



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

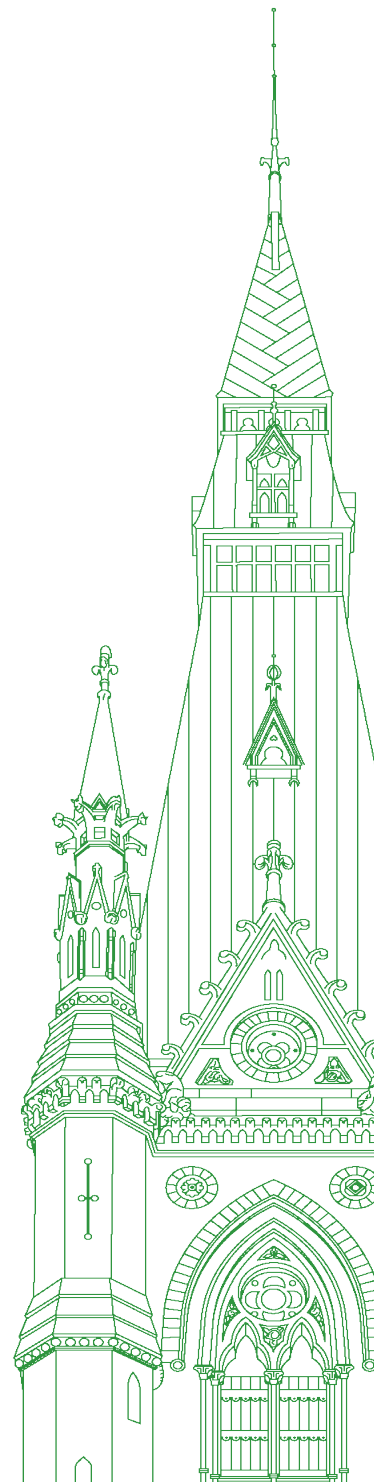
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House of Commons Debates

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Speaker: The Honourable Anthony Rota



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 18, 2022

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayer

● (1400)

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: For *O Canada*, today we have the hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

[Members sang the national anthem]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

MULLIVAICKAL REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for Mullivaikkal, Tamils across the world mourn their loved ones. May 18, 2009, marks the end of the armed conflict in Sri Lanka. With no peace on the island until this date, over 70,000 Tamils were killed, 300,000 were detained and countless disappeared.

[Translation]

Today marks the 13th anniversary of the Mullivaikkal genocide. We join with the Tamil people in honouring them and remembering.

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[English]

LEADERSHIP IN NIAGARA FALLS

Mr. Tony Baldinelli (Niagara Falls, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize four outstanding individuals from my beautiful riding of Niagara Falls who have made significant contributions in our communities and in this country. They are as follows.

David Mostoway, better known as Duff Roman from his broadcasting days, from Niagara-on-the-Lake, was appointed to the Order of Canada by the Governor General for his significant contributions to the Canadian music industry.

Peter Warrack, also of Niagara-on-the-Lake, was recently awarded the Meritorious Service Cross by the Governor General in recognition of his significant work to combat human trafficking in Canada and abroad.

Steve Ludzik, from Niagara Falls, was awarded the Meritorious Service Decoration Award in the civil division from the Governor General for his work in establishing the Steve Ludzik Centre for Parkinson's Rehab at Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre.

Aaron Tate, of Niagara Falls, was awarded the Ontario Medal for Firefighter Bravery by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario for putting his own life at risk by rescuing a distressed teenager in the raging waters of the Lower Niagara River.

Congratulations to these four constituents for their incredible work, sacrifices and commitment to bettering the lives of those in our communities and our country.

* * *

● (1405)

MULLIVAICKAL REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Scarborough—Rouge Park, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on this Tamil genocide remembrance day, I want to honour those who died and those who survived. I want to honour the mothers of the disappeared who continue to search for their lost children; the women and men who are at Mullivaikkal today to commemorate their loved ones while under strict surveillance by the Sri Lankan military; the war widows who are struggling to feed and raise their children alone, all the while searching for answers; and the Tamil nation for its resilience and persistence against all odds and its relentless pursuit of justice, accountability and self-determination.

Today is also a day to recommit to ensuring that we have accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. In Sri Lanka, this starts with the discredited Rajapaksa brothers, whose veil of impunity is unravelling. International impunity will also end as we reaffirm the international rules-based order, and the Rajapaksas and others will face the wrath of justice.

Today, let us remember and reaffirm our thirst for justice, accountability and peace.

Statements by Members

[Translation]

PIERRE DE BELLEFEUILLE

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow I will have the honour of attending a book launch in my riding. It is a biography about Pierre de Bellefeuille, a former Parti Québécois MNA. In his book, entitled *Pierre de Bellefeuille Parcours d'un libre penseur*, author Denis Monière recounts the extraordinary life of a man who was a journalist at *Le Droit*, an executive at the National Film Board of Canada, editor of *Maclean's* magazine and director of exhibitors at Expo 67.

On November 15, 1976, when the people of Quebec chose René Lévesque to be their premier, Pierre de Bellefeuille was the first Parti Québécois MNA to be sworn in to represent the riding of Deux-Montagnes. Also, Pierre de Bellefeuille lived in the Chénier-Sauvé house in old Saint-Eustache, where both Jean-Olivier Chénier, our most famous patriot, and Paul Sauvé, former premier of Quebec, had themselves resided.

I thank Denis Monière for introducing us to the brilliant intellectual and patriot who was Pierre de Bellefeuille.

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VAUDREUIL-DORION HERITAGE WEEKEND

Mr. Peter Schiefke (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.): Oyez, oyez, Mr. Speaker! Lords, ladies, nobles and the good folk of Vaudreuil-Dorion will gather on June 9, 10 and 11 for the 30th edition of the Seigneuriales. At this festival honouring the history of New France, they will eat, drink, play and sing as they celebrate the rich cultural heritage of our community, Vaudreuil—Soulanges. After two years of scaled-back or cancelled festivities, everyone in our community, young and old alike, can finally gather to celebrate our rich cultural history.

I want to thank Guy Pilon, mayor of the City of Vaudreuil-Dorion, Daniel Bissonnette and the Musée régional de Vaudreuil—Soulanges, and Christiane Lévesque and her team for their amazing work.

I invite all the lords and ladies of Vaudreuil—Soulanges to join me at this festival. There will be activities for the whole family, local artisans and, of course, everything our seigneurie has to offer.

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[English]

PALLIATIVE CARE

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was really pleased when my private member's bill to create a framework to get consistent access to palliative care for all Canadians was unanimously passed. The health minister then created the framework and committed \$6 billion over 10 years, in 2018, for palliative care. However, here we are four years later and only \$200 million of the money pledged has been spent, and most of it was spent on medical assistance in dying. This is unacceptable.

I call on the government to return to the plan: funding to enhance virtual services for palliative care, funding to train nurses and paramedics to deliver palliative care in rural areas and building hos-

pices to serve the aging population. These were just some of the great plans that we need to get back on track.

The special committee that studied MAID said that without good quality palliative care there really is no choice. My bill and the plan developed with all-party support would make that choice a reality.

I encourage the health minister to return to the plan and fulfill the promised funding for palliative care.

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UKRAINE

Ms. Ya'ara Saks (York Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, each year, as parliamentarians, we have the opportunity to welcome Ukrainian interns to be part of our offices through the Canada-Ukraine parliamentary program. This year comes with added significance and an opportunity for us to learn first-hand what Ukrainians are facing right now.

Maggie joined my office and has shared her fears and hopes for her community back home. When asked what she would like all of us in this chamber to know, her words are simply put but urgent.

The Ukrainian military is under fire daily in the Azovstal plant in Mariupol, fighting in poor sanitation conditions and without water. They are fighting to survive and not surrender, as Russian troops continue to violate the rules of war, killing civilians. Thankfully, the Ukrainian military is evacuating women and children from the plant, as many have been there for more than two months. However, their rescue continues to be in constant jeopardy. There is a need for more international observers in the face of this humanitarian crisis.

Maggie asks that we make sure that all of us know the tragedy of Mariupol and Azovstal and the urgency to save lives. She echoes the calls of her fellow courageous Ukrainians to act: "Save Mariupol. Save Azovstal. Now."

We all have a responsibility in the House to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. *Slava Ukraini.*

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● (1410)

YOUTH HELPING YOUTH SOCIETY

Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Youth Helping Youth Society, which held its annual fundraising dinner in support of the B.C. Children's Hospital. Last Friday's event raised \$41,000, which brings the total amount raised since 2012 to an amazing \$291,000.

I thank the organization's young volunteers and directors, including Manroop Ghuman, Amritpal Ughra, Manvir Kooner, Arvin Kooner, Arshdeep Pataria and Divjot Pataria, for their efforts on behalf of British Columbia's world-class health care facility for children. This is the kind of community initiative that shows off the very best of what our youth have to offer to the broader community.

Please join me in thanking these youth volunteers for doing an amazing job for our society.

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2022 CENTENNIAL CUP

Mr. Robert Kitchen (Souris—Moose Mountain, CPC): Mr. Speaker, tomorrow officially marks the start of Canada's National Junior A Championship, the 2022 Centennial Cup, taking place in my hometown of Estevan, Saskatchewan, and the excitement is definitely in the air. This year's tournament will run for 11 days and feature 10 teams from nine JHL leagues across the country. It also marks the 50th anniversary of the Centennial Cup event, so it is an honour to be able to host the tournament in Estevan and celebrate the milestone.

The Flin Flon Bombers, Summerside Western Capitals, Ottawa Junior "A" Senators, Soo Thunderbirds, Dauphin Kings, Pickering Panthers, Red Lake Miners, Collège Français de Longueuil, Brooks Bandits, and the SJHL champions, the Estevan Bruins, will play some of the best hockey in this country, and I encourage everyone to show support by coming in person to watch a game or tuning in online.

Of course, I myself will be rooting for the Estevan Bruins, but I wish the best of luck to all participants for a successful and memorable Centennial Cup, and I say, "Go, Bruins, go."

* * *

SHIREEN ABU AKLEH

Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Al Jazeera reporter Shireen Abu Akleh, who was shot and killed during an Israeli military operation in the West Bank, and I am deeply disturbed by what happened during her funeral procession.

Journalists are vital to our democracy; they risk their lives every day to bring us the truth about what is happening in our world. Canada must make clear the need for an independent international investigation and that those responsible for the shooting of Shireen Abu Akleh must be held accountable for their actions to the full extent of local and international law. It is clear that only the International Criminal Court has the ability to conduct an investigation that is thorough, full and independent, and I call on Canada to recognize its jurisdiction so there can be justice.

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SMALL VESSEL CROSSINGS

Mr. Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the tourism sector is on its knees. Communities across this country and in Simcoe North are depending on the influx of tourists to get back on their feet, but businesses and communities should not have to al-

so deal with the federal government getting in the way of what should be a strong recovery. The latest revelation from the CBSA, that almost 80% of small vessel crossings will remain closed, will be devastating to communities like Simcoe North.

If Michigan boaters wish to visit Georgian Bay and our 30,000 islands, they would need to go 230 kilometres round trip out of their way to Sarnia. This is neither safe for boaters, nor good for the environment or good for business. Another example is the Tall Ships Challenge Great Lakes series, which is expected to bring tens of thousands of visitors to communities in the Great Lakes, including the beautiful city of Midland. However, the CBSA policy may put these tall ship visits in jeopardy.

The government must take swift action now, so we may save the upcoming tourism season. Let us save the summer.

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● (1415)

COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been more than two years since the start of the pandemic, but Canadians are still reporting high levels of anxiety and depression and are struggling with their mental health. More and more countries around the world are ending their vaccine mandates and travel restrictions and getting life back to normal, but here in Canada many Canadians are still faced with hardship and heartbreak because of outdated and vindictive vaccine mandates. The Liberals continue to punish Canadians despite strong alternatives, like rapid testing, being readily available.

