limit long-term care workers to a single facility to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Before the pandemic, workers were forced to pick up shifts at multiple facilities that paid differing and insufficient wages. However, the B.C. government has spent more than \$10 million a month to level up the wages and benefits of long-term care workers so that they earn a standard income no matter where they work. Premier Horgan has pledged to make this increase permanent.

As Canada sits on the crest of a second wave of COVID-19 and outbreaks in long-term care facilities are flaring up once again, residents remain at extreme risk due to continued federal inaction. In order to prevent another catastrophe, Canada's leading scientists and scholars are calling on the government to act immediately to implement binding national standards of care tied to new federal funding.

In its recent throne speech, the government did pledge to “work with the provinces and territories to set new, national standards for long-term care”. However, it failed to provide a timeline for action or a commitment to new federal funding.

Can the Liberal government confirm whether binding national standards and funding tied to meeting these standards for long-term care will be in place in time to protect vulnerable residents from the second wave of COVID-19?

● (2000)

**Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Seniors, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Vancouver Kingsway for his excellent question.

[*Translation*]

One of the greatest tragedies of this pandemic is the lives lost in long-term care facilities. Like all Canadians, we are alarmed by the events that have occurred. In a country like ours, we should not need to call in soldiers to look after our seniors, as my colleague mentioned in his introduction.

The pandemic has highlighted the challenges that the long-term care sector has faced for many years. It has also highlighted the essential work done by personal support workers across the country who deserve greater recognition for the contributions they make to our society. While long-term care is regulated by the provincial and territorial governments, the federal government works with the provinces and territories to ensure the safety of residents and staff.

Under the new COVID-19 resilience stream of the investing in Canada program, federal infrastructure funding can be used to modernize long-term care homes, making them more resilient to ensure the safety of seniors.

The safe restart agreement has invested \$740 million in infection prevention and control measures in long-term care homes and among other vulnerable populations.

We published guidelines for long-term care facilities to prevent and control COVID-19 outbreaks. We are investing billions of dollars in the procurement of PPE for health care workers, including the staff of long-term care facilities. We have provided \$3 billion to

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the provinces and territories to increase the wages of low-income essential workers, such as staff at long-term care facilities.

Members of the Canadian Armed Forces were deployed in more than 50 long-term care facilities in Quebec and Ontario, as my colleague mentioned.

In the Speech from the Throne, our government presented ambitious plans to work with other levels of government to improve how our society cares for seniors in long-term care.

Our government is committed to working with the provinces and territories to establish new national standards for long-term care. Our government will include in the Criminal Code penalties for those who neglect seniors under their care, putting them in harm's way. Our government will also examine other measures specifically for personal support workers.

Together with other measures, all this could help provide better protection for seniors and prevent this type of tragedy from ever happening again.

In conclusion, seniors built our country and continue to make an important contribution to our economy, our families and our communities. Seniors need to know that they can always count on our government to be sensitive to their needs and work hard to meet them.

● (2005)

[*English*]

**Mr. Don Davies:** Madam Speaker, families are incredibly worried that their loved ones in long-term care will not get the support they need. They do not want to see more jurisdictional wrangling or finger pointing; they need concrete action now. The long-term care crisis is a national problem and the federal government must play a leadership role to resolve it immediately.

When the Liberal government previously struck targeted funding agreements in budgets to improve home and community care as well as mental health and addiction services, all in provincial competency by the way, it did not use jurisdiction as an excuse not to act. Long-term care residents deserve equal protection from COVID-19 no matter where they live in Canada. Therefore, when can Canadian seniors expect concrete action to improve their care in these vulnerable facilities?

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[*Translation*]

**Mr. Stéphane Lauzon:** Madam Speaker, we will be there to support the provinces and the territories who need help managing their long-term care system.

Contrary to what my colleague across the way is saying, communications with the provinces are good. We are working together for our seniors whether by supporting them with the Canadian Armed Forces, investing in PPE, or being there for our seniors in long-term care.

We announced a new funding stream, COVID-19 resilience, which allows federal infrastructure funding to be used to improve

long-term care facilities during the pandemic, in order to ensure the safety of seniors. We will always be there for seniors together with the provinces and territories.

[*English*]

**The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 8:08 p.m.)

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