These are Canadians like my constituent Denise, who had to turn down work with UNICEF; Mike, who has not been able to hug his grandkids; Sylvie, who missed her grandmother's funeral in Ontario; Randy, who was not able to celebrate his mom's 92nd birthday with her; or the thousands of energy workers from across Canada, who have not been able to travel to B.C., Alberta or Saskatchewan to work in the vital oil sands.

It is time to stop this ideological and divisive language around the vaccine mandates and end the travel restrictions. It is time to get people back to work and address the mental health crisis that many Canadians are facing.

* * *

[Translation]

HAITIAN FLAG

Mr. Emmanuel Dubourg (Bourassa, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, *jodia se fête drapeau haïtien.*

Today it is my privilege to draw the Canadian House of Commons' attention to the 219th anniversary of the creation of the Haitian flag.

Statements by Members

The blue and red flag represents the abolition of slavery in the colonies and the proclamation of liberty and equality for all. The bravery of the country's heroines, heroes and noble people resulted in one of the greatest victories in human history, the Haitian revolution of 1804.

As we celebrate the achievements of Haitians around the world, I sincerely hope that Haitians will draw on their great history to at last bring democracy to the nation that was once known as the pearl of the Antilles.

I wish them a happy flag day. *Avèw Map Mache!*

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: I want to remind members to keep the noise down so that we can get the statements out.

The hon. member for Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing.

* * *

WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, recently a leaked draft opinion revealed that the U.S. Supreme Court is considering overturning *Roe v. Wade*, a landmark decision on abortion rights. This unprecedented disclosure raises deep concerns about the existing guarantees of abortion access, and it is more important than ever to ensure that reproductive rights and justice are protected in Canada.

Today, I rise to highlight that, while abortion rights have always been a priority in Canadian society, access barriers still exist. Recently, Manitoulin Island-based writer Ruth Farquhar described the situation in our country as abortion being “only truly accessible to women of privilege”, due to numerous issues related to geography, age, gender, race, socio-economic factors and immigration status.

[Translation]

It is critical that we, as parliamentarians, strengthen policies to advance reproductive justice by addressing the needs of the most marginalized women, families and communities and expanding access to sexual and reproductive health care across the country.

* * *

QUEBEC COMEDY GROUP

Mr. Martin Champoux (Drummond, BQ): Mr. Speaker, do you know who is turning 40 this week? None other than Rock et Belles Oreilles.

Although the group has not been active for some years now, RBO's humour remains part of the daily lives of Quebecers, thanks to sketches such as Mini-putt, Hockey for the blind, and Deaf news bulletin, which have all become classics.

With such charming characters as Cherze Siachon, Monsieur Caron, the Slomeau family and Madame Brossard from Brossard, RBO not only entertained us, but they also sometimes shocked us, like they did with their parody of a commercial for a “Zerox” machine that invokes a certain Jesus Christ.

André Ducharme, Chantal Francke, Bruno Landry, Guy A. Lepage, Yves P. Pelletier and Richard Z. Sirois have left their mark on

Quebec, walking the fine line of what was socially acceptable—and then promptly crossing it. The more RBO pushed the envelope, the harder Quebecers laughed. Basically, RBO's humour is a bit like the recipe in their famous “Crastillon” skit. It's the chaff that makes us laugh.

Whether on an album, on stage, on the radio, on TV, or featuring in the annual *Bye Bye* New Year's Eve comedy special, RBO is loved by one and all.

* * *

● (1420)

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today we will see the implementation of the new Liberal long gun registry. A former Liberal Party leadership candidate—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Let us keep it down; we have a couple more to go.

The hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies will start again.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Mr. Speaker, today we will see the implementation of the new Liberal long gun registry. A former Liberal Party leadership candidate said, “The long gun registry, as it was, was a failure and I'm not going to resuscitate that”. The same member said that “there are better ways of keeping us safe than that registry which is, has been removed” and “We will not be bringing back a long-gun registry—it's not part of our plan and has never been”. There is one more, from the same Liberal MP: “I was raised with an appreciation and an understanding of how important in rural areas and right across the country gun ownership is as a part of the culture of Canada.”

Who said that? It was the Prime Minister.

If the Prime Minister truly believes that the Liberal long gun registry was a failure, then why is he breaking his promise to the law-abiding firearms community, and why is he re-establishing it today?

* * *

SHIREEN ABU AKLEH

Ms. Iqra Khalid (Mississauga—Erin Mills, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Shireen Abu Akleh spent her career as a journalist shedding light on the plight of the Palestinian people. She was fearless, inspiring and, at her core, a compassionate woman who dedicated herself to bringing a voice to the voiceless. On May 12, she was shot and killed while reporting on an Israeli military raid in the West Bank.

Good journalists perform a vital role in democracies around the world. They are protected under international law. There must be an investigation into Shireen Abu Akleh's killing, and there must be justice.

The fact is that these senseless deaths will not stop until the world comes together to build a just and lasting peace for all those who live in the region. The fact is that Shireen Abu Akleh is dead, and we are all the poorer for it. May she rest in peace.

Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government's argument for invoking the Emergencies Act on Canadians is very quickly falling apart. Last week, we learned the RCMP did not ask the government to invoke the act, and just yesterday we learned the Ottawa police did not either. The Liberals are simply not telling Canadians the truth.

The Emergencies Act was an overreach by the Prime Minister and a government in trouble. Their power grab was just another example of classic Liberal cover-up, denial and blame. Is that not the truth?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the illegal blockades in our cities and at our ports represented a threat to Canadian jobs, to trade and to our democracy. Police told us they needed additional tools to clear the blockades and, as OPP Chief Superintendent Carson Pardy said at yesterday's meeting:

The Emergencies Act [gave police] effective supplementary tools needed to help protect critical infrastructure and ensure the continuous and safe delivery of essential goods and services, while at the same time maintaining—or in the case of Ottawa, restoring—peace, order and public security.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister's divisiveness is the reason the protest started and his failure to lead is the reason it got worse. The Prime Minister called people names: he wedged, he divided and then he spread misinformation. Then, to deal with the mess that he created, he invoked the Emergencies Act, stomping on freedoms and freezing bank accounts. Now he is covering up.

The time has come for the Prime Minister to stop spreading disinformation and stop hiding the fact that he and his ministers had no valid reason to invoke the Emergencies Act. Will he do that? Will he tell the truth?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in February, when blockades and occupations disrupted our economy, hurt workers and endangered public safety, we invoked the Emergencies Act to help bring them to an end. We have now announced the Public Order Emergency Commission: an independent public inquiry to examine the circumstances that led to the declaration being issued and the measures taken in response, as required under the act.

I know that the interim leader of the Conservative Party, as well as members of the Conservative Party, may not want light shed on these events, given their support of these blockades, but Canadians want to know the truth.

Oral Questions

HEALTH

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is more disinformation from the Prime Minister. He should be ashamed of what he just said.

Airports across the country are at a breaking point, with massive lineups and delays. People are waiting for months and months for passports and basic government services, and it is all because of the Prime Minister's failure. While the world has moved on from COVID, Canada is stuck in out-of-date restrictions and rules because the Liberal Prime Minister is stubborn, out of touch and out of date.

My question is simple. When will Canada get back to pre-COVID normal? When?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as much as the Conservatives would like to ignore it, COVID-19 is still with us, and will continue to be with us, and Canadians need to continue to follow the best science in order to keep people safe.

With regard to airports, our government has already taken action to reduce wait times by standing up working groups with relevant agencies to identify and address bottlenecks and by hiring about 400 additional security screeners. The CBSA has also added 25 kiosks at Pearson airport to speed up processing time and increased overtime available to officers.

Unfortunately for Conservatives, we will continue to follow the science and keep Canadians safe.

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians know the Prime Minister does not have to wait for hours in line at an airport. When he wants to go somewhere, he just hops on his government jet and flies wherever he likes. Once there, off goes his mask and he enjoys freedom in the countries he is visiting. I guess COVID is not in those particular countries. Meanwhile, back in Canada, Canadians are suffering under his out-of-date COVID rules.

Canadians have done everything that they have been asked to do. They have done everything expected of them. When are they going to get back to the pre-COVID lives they need and they deserve?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, all Canadians are sick and tired of COVID. We all agree on that, but wishing it away or ignoring it will simply not make it go away. Over the past months, we have seen more deaths from COVID than at any time in the beginning of the pandemic. We will continue to do the work Canadians elected us to do just six months ago, and do everything necessary to keep Canadians safe.

I know Conservatives have not been unequivocal on the need for vaccines. They have been hesitant and have been supporting antivaxxers. We will continue to stand on the side of keeping Canadians safe.

* * *

YOUTH

Hon. Candice Bergen (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there he goes again, spreading more disinformation. When he has no valid argument, it is disinformation on that side.

Well, the Prime Minister does not have to wait in a line. He does not have to worry about filling up his tank, buying groceries or buying a home. Young people in this country are desperately worried about those things, and they know the Prime Minister either does not understand or just does not care. They see a Prime Minister who blames everyone else for the problems he has created. The fact is that millions of young Canadians are seeing the truth. They do not trust the Prime Minister and do not believe he understands their struggles.

Why is he ignoring and disrespecting young Canadians?

• (1430)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the beginning of the pandemic, we made a promise to Canadians that we would have their backs, and that especially included young Canadians. We invested in supports for the kinds of small businesses that keep young people employed, we reduced student tuition costs and provided support for student loans. We have continued to invest in increasing Canada summer jobs to make sure they got through the pandemic. We have consistently been there for young people, and every step of the way, the Conservatives criticized us for doing as much as we have to help young people. They have criticized us for supporting young people at all. We will continue to be there for all Canadians.

* * *

[Translation]

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, as they say in mass, and then there was light.

I truly understand why the Prime Minister was so hostile to our motion on the separation of church and state. He was planning to spend a week with the heir apparent to the British throne, who, incidentally, is the future head of the Church of England. We see and understand his priorities.

Now that we know that we must pray for the royals of the British monarchy and that they are welcome here, can the Prime Minister tell us how much this costs?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my goodness, the Liberal government in Ottawa must be doing a great job meeting the expectations of Quebecers, if the only thing the leader of the Bloc Québécois can complain about is still the monarchy and the prayer in the House of Commons.

We are now creating more child care spaces for Quebec families. We are investing in help for small businesses. We are working on growing immigration to address the labour shortage. We are there to meet the expectations of Quebecers and all Canadians. The leader of the Bloc Québécois has to dig deep to pick a fight.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, for the Prime Minister, \$2.2-million vacations are hardly extraordinary. There are islands that welcome him. In real life, the vast majority of Quebecers and a majority of Canadians do not support the British monarchy. It is costing us more than \$2 million this week and more than \$65 million a year. Tourism usually generates revenues, not expenses.

Who is footing the bill?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on a serious note, I am pleased to say that Canada has one of the strongest and most stable democracies in the world. We see the extent to which democracy is literally being attacked in Ukraine and elsewhere in the world by polarization, toxicity, and the deterioration of democratic principles and values in many parts of the world.

Canada can be proud because we have a system that has been in place a very long time. We can focus on the major issues of concern to Canadians and not on our own stability. I believe that is a good thing.

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[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here is the situation in Canada: In April, inflation hit 6.7%, which is the highest it has been since 1991. The cost of food has gone up by 9.8%, and salaries have only gone up by 3.3%. All of this is to say workers are experiencing a massive pay cut. All the while, oil and gas companies are enjoying massive profits. The Prime Minister can do something instead of just standing by.

Will the Prime Minister follow our plan, cancel the fossil fuel subsidies and reinvest that into people by sending up to \$1,000 directly to those who need it the most?

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are committed to phasing out fossil fuel subsidies in the next two years, and have already phased out eight tax breaks for the sector. We recently presented the emissions reductions plan that goes line by line to cut emissions and will inform our approach to cap and cut emissions from oil and gas.

We are taking real action to fight climate change by committing over \$100 billion to climate action and by making sure that polluting is no longer free anywhere in the country. We are going to keep pushing forward, and I am looking forward to the support of the leader of the NDP in doing just that.

[Translation]

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here is the situation across the country.

The cost of food has increased 9.8%, but wages have only increased 3.3%. For workers, that represents a big pay cut. The Liberal government has an opportunity to take action. It can follow our plan, eliminate oil subsidies and reinvest that money in helping people by directly giving them up to \$1,000.

Will the government follow our plan?

• (1435)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know that Canadians across the country are struggling because of the increased cost of living. We will continue to be there to support them.

With regard to the public financing of the fossil fuel sector, we are gradually eliminating those subsidies. Nothing will distract us from our goal of giving Canadians clean air and a strong economy.

Export Development Canada shares this goal. It no longer provides loans to the fossil fuel sector, but instead it has become the largest financier of Canada's clean technology sector. In fact, Canada announced its intention to end new direct public support for the international unabated fossil fuel sector.

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[English]

JUSTICE

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, violent crime is increasing under the Prime Minister. Gun crime is up 83% since the Liberals took office. At the same time, they are going to make it allowable for criminals to get house arrest instead of going to jail for armed robbery, weapons trafficking, drug trafficking, breaking and entering, possession of illegal firearms and drive-by shootings.

He is going after law-abiding Canadians, but going soft on gangsters who do not care about his rules and paperwork. Will he scrap Bill C-5?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our criminal justice reform legislation turns the page on failed Conservative Party policies. The Conservatives claim to be tough on crime, but are really just tough on Black Canadians and indigenous peoples.

What our communities need is a justice system that punishes criminals. What we do not need is a system that targets—

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: There is a point of order. I think the interpretation is not working.

[English]

It is good now?

The right hon. Prime Minister can back up a little bit.

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, our criminal justice reform legislation turns the page on failed Conservative Party policies, in which the Conservatives claimed to be tough on crime, but were really just tough on Black Canadians and on indigenous Canadians.

What we need is a system that does not target people because of systemic discrimination or send people to prison because they struggle with addiction. This bill is another step forward to create a system that is fair and effective and that keeps Canadians safe.

Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is shameful. Instead of vile insults, let us actually talk about reality. There are record highs in Toronto alone for most shootings, most murders and most people injured in 2018 or 2019. Many who harm innocent Canadians are multiple repeat offenders, but the Prime Minister wants to make it easier for them to stay home among their victims for crimes like sexual and physical assault, human trafficking, kidnapping, criminal harassment, failure to give the necessities of life and arson. These are major crimes that cause lifelong trauma and loss.

When will he stop punishing law-abiding Canadians and actually crack down on criminals?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let us be absolutely clear and avoid any disinformation from the Conservatives. This legislation does not stop police from charging people with gun offences or prosecutors from pursuing convictions. What it does is make sure that criminals face serious penalties while addressing the overrepresentation of Black Canadians and indigenous peoples in the criminal justice system. This is a responsible approach to keeping communities safe.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 16-year-old Thomas was shot and killed in northern Montreal after an individual called out to him from an alleyway. Thomas lived in the riding of the member for Bourassa.

A 17-year-old teen was shot several times in his upper body in Laurier—Sainte-Marie and later succumbed to his injuries.

Now the NDP-Liberal coalition, supported by the Bloc Québécois, wants to expedite the passage of Bill C-5, which will only serve to help street gangs carry out more shootings. Why?

• (1440)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives need to stop spreading disinformation.

This legislation does not stop police from charging people or prosecutors from pursuing convictions. What it does is make sure that criminals face serious penalties while addressing the overrepresentation of Black Canadians and indigenous peoples in the criminal justice system.

This is a responsible approach to keeping communities safe, in contrast to the Conservatives' approach, which failed in the past.

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a criminal is a criminal, no matter their race. Does the Prime Minister know that 90% of victims in 2021 belonged to the same communities as the perpetrators?

Black, white or indigenous, it does not matter. The unlawful use of a firearm must be punished.

Why not stop Bill C-5? Why eliminate minimum sentences for gun crimes?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our criminal justice reform bill eliminates the failed policies of the Conservative Party, which claimed to be tough on crime but was ultimately just going after Black Canadians and indigenous peoples.

What our communities need is a criminal justice system that punishes criminals. What we do not need is a system that targets racialized people through systemic discrimination.

This legislation is another step towards a fair and effective system that will keep all Canadians safe.

[English]

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals' Bill C-5 goes soft on violent crimes that are ripped right from the headlines. Just yesterday, a news headline read, "Montreal man charged with firearm offences after investigation into drive-by shootings". This was right in the Prime Minister's own neighbourhood, yet Bill C-5 lets drive-by shooters off easy.

Why is he putting his own neighbours' lives at risk with the soft-on-crime bill, Bill C-5?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, targeting the supply of guns and the root causes of violence is essential to ending gun and gang violence, so we are taking action by investing \$250 million directly in communities to stop violence

before it starts. We are banning military-style assault weapons, and we are establishing a task force with the U.S. to end smuggling.

We know there is more to do because every life lost to gun violence is one too many. I stand with communities, experts and advocates to say, "Do not worry, Conservatives. We are committed to doing even more on gun control."

Hon. Rob Moore (Fundy Royal, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is not standing with victims. Victims have spoken loud and clear. As a matter of fact, a poll published this week found that most Canadians feel that gun violence is getting worse in their communities. Rather than stopping illegal firearms from coming across the border, the Liberals' Bill C-5 will help repeat offenders charged with multiple violent gun crimes escape accountability.

We know the Prime Minister likes to govern by opinion polls, so will he finally do the right thing, reverse course and abandon the soft-on-crime Bill C-5?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, allow us to be very clear in the face of misinformation and disinformation from the Conservatives. This legislation does not stop police from charging people with gun offences or prosecutors from pursuing convictions. We are moving forward on stronger gun controls, both by interdicting the flow of illegal guns across the border and continuing to step up on more gun control.

All Canadians are united in wanting to see less gun crime and less gun violence, and that is exactly what we are delivering, contrary to the Conservatives, who want less gun control.

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*[Translation]***OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister managed to praise democracy and the monarchy in the same sentence. Unbelievable.

This is the same monarchy whose quick little vacation I am paying for, and the same monarchy that he is maintaining by appointing a Governor General and a Lieutenant Governor who do not speak a word of French.

Will the Prime Minister try to explain to the Prince of Wales that the Dominion of Canada is bilingual?

• (1445)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact, I will be sitting down with the prince this afternoon, along with business and indigenous leaders, to talk about the importance of fighting climate change.

We know this is a global concern. We are taking action as global leaders to ensure a more sustainable transition and increased investments in a clean energy future. We will continue to work within our system of strong, democratic institutions. That is what will deliver results for Canadians.

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, he needs the Prince of Wales around in order to meet with business people and indigenous people? Okay then.

Meanwhile, he appoints people to represent the monarchy who do not speak French. He supports the Liberal MPs who are challenging Camille Laurin's and René Lévesque's Bill 101. He refuses to allow the Charter of the French Language to apply to federally regulated businesses.

In light of all that, is the Prime Minister preparing to launch a full-scale attack on the French language?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with our bill to modernize the Official Languages Act, we are not only strengthening protections for the French language, including within Quebec, but we are also doing something the Bloc Québécois could never do, and that is protecting the French fact all across the country.

We will continue to be there for francophone minorities who are facing enormous challenges. It is this Liberal government and the Liberal Party of Canada, not the Bloc Québécois, that will always be there to support and defend them and to invest in the future of French in Canada.

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[English]

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, could the Prime Minister tell me if he is beginning consultations for a tariff on urea?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will ensure that the appropriate minister follows up with the member.

Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I guess we now understand why the Liberals are refusing to answer questions on a fertilizer tariff. It is because they have no idea what we are talking about. In fact, stakeholders in meetings with ministers have been told that the Liberals had no idea that Canadian farmers actually purchased fertilizer from Russia.

Now we are the only country in the world that has a tariff on fertilizer, and our producers are the ones who are paying the price. It is typical of the Liberals to impose a punishing policy first and then ignore the devastating results from the fallout. Will the Prime Minister exempt the 35% tariff on Russian fertilizer purchased before March 2?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has required us to step up on sanctions to punish Vladimir Putin and those who have supported and enabled his war. We know that countries around the world are facing hardships because of limits on Russian exports, and we have committed to being there to support Canadians who are facing these

difficulties. Whether it is the Evraz employees or farmers on the east coast, who depend more on Russian fertilizer than those on the west coast, we are going to be there to continue to support Canadian farmers through this difficult time.

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, spring seeding is upon us and our farmers are very worried. The price of fuel and fertilizer has more than doubled since last fall, and it continues to increase under the NDP-Liberal government, with an inflation rate of 6.8%.

Does this government not realize that the 35% tariff it is imposing on our farmers is not even penalizing Russia? It is only handicapping our family farms and doubling the cost of producing Canadian food. When will the Prime Minister finally stand up for our farmers?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we strongly condemn the unfair and illegal war that Vladimir Putin is waging in Ukraine.

We know that fertilizer is essential to Canadian agriculture, and we continue to work with the industry. Our government is now giving farmers access to \$1 million through the advance payments program, with the first \$100,000 being interest free.

Our government continues to support Canadian farmers by giving them access to business risk management programs that are designed to help them manage revenue losses, including those caused by increased expenses.

* * *

• (1450)

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, because of the government's reckless debt spending, Canadians are becoming poorer by the day. That is because inflation has now reached a record of 6.8%. Groceries are up by 10%. Gas is over \$2.30 a litre in parts of western Canada, and housing prices have doubled. Sadly, these realities do not seem to register with the Prime Minister because someone else foots his bill.

Would the Prime Minister please demonstrate just a little bit humility today and try to put himself in the shoes of working-class Canadians and stop the out-of-control spending that is condemning the Canadian people to a life of poverty?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we know families across this country and Canadians are facing increased prices at the pumps and at the grocery stores. That is why we have continued to move forward in ways that have their backs.

Oral Questions

Unlike the Conservatives, who voted against our measures on supporting families, we moved forward with an early learning and child care program that, as I announced in Newfoundland and Labrador yesterday, will save average families about \$5,000 in their bills this year. These are investments that will support families right across the country now that every single province and territory, including the Conservative ones, have signed on to our early learning and child care framework. Families are going to save thousands of dollars this year across the country.

* * *

SERVICE CANADA

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, people are waiting for hours and hours at the airports. People are having extremely long waits just to get their passports. None of this is a surprise. As soon as travel restrictions eased, people were going to travel.

Why did the Prime Minister not hire enough staff and have enough human resources so that Canadians would not have to wait through these massive delays to receive their passports and other services federally, and be able to go and visit their families?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is very good news that Canadians are starting to travel again. This is something that is exciting for everyone, but we understand that the slowdowns for passports are difficult and stressful. Canadians are giving a significant increase in demand for passports, so we created new centres to increase production capacity, hired 500 new employees and set up a new online booking tool to direct applicants to the best option for submitting their passport applications.

We will continue exploring all options to improve the current situation.

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Rogers takeover of Shaw will mean massive layoffs of workers. It is going to be bad for Canadians because of rising costs. It will certainly be good for billionaires, though, and the billionaire families involved. Now, there is a risk of another billionaire company, Quebecor, buying Freedom Mobile. This is also going to be bad for workers with layoffs and bad for Canadians with the rising costs of cellular services, but again, it will be good for billionaires.

When will the Prime Minister say no to billionaires, no to this merger and yes to Canadians, who deserve affordable cellular and Internet services?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our priority has always been greater affordability, competition and innovation in the Canadian telecom sector. These goals are front and centre as we analyze the implications of this proposed deal. This transaction has been independently reviewed by the Competition Bureau of Canada and the CRTC. Our government will ensure that consumers are protected and that the broader public interest is served, as this proposed merger is evaluated.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Ryan Turnbull (Whitby, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Ukrainian people have exhibited strength beyond measure, yet unfortunately, next week will mark three months since the start of Putin's illegal war on Ukraine. Ukraine's President Zelenskyy has repeatedly thanked Canada for the aid and support to help his people defend itself against the Russian invaders, yet there still is no end in sight in this senseless war, and Ukraine's forces need for lethal and non-lethal equipment is not winding down anytime soon.

Can the Prime Minister update the House on the support Canada is providing so Ukrainians can better defend their homeland?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Whitby for his hard work.

Millions of dollars' worth of our aid has arrived in the Ukraine and is making a critical difference on the ground. To support our European allies, the Royal Canadian Air Force's C-130s have now moved two million pounds of military and humanitarian aid destined for Ukraine across the European continent, and this work continues every single day. As Ukrainian heroes fight back against Putin, we will continue to help them win this war.

Slava Ukraini.

* * *

● (1455)

HEALTH

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, let us be clear, this Prime Minister has called everyone on this side of the House, just now, a racist. This is shameful. It is not a thing that should happen in this House. It is shameful. It is no surprise that many Canadians continue to reject his federal mandates.

We know this is a cabinet decision. We know that makes it this Prime Minister's personal decision to punish his political opponents. Not allowing families to reunite is deeply hurtful and is tantamount to ostracism and political vindictiveness. What is next to go for those who will not conform, those he has described as taking up space? Which rights will the Prime Minister trample on next?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from the beginning of this pandemic, we made a very straightforward promise to Canadians that we would have their backs and that we would follow the science to keep them safe. That is exactly what we have done.

The Conservative Party has been all over the place, shouting that we needed to deliver vaccines faster and then ignoring the need for vaccines once they arrived. They continue to want to wish this pandemic away.

However, magical thinking does not save lives in Canada. It does not restore small businesses. It does not grow our economy and get people back to work. That is why we continue to follow the science. We continue to keep Canadians safe.

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister talks about science. Let us talk about what the truth is.

Let us imagine that we are living in a country that singles out 15% of its population for special treatment. That means mocking their personal decisions, calling them names and telling them they are taking up space. Let us further imagine that their freedom to move around this very large country is also taken away.

Why are they being singled out? It is because they made a personal health decision.

Should other world leaders call out the Prime Minister for this vindictive behaviour? They certainly should. This behaviour is petty and petulant, and it must stop. On which day will Canada return to normal?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the question from the hon. member might be a little more convincing if the member for Cumberland—Colchester had not just said, a few weeks ago, in this House, that the vaccine mandates had the important purpose of keeping Canadians safe. He agreed that we had to have them in place while the pandemic was going on.

As all Canadians know, this pandemic has not yet ended. Canadians are still dying in larger numbers than they did previously during the pandemic. We need to continue to do what is necessary to keep them safe. That is exactly what this government will continue to do.

The Deputy Speaker: I just need to remind folks that questions are 35 seconds or so.

The hon. member for Thornhill.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, international arrivals at Canadian airports are so backed up that people are being kept on planes for hours after they land because there is not enough space for the long lineups.

The Prime Minister's minister blames travellers, and the world has embraced restriction-free travel. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Airports Council and now health experts are telling the government that its outdated COVID restrictions have to go.

Who is actually telling the government to keep those restrictions?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the past months, Canadians continue to die at a higher rate than during the first two years of COVID-19. The pandemic is still with us. We need to continue to do what is necessary, based on science, to keep people safe.

In regard to airport delays, we are hiring about 400 additional security screeners; we have added 25 kiosks at Pearson airport to

speed up processing times, and we have increased overtime available to officers. It is a good thing Canadians are starting to travel again, and we will be there to support them. However, we are also going to continue to keep Canadians safe.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the answer is nobody, except for the spin doctors in the Liberal cabinet.

Instead of telling Canadians they are out of practice, he could bring back the workers they fired; he could stop the 4,000 tests for incoming travellers each day, and he could do what most other countries have done and end the restrictions. Why is the Prime Minister doing nothing?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we continue to evaluate and re-evaluate the measures we have to keep Canadians safe, and we will continue to do exactly that.

Canada put in place measures that kept us on a better track through this pandemic than most of our peer countries. We will continue to make sure we are keeping Canadians safe, not just for the sake of keeping Canadians alive and healthy, which is in itself a noble goal, but also because that is the best way to restore our economy and our functioning, which is exactly what we are seeing with what the government has done to support small businesses and families across the country.

* * *

• (1500)

[Translation]

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Rhéal Fortin (Rivière-du-Nord, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we need an organized crime registry to combat the gang wars in the greater Montreal area. This registry would make it easier for police officers to do their job because simply belonging to a criminal gang would become an offence.

The day before yesterday, the Minister of Public Safety agreed with the idea. Yesterday, he slammed the door on it. Today, what does the Prime Minister have to say about it? While the federal government dithers, Montreal's shootings are beginning to resemble those of the biker wars in the 1990s. Today, we want a clear response. We are fed up.

Will the Prime Minister create the organized crime registry? Yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to put an end to gang violence, we must address the root causes of violence.

Oral Questions

Since 2017, we have invested more than \$358 million to enhance law enforcement and prosecution resources, to increase law enforcement and prevention training, and to fund local strategies for preventing and combatting violence. We also created the \$250-million building safer communities fund to prevent at-risk youth from committing crimes.

We take all of this seriously. We will continue with solutions that work.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday, a member of the Hells Angels was killed in broad daylight in the Prime Minister's riding. He must realize that there is a gang problem in Montreal.

We need an organized crime registry that makes it a crime to be a gang member. It is simple. It is the same concept as the list of terrorist entities. Right now, belonging to a terrorist organization is a crime, but being a member of the Hells Angels or a street gang is A-okay, even though gangs are the ones doing all the shooting right now.

Why is the federal government giving them a free pass?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it would be nice if we could apply such simplistic solutions to complex problems like street gangs and gun violence, but the reality is that the root causes and symptoms of each of these issues need to be addressed very differently. That is exactly what we are doing by investing hundreds of millions of dollars in communities in order to get tougher and give the police more tools to tackle gun violence.

We will continue to be there as we partner with the municipalities and provinces in the fight against crime.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the pandemic has had a tremendous negative impact. The cost of living is rising, businesses are having real supply chain issues and we are experiencing an unprecedented labour shortage. Another major problem is the huge rise in mental health issues.

This Liberal government must act now. Its 2022 budget is not enough. Will the Prime Minister commit to swiftly presenting a plan to protect our young people, among others, who have suffered a lot as a result of this crisis?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Conservative member for acknowledging that the pandemic is responsible for the rising cost of living and the supply chain issues. We will continue to be there to help families that are struggling.

At the same time, we will obviously be there to invest in addressing mental health issues. We will be there to support the mental health of young people. We have already made historic investments, and we will continue to work with the provinces, while, of course, respecting their jurisdictions, to implement mental health measures for young people.

[English]

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, four times in the past two weeks I have asked questions about the Canada mental health transfer, an election commitment quite obviously broken by the Liberal government. The minister never even pretended to attempt an answer.

Page 75 of the Liberal platform clearly promises immediate funding of \$250 million and then another \$625 million in this year's budget. There has to be an explanation as to why the Liberals broke this significant promise to vulnerable Canadians. Could the Prime Minister simply tell us what that explanation is?

• (1505)

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the course of the last two years we invested about \$69 billion more than the federal government usually does in health care across the country, much of it transfers to provinces, much of it direct investments in things like vaccines and mental health programs, like the national wellness hotline and website.

There is much more to do and we will do that, but we will do that in full respect of the provinces' jurisdiction over health care and defining how we can move forward in a way that works for all Canadians. On this side of the House, we respect the division of powers laid out by the Constitution.

Hon. Mike Lake (Edmonton—Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, then why did they make the promise? The Prime Minister recently stood here and actually said, with a straight face, "We will not simply fall back on slogans and easy solutions...." Instead, with the current government, it is always only slogans and no solutions.

More than 30 times this year, including a couple of times today, the Prime Minister has responded to legitimate questions by shrugging them off and offering yet another mind-numbing reference to "having Canadians' backs". On his signature promise of a Canada mental health transfer, he is turning his back on Canadians who really need help. Again, simply, why is he breaking his word on such an important commitment?

*Oral Questions***HEALTH**

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have said time and time again that we will be there to step up on investing more in health care, including on mental health, across the country, but that needs to be done right. It needs to be done in partnership with the provinces and territories. We cannot simply expect that throwing money at a problem is going to solve it in terms of delivery for Canadians. That is why we intend to work closely with the provinces in partnership on delivering better mental health care and on delivering better supports for Canadians, as we have throughout this pandemic with historic investments of over \$69 billion in additional funding for health care.

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[Translation]

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Anju Dhillon (Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change will host a round table discussion with Canada's top 25 financial institutions, insurance companies and pension funds with the aim of harnessing the power of sustainable finance in the fight against climate change.

Can the hon. Prime Minister tell the House about this important initiative that will help Canada meet its greenhouse gas emission targets, while supporting a strong economy over the long term?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, to begin, I would like to thank the member for Dorval—Lachine—LaSalle for her question and her hard work in her riding.

The round table is a critical step as Canada continues to leverage private sector finance in sustainable investment options. We clearly need to harness private sector capital and expertise in order to achieve our climate goals and create a climate-resilient economy. Today's action-oriented discussions will help Canada meet its greenhouse gas emission targets, while supporting long-term economic strength.

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[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have two quick questions for the Prime Minister.

First, the World Health Assembly will be meeting next week. Does Canada support Taiwan's participation at next week's meeting?

Second, the International Civil Aviation Organization's upcoming triennial assembly will be taking place in September. Does Canada support Taiwan's inclusion at that upcoming triennial assembly?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canada's position on Taiwan is long-standing. We support its inclusion in multilateral fora and multilateral bodies to make sure that its perspective is heard.

Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on May 22 to May 28, representatives from 194 countries will meet in Geneva at the World Health Assembly to discuss the WHO global pandemic treaty and to vote on amendments to the international health regulations. Why did the Prime Minister not establish a public health inquiry into our COVID response before considering signing amendments to the international health regulations?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as an active member of the WHO, Canada has always been there to push for better science and to push for better impacts in the way we collaborate around the world. Canada is a leading voice on ensuring not only that we make it through this pandemic, which is continuing to be ongoing, but also that we prepare for future pandemics, which, unfortunately, may well be the reality for decades and generations to come. We will continue to be active, strong participants in international fora around health while always respecting and protecting Canada's sovereignty and choices to make the right decisions for its own citizens.

• (1510)

The Deputy Speaker: I see someone standing, but the member for Wellington—Halton Hills took the first question. The next one in sequence is the member for Calgary Skyview.

We are checking with the Table and in the sequence there were only two. The sequence was two Conservatives. We had the member for Wellington—Halton Hills and then we had the member for Haldimand—Norfolk.

We will take a break for a second. I want to make sure everybody is heard correctly here.

That is fine in the count, and I apologize. I just wanted to make sure.

The hon. member for Haldimand—Norfolk.

Ms. Leslyn Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians deserve to know what the government is signing away. It is irresponsible to negotiate pandemic response powers when we have not had a public inquiry into our own pandemic policies. How can we prepare for the future when we have not learned the lessons from the past two years?

Will the Prime Minister tell Canadians today when a public inquiry into government COVID responses will be established?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, here is the lesson we have all learned from the past two years: Vaccines save lives.

Oral Questions

We know that basing our response to this pandemic on the best public health advice, which includes getting as many Canadians vaccinated as possible to keep them safe, is exactly the way through. It is a shame to continue to see the Conservative Party supporting the view that vaccination is not the way through this pandemic. As we deal with the continued consequences of this pandemic, we will continue to stand with science and ensure Canadians continue to get vaccinated.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. George Chahal (Calgary Skyview, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are outraged by Russia's despicable invasion of Ukraine. They are following the situation closely and were pleased to see economic sanctions on those who have a role to play in this. They also want to ensure those directing, perpetrating and supporting this wilful violence are held accountable for their actions.

Can the Prime Minister tell us what measures Canada is taking to hold Russian collaborators accountable and prevent them from entering our country?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Calgary Skyview for his incredibly hard work in his community. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine is being met with severe, coordinated economic sanctions and increased pressure from Canada and our allies.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, Canada has sanctioned 915 individuals from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. We recently strengthened our regime by introducing legislation allowing officials to bar entry or remove those sanctioned for their role in Putin's war. We will ensure the sanctions have further consequences in terms of immigration and access to Canada will continue—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Nunavut has the floor.

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INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Lori Idlout (Nunavut, NDP): *Uqaqtittiji*, there are consequences when the Liberal government fails to implement the calls for justice by the national inquiry on MMIWG.

Indigenous women and land defenders continue to face systemic discrimination and violence from the RCMP. Indigenous women are increasingly overrepresented in Canada's prisons. Indigenous women are still experiencing disproportionate rates of violence.

When will the Prime Minister stop offering empty words and start acting to help indigenous women?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, everyone has the right to live free from violence. Since we formed government, we have taken real action to end gender-based violence in our communities, with specific emphasis on the violence faced by indigenous women and girls right across the country.

We developed the first federal strategy to prevent gender-based violence in 2017, and we are making historic investments to prevent and end gender-based violence. Our most recent budget invests nearly \$540 million to develop a national action plan along-

side provinces and territories to prevent gender-based violence and support survivors.

We know there is an urgent need for even more action. We will not stop until gender-based violence comes to an end.

* * *

● (1515)

TAXATION

Mr. Kevin Vuong (Spadina—Fort York, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, the soaring cost of gas has eviscerated Canadian consumers. With an unprecedented 6.8% inflation rate, people are wondering where next month's mortgage or rent is coming from, all while the GST is slashing through what remains in their pocketbooks. The government knows it is raking in billions of extra dollars.

Will the Prime Minister introduce a tax rebate, as the fiscally prudent and compassionate Martin government did, to help Canadians, yes or no?

Right Hon. Justin Trudeau (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, every step of the way through this pandemic and beyond, we have been there to support Canadians, and we will continue to by making investments to support families, ensuring the Canada child benefit is indexed to the cost of inflation so it continues to match Canadians' spending powers, and moving forward with historic investments in child care that are saving families across this country thousands of dollars every year, which will help them with the rising costs of living. We know Canadians are facing challenges. We will continue to be there to support them.

The Deputy Speaker: That is all the time we have for question period today.

Before we move on, I just want to apologize to the member for Haldimand—Norfolk. There was a printing error with the sheets that we were given, so her question was missed in the lineup. I just wanted to make sure I apologized on behalf of the Table for missing the printout.

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands is rising on a point of order.

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, I understand the reason to apologize, but it does raise the issue that getting a list from the party whips is not the rule in this place. It is a tradition that has grown, but it is not what any other western parliamentary democracy does. Every Speaker has the right to identify the person who catches his eye.

The Deputy Speaker: I think in this case, with the number of questions that we do receive, it is great to have a list from the parties.

I believe that we have a motion or a point of order from the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge Park.

TAMIL GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Gary Anandasangaree (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it I trust that you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That this House acknowledge the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka and recognize May 18 of each year as Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

Hearing no dissenting voice, it is agreed.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

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CRIMEAN TATAR DEPORTATION (SURGUNLIK) MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions among the parties, and if you seek it I hope that you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

- (i) on May 18, 1944, the Soviet Union, under the orders of Joseph Stalin, commenced the Surgunlik—the mass deportation of the Crimean Tatar people from Crimea;
- (ii) there is clear and ample evidence that the deportation of the Crimean Tatars from their homeland was intended by the Soviet regime as a means of collective punishment and to destroy the Crimean Tatar people.
- (iii) the mass deportation led to: a. Approximately 200,000 Crimean Tatars being deported from their homeland; b. Thousands of Crimean Tatars dying during the deportation; c. Tens of thousands of Crimean Tatars dying from starvation, disease, forced labour and continuous abuse by the Soviet regime; d. All Crimean Tatars being deprived of their property, their freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and freedom of movement;
- (iv) on November 12, 2015, the Parliament of Ukraine recognized the mass deportation of the Crimean Tatars by the Soviet regime in 1944 as genocide and designated May 18 as an official day of commemoration;
- (v) on March 18, 2014, the Russian Federation annexed the Autonomous Republic of Crimea following a military invasion of Ukraine;
- (vi) since then, Crimean Tatars face renewed persecution, including forced disappearances, attacks on their freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and freedom of speech, and their dispossession of private property by the occupying Russian Federation;

the House:

- (a) recognize that the mass deportation of the Crimean Tatars by the Soviet regime in 1944, known as the Surgunlik, constituted a genocide against the Crimean Tatar people.
- (b) designate May 18th of each year as Crimean Tatar Deportation (Surgunlik) Memorial Day.

• (1520)

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the hon. member's moving the motion will please say nay.

Hearing none, it is agreed.

The House has heard the terms of the motion. All those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

(Motion agreed to)

Private Members' Business

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION PRICING ACT

The House resumed from May 11 consideration of the motion that Bill C-234, An Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 3:21 p.m., pursuant to an order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-234 under Private Members' Business.

• (1530)

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

(Division No. 96)

YEAS

Members

Aitchison	Albas
Allison	Angus
Arnold	Ashton
Bachrach	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barron
Beaulieu	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Blaikie
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Blaney	Block
Blois	Boulerice
Bragdon	Brassard
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Cannings
Caputo	Carrie
Chabot	Chambers
Champoux	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Dalton
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Doherty	Dowdall
Dreessen	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Findlay
Fortin	Gallant
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gourde	Gray
Green	Hallan
Hoback	Hughes
Idlout	Jeneroux
Johns	Julian
Kelly	Kitchen
Kmiec	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kwan
Lake	Lantsman
Larouche	Lawrence
Lehoux	Lemire
Lewis (Essex)	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)

Private Members' Business

Liepert	Lloyd
Lobb	MacGregor
MacKenzie	Maguire
Martel	Masse
Mathysen	May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
McLean	McPherson
Melillo	Michaud
Moore	Morrice
Morrison	Motz
Muys	Nater
Normandin	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Plamondon
Poilievre	Rayes
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Rood	Ruff
Savard-Tremblay	Schmale
Seebach	Shields
Shipley	Simard
Singh	Small
Soroka	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart
Strahl	Stubbs
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Tochor
Tolmie	Trudel
Uppal	Van Popta
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Vis	Vuong
Wagantall	Warkentin
Waugh	Webber
Williams	Williamson
Zarrillo	Zimmer — 170

NAYS**Members**

Aldag	Ali
Anand	Arseneault
Arya	Atwin
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Battiste
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Bibea
Bittle	Blair
Boissonnault	Bradford
Brière	Carr
Casey	Chagger
Chahal	Champagne
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Dubourg	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury
Erskine-Smith	Fergus
Fillmore	Fisher
Fragiskatos	Gaheer
Garneau	Gerretsen
Gould	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hussen
Iacono	Ien
Jacsek	Jones

Jowhari	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Lattanzio	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lightbound	Long
Longfield	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada
May (Cambridge)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
Mendès	Mendicino
Miao	Miller
Morrissey	Murray
Naqvi	Ng
Noormohamed	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Sahota
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Sorbara
Spengemann	St-Onge
Sudds	Tassi
Taylor Roy	Thompson
Trudeau	Turnbull
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeven	Vandal
Vandenbeld	Virani
Weiler	Wilkinson
Yip	Zahid
Zuberi — 143	

PAIRED**Members**

Aboultatif	Barrett
Duclos	Joly
Morantz	Sajjan — 6

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

● (1535)

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from May 12 consideration of the motion that Bill S-206, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (disclosure of information by jurors), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill S-206 under Private Members' Business.

Private Members' Business

● (1545)

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

*(Division No. 97)***YEAS****Members**

Aitchison	Albas
Aldag	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barron
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Cannings
Caputo	Carr
Carrie	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Chambers
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Damoff
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Doherty
Dong	Dowdall
Dreeshen	Drouin
Dubourg	Duguid
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	El-Khoury
Ellis	Epp
Erskine-Smith	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Falk (Provencher)	Fast
Fergus	Fillmore
Findlay	Fisher
Fonseca	Fortier
Fortin	Fragiskatos
Fry	Gaheer
Gallant	Garneau
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Généreux	Genuis
Gerretsen	Gill
Gladu	Godin
Goodridge	Gould
Gourde	Gray
Green	Hajdu

Hallan	Hanley
Hardie	Hepfner
Hoback	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Iacono
Idlout	Ien
Jaczek	Jeneroux
Johns	Jones
Jowhari	Julian
Kayabaga	Kelloway
Kelly	Khalid
Khera	Kitchen
Kmiec	Koutrakis
Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Kurek	Kusie
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lake	Lalonde
Lambropoulos	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lantsman
Lapointe	Larouche
Lattanzio	Lauzon
Lawrence	LeBlanc
Lebouthillier	Lehoux
Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
Lightbound	Lloyd
Lobb	Long
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacGregor	MacKenzie
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maguire
Maloney	Martel
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	Mazier
McCauley (Edmonton West)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLean
McLeod	McPherson
Melillo	Mendès
Miao	Michaud
Miller	Moore
Morrice	Morrison
Morrissey	Motz
Murray	Muys
Naqvi	Nater
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
O'Toole	Patzer
Paul-Hus	Pauzé
Perkins	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Poilevie	Powlowski
Qualtrough	Rayes
Reid	Rempel Garner
Richards	Roberts
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Rood	Ruff
Sahota	Saks
Samson	Sarai
Savard-Tremblay	Scarpaleggia
Schiefke	Schmale
Seeback	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
Shiple	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Singh	Small
Sorbara	Soroka
Spengemann	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart

Private Members' Business

St-Onge	Strahl
Stubbs	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Thompson
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Virani	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Weiler
Wilkinson	Williams
Williamson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zimmer	Zuberi — 318

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Aboultiaf	Barrett
Duclos	Joly
Morantz	Sajjan — 6

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

* * *

CRIMINAL CODE

The House resumed from May 13 consideration of the motion that S-223, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (trafficking in human organs) be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading of Bill S-223 under Private Members' Business.

The question is on the motion.

• (1555)

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

(Division No. 98)

YEAS

Members

Aitchison	Albas
Aldag	Ali
Allison	Anand
Anandasangaree	Angus
Arnold	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains

Baker	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barron
Battiste	Beaulieu
Beech	Bendayan
Bennett	Benzen
Bergen	Bergeron
Berthold	Bérubé
Bezan	Bibeau
Bittle	Blaikie
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Jonas	Blaney
Block	Blois
Boissonnault	Boulerice
Bradford	Bragdon
Brassard	Brière
Brock	Brunelle-Duceppe
Calkins	Cannings
Caputo	Carr
Carrie	Casey
Chabot	Chagger
Chahal	Chambers
Champagne	Champoux
Chatel	Chen
Chiang	Chong
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cooper	Cormier
Coteau	Dabrusin
Dalton	Damoff
Dancho	Davidson
Davies	DeBellefeuille
Deltell	Desbiens
Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Doherty
Dong	Dreeshen
Drouin	Dubourg
Duguid	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
El-Khoury	Ellis
Epp	Erskine-Smith
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Fast	Fergus
Fillmore	Findlay
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fry
Gaheer	Gallant
Garneau	Garon
Garrison	Gaudreau
Gazan	Généreux
Genuis	Gerretsen
Gill	Gladu
Godin	Goodridge
Gould	Gourde
Gray	Green
Hajdu	Hallan
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Hoback
Holland	Housefather
Hughes	Hussen
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Jeneroux	Johns
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Kelly
Khalid	Khera
Kitchen	Kmiec
Koutrakis	Kram
Kramp-Neuman	Kurek
Kusie	Kusmierczyk
Kwan	Lake
Lalonde	Lambropoulos

Lametti
 Lantsman
 Larouche
 Lauzon
 LeBlanc
 Lehoux
 Lewis (Essex)
 Liepert
 Lloyd
 Long
 Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
 MacDonald (Malpeque)
 MacKenzie
 Maguire
 Martel
 Masse
 May (Cambridge)
 Mazier
 McDonald (Avalon)
 McKay
 McLean
 McPherson
 Mendès
 Michaud
 Moore
 Morrison
 Motz
 Muys
 Nater
 Noormohamed
 O'Connell
 O'Regan
 Patzer
 Pauzé
 Perron
 Plamondon
 Powlowski
 Rayes
 Rempel Garner
 Roberts
 Rodriguez
 Romanado
 Ruff
 Saks
 Sarai
 Scarpaleggia
 Schiefke
 Seeback
 Sgro
 Sheehan
 Shipley
 Sidhu (Brampton South)
 Singh
 Sorbara
 Spengemann
 Ste-Marie
 St-Onge
 Stubbs
 Tassi
 Thériault
 Thomas
 Tochor
 Trudeau
 Turnbull
 Valdez
 van Koeverden
 Vandal
 Vecchio
 Vien
 Vignola
 Virani
 Vuong
 Warkentin

Lamoureux
 Lapointe
 Lattanzio
 Lawrence
 Lebouthillier
 Lemire
 Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
 Lightbound
 Lobb
 Longfield
 MacAulay (Cardigan)
 MacGregor
 MacKinnon (Gatineau)
 Maloney
 Martinez Ferrada
 Mathysen
 May (Saarich—Gulf Islands)
 McCauley (Edmonton West)
 McGuinty
 McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
 McLeod
 Melillo
 Miao
 Miller
 Morrice
 Morrissey
 Murray
 Naqvi
 Ng
 Normandin
 Oliphant
 O'Toole
 Paul-Hus
 Perkins
 Petipas Taylor
 Poilievre
 Qualtrough
 Reid
 Richards
 Robillard
 Rogers
 Rood
 Sahota
 Samson
 Savard-Tremblay
 Scheer
 Schmale
 Serré
 Shanahan
 Shields
 Sidhu (Brampton East)
 Simard
 Small
 Soroka
 Steinley
 Stewart
 Strahl
 Sudds
 Taylor Roy
 Therrien
 Thompson
 Tolmie
 Trudel
 Uppal
 Van Bynen
 Van Popta
 Vandenbeld
 Vidal
 Viersen
 Villemure
 Vis
 Wagantall
 Waugh

Business of Supply

Webber
 Wilkinson
 Williamson
 Zahid
 Zimmer

Weiler
 Williams
 Yip
 Zarrillo
 Zuberi — 318

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif
 Duclos
 Morantz

Barrett
 Joly
 Sajjan — 6

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1600)

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—SUBSIDIES FOR THE OIL AND GAS SECTOR

The House resumed from May 17 consideration of the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Victoria relating to the business of supply.

The question is on the motion. May I dispense?

Some hon. members: No.

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

● (1610)

[*Translation*]

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

(*Division No. 99*)

YEAS

Members

Angus
 Bachrach
 Beaulieu
 Bérubé
 Blanchet
 Blaney
 Brunelle-Duceppe
 Chabot
 Collins (Victoria)
 DeBellefeuille
 Desilets
 Fortin
 Garrison
 Gazan
 Gill
 Hughes

Ashton
 Barron
 Bergeron
 Blaikie
 Blanchette-Joncas
 Boulterice
 Cannings
 Champoux
 Davies
 Desbiens
 Desjarlais
 Garon
 Gaudreau
 Gerretsen
 Green
 Idlout

Business of Supply

Johns
Kwan
Lemire
Masse
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
Michaud
Normandin
Perron
Savard-Tremblay
Singh
Thériault
Trudel
Villemure

Julian
Larouche
MacGregor
Mathysen
McPherson
Morrice
Pauzé
Plamondon
Simard
Ste-Marie
Therrien
Vignola
Zarrillo— 58

Kayabaga
Kelly
Khera
Kniec
Kram
Kurek
Kusmierczyk
Lalonde
Lametti
Lantsman
Lattanzio
Lawrence
Lebouthillier
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lloyd
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
Martinez Ferrada
Mazier
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLean
Melillo
Mendicino
Miller
Morrison
Motz
Muys
Nater
Noormohamed
Oliphant
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Petitpas Taylor
Powlowski
Rayes
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Rodriguez
Romanado
Ruff
Saks
Sarai
Scheer
Schmale
Serré
Shanahan
Shields
Sidhu (Brampton East)
Small
Soroka
Steinley
St-Onge
Stubbs
Tassi
Thomas
Tochor
Trudeau
Uppal
Van Bynen
Van Popta
Vandenbeld
Vidal
Viersen
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Wilkinson
Williamson

Kelloway
Khalid
Kitchen
Koutrakis
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lake
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lapointe
Lauzon
LeBlanc
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lightbound
Lobb
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacKenzie
Maguire
Martel
May (Cambridge)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod
Mendès
Miao
Moore
Morrissey
Murray
Naqvi
Ng
O'Connell
O'Regan
Patzner
Perkins
Poilievre
Qualtrough
Reid
Richards
Robillard
Rogers
Rood
Sahota
Samson
Scarpaleggia
Schieffe
Seebach
Sgro
Sheehan
Shipley
Sidhu (Brampton South)
Sorbara
Spengemann
Stewart
Strahl
Sudds
Taylor Roy
Thompson
Tolmie
Turnbull
Valdez
van Koeverden
Vandal
Vecchio
Vien
Virani
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williams
Yip

NAYS**Members**

Aitchison
Aldag
Allison
Anandasangaree
Arseneault
Atwin
Bains
Baldinelli
Battiste
Bendayan
Benzen
Berthold
Bibeau
Blair
Blois
Bradford
Brassard
Brock
Caputo
Carrie
Chagger
Chambers
Chatel
Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cormier
Dabrusin
Damoff
Davidson
Dhaliwal
Diab
Dong
Dreeshen
Dubourg
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Dzerowicz
Ellis
Erskine-Smith
Falk (Provencher)
Fergus
Findlay
Fonseca
Fragiskatos
Gaheer
Garneau
Genuis
Godin
Gould
Gray
Hallan
Hardie
Hoback
Housefather
Iacono
Jaczek
Jones

Albas
Ali
Anand
Arnold
Arya
Badawey
Baker
Barlow
Beech
Bennett
Bergen
Bezan
Bittle
Block
Boissonnault
Bragdon
Brière
Calkins
Carr
Casey
Chahal
Champagne
Chen
Chong
Cooper
Coteau
Dalton
Dancho
Deltell
Dhillon
Doherty
Dowdall
Drouin
Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
El-Khoury
Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fry
Gallant
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gourde
Hajdu
Hanley
Hepfner
Holland
Hussen
Ien
Jeneroux
Jowhari

Zahid
Zuberi— 261

Zimmer

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif
Duclos
Morantz

Barrett
Joly
Sajjan— 6

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

ARAB HERITAGE MONTH ACT

The House resumed from May 17 consideration of the motion that Bill C-232, An Act respecting Arab Heritage Month, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion at second reading stage of Bill C-232 under Private Members' Business.

• (1620)

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

(Division No. 100)

YEAS

Members

Aitchison
Aldag
Allison
Anandasangaree
Arnold
Arya
Atwin
Badawey
Baker
Barlow
Battiste
Beech
Bennett
Bergen
Berthold
Bezan
Bittle
Blair
Blanchette-Joncas
Block
Boissonnault
Bradford
Brassard
Brock
Calkins
Caputo
Carrie
Chabot
Chahal
Champagne
Chatel
Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)
Cooper
Coteau

Albas
Ali
Anand
Angus
Arseneault
Ashton
Bachrach
Bains
Baldinelli
Barron
Beaulieu
Bendayan
Benzen
Bergeron
Bérubé
Bibeau
Blaikie
Blanchet
Blaney
Blois
Boulerice
Bragdon
Brière
Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings
Carr
Casey
Chagger
Chambers
Champoux
Chen
Chong
Collins (Victoria)
Cornier
Dabrusin

Dalton
Dancho
Davies
Deltell
Desilets
Dhaliwal
Diab
Dong
Dreeshen
Dubourg
Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Dzerowicz
El-Khoury
Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)
Fast
Fillmore
Fisher
Fortier
Fragiskatos
Gallant
Garon
Gaudreau
Généreux
Gerretsen
Gladu
Goodridge
Gourde
Green
Hallan
Hardie
Hoback
Housefather
Hussen
Idlout
Jaczek
Johns
Jowhari
Kayabaga
Kelly
Khera
Kniec
Kram
Kurek
Kusmierczyk
Lake
Lambropoulos
Lamoureux
Lapointe
Lattanzio
Lawrence
Lebouthillier
Lemire
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lightbound
Lobb
Longfield
MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)
Maloney
Martinez Ferrada
Mathysen
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)
McCauley (Edmonton West)
McGuinty
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)
McLeod
Melillo
Mendicino
Michaud
Moore
Morrison

Damoff
Davidson
DeBellefeuille
Desbiens
Desjarlais
Dhillon
Doherty
Dowdall
Drouin
Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Ehsassi
Ellis
Erskine-Smith
Falk (Provencher)
Fergus
Findlay
Fonseca
Fortin
Gaheer
Garneau
Garrison
Gazan
Genuis
Gill
Godin
Gould
Gray
Hajdu
Hanley
Hepfner
Holland
Hughes
Iacono
Ien
Jeneroux
Jones
Julian
Kelloway
Khalid
Kitchen
Koutrakis
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Kwan
Lalonde
Lametti
Lantsman
Larouche
Lauzon
LeBlanc
Lehoux
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lloyd
Long
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)
MacDonald (Malpeque)
MacKenzie
Maguire
Martel
Masse
May (Cambridge)
Mazier
McDonald (Avalon)
McKay
McLean
McPherson
Mendès
Miao
Miller
Morrice
Morrissey

Routine Proceedings

Motz	Murray
Muys	Naqvi
Nater	Ng
Noormohamed	Normandin
O'Connell	Oliphant
O'Regan	O'Toole
Patzer	Paul-Hus
Pauzé	Perkins
Perron	Petitpas Taylor
Plamondon	Poilievre
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Rayes	Reid
Rempel Garner	Richards
Roberts	Robillard
Rodriguez	Rogers
Romanado	Rood
Ruff	Sahota
Saks	Samson
Sarai	Savard-Tremblay
Scarpaleggia	Scheer
Schiefke	Schmale
Seeback	Serré
Sgro	Shanahan
Sheehan	Shields
Shipley	Sidhu (Brampton East)
Sidhu (Brampton South)	Simard
Singh	Small
Sorbara	Soroka
Spengemann	Steinley
Ste-Marie	Stewart
St-Onge	Strahl
Stubbs	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Thériault	Therrien
Thomas	Thompson
Tochor	Tolmie
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Uppal
Valdez	Van Bynen
van Koeverden	Van Popta
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vecchio	Vidal
Vien	Viersen
Vignola	Villemure
Virani	Vis
Vuong	Wagantall
Warkentin	Waugh
Webber	Wilkinson
Williams	Williamson
Yip	Zahid
Zarrillo	Zimmer
Zuberi— 319	

NAYS

Nil

PAIRED

Members

Aboultaif	Barrett
Duclos	Joly
Morantz	Sajjan— 6

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee)

The Deputy Speaker: I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded divisions, Government Orders will be extended by 62 minutes.

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 Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, Labour; the hon. member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Public Safety; the hon. member for Port Moody—Coquitlam, Persons with Disabilities.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1625)
[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8)(a), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to six petitions. These returns will be tabled in an electronic format.

While I am on my feet, I move:

That the House do now proceed to orders of the day.

The Deputy Speaker: If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I invite them to please rise and indicate it to the Chair.

The hon. opposition House leader.

Mr. John Brassard: Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Deputy Speaker: Call in the members.

● (1710)
(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 101)

YEAS

Members

Aldag	Ali
Anand	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Barron	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Cannings
Carr	Casey
Chagger	Chahal
Champagne	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
Davies	Desjarlais
Dhaliwal	Dhillon
Diab	Dong
Drouin	Duguid
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Dzerowicz
Ehsassi	El-Khoury

Routine Proceedings

Erskine-Smith	Fergus	Brunelle-Duceppe	Calkins
Fillmore	Fisher	Caputo	Carrie
Fonseca	Fortier	Chabot	Chambers
Fragiskatos	Fry	Champoux	Chong
Gaheer	Garneau	Cooper	Dalton
Garrison	Gazan	Dancho	Davidson
Gerretsen	Gould	DeBellefeuille	Deltell
Green	Hajdu	d'Entremont	Desbiens
Hanley	Hardie	Desilets	Doherty
Hepfner	Holland	Dowdall	Dreeshen
Housefather	Hussen	Dubourg	Duncan (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry)
Iacono	Idlout	Ellis	Epp
Ien	Jaczek	Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)
Johns	Jones	Fast	Findlay
Jowhari	Julian	Fortin	Gallant
Kayabaga	Kelloway	Garon	Gaudreau
Khalid	Khera	Généreux	Genuis
Koutrakis	Kusmierczyk	Gill	Gladu
Kwan	Lalonde	Godin	Goodridge
Lambropoulos	Lametti	Gourde	Gray
Lamoureux	Lapointe	Hallan	Hoback
Lattanzio	Lauson	Jeneroux	Kelly
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier	Kitchen	Kmiec
Lighbound	Long	Kram	Kramp-Neuman
Longfield	Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	Kurek	Kusie
MacAulay (Cardigan)	MacDonald (Malpeque)	Lake	Lantsman
MacGregor	MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Larouche	Lehoux
Maloney	Martinez Ferrada	Lemire	Lewis (Essex)
Masse	Mathysen	Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Liepert
May (Cambridge)	McDonald (Avalon)	Lloyd	Lobb
McGuinty	McKay	MacKenzie	Maguire
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod	Martel	May (Saenich—Gulf Islands)
McPherson	Mendès	Mazier	McCauley (Edmonton West)
Mendicino	Miao	McLean	Melillo
Miller	Morrice	Michaud	Moore
Morrissey	Murray	Morrison	Motz
Naqvi	Ng	Muys	Nater
Noormohamed	O'Connell	Normandin	O'Toole
Oliphant	O'Regan	Patzer	Paul-Hus
Petitpas Taylor	Powlowski	Pauzé	Perkins
Qualtrough	Richards	Perron	Plamondon
Robillard	Rodriguez	Poilievre	Rayes
Rogers	Romanado	Reid	Rempel Garner
Sahota	Saks	Roberts	Rood
Samson	Sarai	Ruff	Savard-Tremblay
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke	Scheer	Schmale
Serré	Sgro	Seebach	Shields
Shanahan	Sheehan	Shipley	Simard
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)	Small	Soroka
Singh	Sorbara	Steinley	Ste-Marie
Spengemann	St-Onge	Stewart	Strahl
Sudds	Tassi	Stubbs	Thériault
Taylor Roy	Thompson	Therrien	Thomas
Turnbull	Valdez	Tochor	Tolmie
Van Bynen	van Koeverden	Trudel	Uppal
Vandal	Vandenbeld	Van Popta	Vecchio
Virani	Weiler	Vidal	Vien
Wilkinson	Yip	Viersen	Vignola
Zahid	Zarrillo	Villemure	Vis
Zuberi — 171		Vuong	Wagantall
		Warkentin	Waugh
		Williams	Williamson
		Zimmer — 143	

NAYS

Members

Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Beaulieu
Benzen	Bergen
Bergeron	Berthold
Bérubé	Bezan
Blanchet	Blanchette-Joncas
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock

PAIRED

Members

Aboultiaf	Barrett
Duclos	Joly
Morantz	Saïjan — 6

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I declare the motion carried.

Government Orders

Hon. Marci Ien: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am tabling the government's responses to Questions Nos. 456 to 460.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

PRESERVING PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ACT

The House resumed from May 16 consideration of the motion that Bill C-14, An Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1867 (electoral representation), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House as the representative of the good people of North Okanagan—Shuswap, as always. Finally, after three days of delay, I get to speak to Bill C-14.

Today, I rise to speak to Bill C-14, an act to amend section 51 of the Constitution Act, 1867. The bill before us today proposes measures to ensure that a province will not have fewer members assigned to it than were assigned during the 43rd Parliament. This proposal is not without precedent. There have been times when the House has agreed to adjust its system of redistribution to ensure that provinces do not lose seats in redistribution, and this is the essence of the legislation we are assessing today.

It is not the first time the House has debated this long-standing question: What are the objectives and factors for adjusting or creating federal electoral districts? In 1991, the Supreme Court of Canada examined the question, precipitated by a redistribution process in Saskatchewan for adjusting electoral boundaries. In its conclusions, the Supreme Court stated:

The content of the Charter right to vote is to be determined in a broad and purposive way, having regard to historical and social context. The broader philosophy underlying the historical development of the right to vote must be sought and practical considerations, such as social and physical geography, must be borne in mind.

The court highlighted the ideal of a “free and democratic society” upon which the charter is founded. The Supreme Court also wrote, “The purpose of the right to vote enshrined in s. 3 of the Charter is not equality of voting power per se but the right to ‘effective representation’. The right to vote therefore comprises many factors, of which equity is but one.”

Basing voting power or parity on mathematical calculations of populations is important, but these are not the only factors for the House to consider.

On June 1, 1872, 150 years ago, the House was debating factors for proposed adjustments to representation in the House of Commons, and Prime Minister John A. Macdonald told the House, “While the principle of population was considered to a very great extent, other considerations were also held to have weight; so that different interests, classes and localities should be fairly represented, that the principle of numbers should not be the only one.”

In the 1991 Saskatchewan case, the Supreme Court further explained reasons why parity of voting power, though of prime im-

portance, is not the only factor to consider in ensuring effective representation. In 1991, the Supreme Court wrote:

Notwithstanding the fact that the value of a citizen's vote should not be unduly diluted, it is a practical fact that effective representation often cannot be achieved without taking into account countervailing factors.

First, absolute parity is impossible. It is impossible to draw boundary lines which guarantee exactly the same number of voters in each district. Voters die, voters move. Even with the aid of frequent censuses, voter parity is impossible.

Secondly, such relative parity as may be possible of achievement may prove undesirable because it has the effect of detracting from the primary goal of effective representation.

As we examine this bill's legislative proposals for our system of redistribution and determining representation provided to each province, I would like to reflect on effective representation. What did the Supreme Court mean when it wrote, “The purpose of the right to vote enshrined in s. 3 of the Charter is not equality of voting power per se but the right to ‘effective representation’”?

● (1715)

The court provided some answers to this question in 1991, when it stated:

Factors like geography, community history, community interests and minority representation may need to be taken into account to ensure that our legislative assemblies effectively represent the diversity of our social mosaic. These are but examples of considerations which may justify departure from absolute voter parity in the pursuit of more effective representation; the list is not closed.

When I reflect on this statement from the court, I see the court highlighting the importance of social fabric and the threads of culture, history, geography and identities interwoven in social fabrics of specific communities, regions and constituencies. I agree that these factors must be considered as constituencies are created or redistributed and as the boundaries of electoral districts are redrawn. Whether we are talking about political boundaries or boundaries such as those the government is drawing on our oceans in a desperate effort to deliver campaign promises, we must reflect on what the purpose is of drawing lines and what the realities are of the societies or waters that we draw lines through.

While the Supreme Court stated in 1991 that the determination of political representation and adjustment of electoral boundaries should support the pursuit of “effective representation”, I believe there are some important points to be made today, in 2022, regarding effective representation.

Canadians depend on us, their elected representatives, to function in the House as their voices, their advocates and their representatives. Effective representation, I believe, is dependent on each of us being open to the Canadians we represent so that we can understand and advocate for their ever-evolving needs and priorities. That is what each of us as individual members can do to support effective representation and the Canadians who depend on us to do so.

However, and I hope members on all sides agree with me on this point, our ability to deliver effective representation to Canadians is severely hampered when Parliament is shuttered and the House of Commons sits silent in adjournment.

Last year, in 2021, the House sat for just 95 days. In 2020, the House sat for 86 days. Yes, in 2020, the House's operation was hampered by the arrival of the pandemic. Yes, in 2021, the Prime Minister chose to trigger an unnecessary election and then delayed the return of Parliament for nine weeks. At a time of unprecedented crisis, the Prime Minister chose to shutter one platform that we all need to deliver effective representation to Canadians.

It is clear why the House was reduced in its function as a forum for effective representation in 2020 and 2021. However, the same cannot be said for 2019, when the House sat for a mere 75 days, even fewer days than in 2020 and 2021. To put things in a historical perspective, from 1945 to 1975, the House sat an average of 138 days each year. From 1975 to 2015, the House sat for an average of 123 days each year.

As we assess the legislation before us today, I hope all members can reflect on the objective that I hope we all share: the goal of providing effective representation for all Canadians. Let us also reflect on the essential role the House plays in facilitating effective representation by providing representatives the forum in which to represent.

It is not enough to champion effective representation only in today's debate; we must pursue it every day. While the House was shuttered, I used my time to connect with constituents and hear their concerns in order to be more effective when Parliament resumed sitting. Let us never sit idly by while the Prime Minister shutters the House, which we need for doing our jobs.

• (1720)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, what we need to highlight here is that this particular piece of legislation will, in all likelihood, receive unanimous support of the House of Commons. Every member from all political parties is going to be supporting it, yet the Conservatives continue to play theatrics, causing issues to delay the passage of legislation.

Why does the Conservative Party want to spend so much time on a piece of legislation that everyone in the chamber will be supporting when we could, in fact, be debating other pieces of legislation that might be a bit more controversial, which the Conservatives could be opposing?

Mr. Mel Arnold: Madam Speaker, the question is really this: Why did the member for Winnipeg North's government shut down debate hours early last night? We could have been through this debate. The real reason we are here debating this is because this is our right. It is our expectation, and the expectation of the people we represent, to be able to debate the legislation the government puts forward, which we continually see as flawed legislation. We want to use this opportunity, as the official opposition, to question the legislation to make sure that it is the best that it can be for the people of Canada whom we represent.

Government Orders

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, Bill C-14 is a step forward. It guarantees at least 78 members for Quebec. Nevertheless, Quebec's proportion of the seats will shrink as the number of MPs for Canada grows, and that is fine.

I would like to know what my colleague thinks of Quebec's proportional political weight, its ratio with respect to Canada. How can we protect that?

[English]

Mr. Mel Arnold: Madam Speaker, the proportional weight of representation is an interesting one coming from a member from the Bloc Québécois, the only party that has seats only in one part of the country and that does not represent the rest of Canada. Therefore, that proportional weight of representation the member is speaking about is a challenging piece coming from that member, who is a member from the other side of the country, when I hear from constituents that they are disappointed that, by the time the vote count reaches British Columbia, the election decision has sometimes already made before votes get counted in British Columbia.

I spoke in my speech about the parity of votes per se not being the only thing that is a deciding factor. It is also about representation of all of the other factors as well, so we have effective representation.

• (1725)

Mr. Matthew Green (Hamilton Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I commend the member for making the distinction between equality and equity, as somebody who does support proportional representation and this notion that one vote equals one vote. However, I do recognize the need for providing equity rights within the context of communities of interest and minority groups.

Could the hon. member perhaps expand on other areas within the country and within the Canadian context, beyond the Quebec example, where equity would be needed to be investigated by the House in order to provide effective representation of Canadians?

Mr. Mel Arnold: Madam Speaker, as I spoke about in my speech, effective representation is one factor that needs to be considered when we consider that some urban ridings may take only 15 minutes to cross from one end of the riding to another versus ridings in the country that could take hours and sometimes a full day to cross to get from one destination to another. Those are factors that also need to be considered with the electoral district redistribution plan, so people in every part of this country can feel that they have effective representation in the House.

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak to this very important issue, which, in a way, was brought forward by the Bloc Québécois. People can say what they will, but the fact is that we devoted an opposition day to this very subject on March 2.

Government Orders

It was the Bloc Québécois that got a motion adopted, with an overwhelming majority, calling on the House to reject any federal electoral map redistribution scenario that would result in the loss of one or more electoral districts in Quebec or a reduction in Quebec's political weight in the House of Commons. The motion called on the government to take action to change the seat distribution formula for the House of Commons.

At the time, some people were surprised that the Bloc Québécois was using its opposition day to discuss the issue. We were told that we were wasting our time, that we could not change anything because it was up to the Chief Electoral Officer to make such decisions and that it was a mathematical formula, so why bother.

I rose to revisit the redistribution planned a decade ago that eliminated the riding that I represent today. Some may say that it is superficial, but that is one of the speeches that has garnered the most attention on my Facebook page. I think that shows that people in Quebec really care about this subject, especially people back home in the Gaspé and the Lower St. Lawrence.

When the Chief Electoral Officer made the announcement, I did not hear a lot of parties in the House of Commons cry foul or say that that they wanted to protect Quebec's political weight at all costs. I only heard members from the Bloc Québécois. In Quebec, we heard the Government of Quebec, who agreed with us.

Finally, I think that the Bloc MPs, with their speeches, ended up raising awareness because, a few weeks later, the government showed up with Bill C-14. It seems like good news that the government is finally interested in this and is offering a solution. However, when we take another look, we see that something is missing.

The government wants to protect what we have gained and Quebec's 78 seats in the House. That is very good. That is good news. The kicker is that the math is off yet again. The focus is on the number of seats instead of on the political weight, and there is a fundamental difference between the two.

What we understand from this bill is that Quebec will never have fewer than 78 seats. That becomes a minimum of sorts. However, we also understand that the legislation will do nothing to prevent seats from being added in other provinces based on the results of demographic calculations. It is great that we are not losing any seats, but one seat could be added in Ontario, one in British Columbia and three in Alberta, which would mean that Quebec's political weight would drop anyway.

The House has already recognized that Quebec is a nation unto itself. In order for Quebec to take its rightful place and in order for its voice to be heard and taken into account, it needs to maintain its political weight. That is essential, particularly at a time when we have to once again fight to defend and protect our French language. In Quebec, we are accustomed to fighting for our values. Unfortunately, it has practically become a way of life for us.

Members should understand that the representation of a nation and a people goes beyond a simple demographic calculation. Its plans, desires and unique characteristics must be taken into account, as must its language, environmental concerns and intrinsic values. Of course, we would prefer it if Quebec were free to make

its own choices, but in the meantime, we cannot allow it to gradually lose its say in the decisions that affect it.

I believe that meaningful political representation is a key part of a healthy democracy. However, in this bill to amend the Constitution Act, 1867, there are some oversights and vagaries that a calculator just cannot take into account.

Earlier I mentioned that Quebec is starting to get accustomed to always having to fight to defend our language and our political weight. During the last electoral redistribution in 2012, my riding of Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia was directly targeted. At the time, the Chief Electoral Officer determined that this nearly 15,000-square-kilometre riding should be eliminated because of declining populations in the region. He proposed splitting the riding in two and merging part of the riding with Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques and the other part with Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine. That move would have created two of the largest ridings by area in all of Quebec.

The proposal was to eliminate my riding without regard for its particularities, for the people who live there, for its uniqueness or for the hours that the member of Parliament would have to travel to meet with their constituents.

● (1730)

As I have said before in the House, my four riding offices are hours of driving away from each other. For example, last Saturday I had to drive four hours to see my constituents and participate in two different activities. This huge riding was supposed to be divided and two even larger ridings created. I think that is the sort of thing that should be taken into consideration. This should be about more than a simple accounting exercise.

Finally, 10 years ago, reason prevailed. A way was found to keep this riding intact. However, 10 years later, even with Bill C-14, we are still at the same point, because I do not think we are approaching the issue from the right angle.

Every region has its own identity that makes it unique; it is not something that can simply be tallied up. It can be seen in special regional traits, in local expressions, in one-of-a-kind communities. I would venture to say that Quebec's representation and political weight is not just something the Bloc cares about. In 2012, when Quebec was about to lose a seat, those who ardently defended it were regionalists. It did not matter what party they belonged to. In fact, one Bloc member and three New Democrats from eastern Quebec fought to defend the weight of their region, and therefore of my region. This March, 262 members of the House supported the Bloc Québécois motion. Unlike Bill C-14, this motion called for Quebec's political weight to be protected, not just its number of seats. I hope that my colleagues will be consistent when it comes time to vote, and I hope that those who voted against it will change their minds. If Nova Scotia's political weight were under threat, I am sure that Nova Scotian MPs here would stand up for their region. That is exactly what we are doing for Quebec.

Call me an idealist, but I believe that the people of Quebec, especially those of Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, deserve better than to be considered a mere ballot-box accounting exercise.

I said that we are not approaching the issue from the right angle and that there are other solutions to consider. The Bloc Québécois offered one up. My very good friend, the member for Drummond, introduced Bill C-246 to add a new criterion to the seat distribution formula. Basically, it suggests going by a percentage rather than a number of seats. That may seem complicated, but it is easy as pie and, more importantly, realistic. It is called the nation clause. It is similar to the existing Senate clauses and grandfather clauses. Given that Quebec is a nation, this bill would guarantee Quebec 25% of the seats in the House of Commons. In other words, one-quarter of the seats in Parliament would go to one-quarter of the Canadian population, the population of Quebec. This is a simple, sound and clear proposal that establishes a solid base for Quebec's representation in the House.

What I am trying to say is that Quebec's nationhood cannot be quantified. Nationhood can be described, discovered, experienced. Nationhood is language, it is culture, it is the people who live there. It is our desires, our goals, our aspirations.

For Quebecers, there are some values that are non-negotiable. We believe that gender equality is essential in a society that considers itself to be egalitarian, and that climate change must be tackled now for the generations that will follow us, so all can live in a healthy environment.

We believe that everyone has the right to receive dignified and proper health care; that seniors have the right to the respect they deserve; that first nations must be treated with dignity and respect, be considered as equals and be dealt with on a nation-to-nation basis. We believe that our vibrant and sustainable businesses are the driving force in an economy that addresses our environmental concerns; that all individuals, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity, have the right to love and live as they choose; that women have the right to choice, to any choice.

Quebec is all that and more. These are values that are not exclusive to the nation that we are, and I realize that. However, they are the values that we stand up for in the House. They are the values that make us who we are. In order for us to represent them, to defend them well, and to ensure that they are heard in this place, Quebec's political weight deserves to be maintained.

• (1735)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is encouraging, in one sense, that from what I understand, Bloc members are supporting this bill.

The government, the Liberal caucus, in working with opposition parties, has recognized just how important it is that we make this change, and it is not the first time, as we have seen similar changes made in the past for other regions. However, it is important to maintain the 78 seats, and this legislation will hopefully receive unanimous consent once the chamber votes.

Government Orders

Would the member not, at the very least, acknowledge that this legislation shows a strong sense of commitment to the province of Quebec, and other provinces, which could find themselves in a similar situation going forward?

[Translation]

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, it is good to have a minimum, as I said. Our gains are preserved and protected. The bill ensures that Quebec has no less than 78 seats in the House of Commons. That is what the government is proposing in Bill C-14. That is fine. What we are saying, however, is that a little something is still missing.

We get to keep our 78 seats, but if the number of seats in the other provinces continues to increase, our political weight will shrink. That is why I am proposing that we make small changes together, that we have discussions to ensure that Quebec's political weight is respected. Merely keeping the 78 seats, as is currently the case, unfortunately does not maintain Quebec's political weight.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, I do not really have a question for the member, but I do have a comment.

I listened carefully to her speech. There were some parts that I agreed with, but we disagree when it comes to political weight. I think that the weight of the population is what matters most for the province. I come from Alberta and we still do not have the number of seats we should have in the House of Commons, based on our demographic weight.

I remind the member that, on March 2, the member for Mégantic—L'Érable, the deputy leader of the Conservative Party, sought unanimous consent for the following: "That the House oppose any federal electoral redistribution scenario that would cause Quebec or any other province or territory to lose one or more electoral districts in the future, and that the House call on the government to act accordingly."

I think that is where the government got this idea. That is the comment I would like to add to the member's speech.

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments. His French is very good, by the way.

That was kind of the point of my speech, that we cannot rely solely on demographic data. I understand what he is saying. My riding, for example, is nearly 15,000 square kilometres. It is an immense territory. Yes, it will have roughly the same number of constituents as a Montreal riding that occupies three or four square blocks. However, there are special characteristics and different qualities that need to be taken into account. We must not rely on a mathematical calculation alone.

• (1740)

Mr. Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay, NDP): Madam Speaker, as the ultimate bastion of the French language in North America, Quebec plays an important role in the structure of our society.

In the member's opinion, how important is Quebec's representation in the House to the survival of French in Quebec and Canada?

Government Orders

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Madam Speaker, it is nice to hear my colleagues speak French in the House. That is the point I wanted to make. Canada is bilingual, and that is more or less what we hear.

The mere fact that there are a lot of Bloc Québécois members in the House means that a lot more French is spoken. There are a lot more members who are defending the French language and who want to fight for its survival in Quebec and across Canada.

I think that significant representation like this could be very beneficial for the French language.

[*English*]

Mr. Rick Perkins (South Shore—St. Margarets, CPC): Madam Speaker, after a few days of trying to deliver my speech in the House, I am pleased to finally rise. I am pleased that the hon. member for Winnipeg North gets to hear it. We had a good conversation about it last night.

I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill C-14, an act to amend the Constitution Act. It deals with how a democracy balances representative democracy with effective representation, and that is at the core of our parliamentary traditions.

Canada, as we know, was formed by compromise, as is our version of how we elect representatives in Parliament. While striving to make each vote have the same weight in a country as large as ours, with a population as dispersed as we have, we have to add other factors to how we determine an electoral district.

At Confederation, my province of Nova Scotia had 19 of the 181 seats in the House of Commons, or 10% of all seats. As the House grew to 208 seats in the late 1800s, Nova Scotia's count rose to 21 seats in Parliament, which was still about 10% of the seats. As we continued to grow again, Nova Scotia began seeing a decrease in its seats in the late 1800s, dropping to 16 seats by 1914 as we began to see the expansion of our country further west. In 1914, the Constitution, as we know, was amended to state that a province could not have fewer seats in the House than it had in the Senate. Nova Scotia has maintained its current 11 seats since 1966, one more than the 10 Senate seats allocated to our province at Confederation.

It is also important to remember that we live in a bicameral system of Parliament at the federal level where we have a legislative chamber tasked with reflecting the regional interests of the country. This is why Ontario and Quebec each have 24 senators, while the Maritimes have 24 and the west has 24. Later on in our history a number of others were added for Newfoundland and the territories.

In my home province of Nova Scotia, changes have been proposed to our boundaries, but the total number of seats will not be changing in this round of redistribution. The province has seen rapid growth, especially in the Halifax area, while experiencing an ongoing depopulation in some of the rural areas, which is not unique to our province, of course.

From end to end, my riding takes about four hours to drive, and people may be surprised by that, along the South Shore and through St. Margaret's Bay. That is only if people drive through the Trans-Canada Highway on the 103. If they take the much more scenic lighthouse route, it will take them a lot longer, but I would encourage people to try to do that.

While my riding may not be the largest in geographic size in Canada, it does highlight the tension inherent in larger ridings when it comes to effective representation. Balancing the need of a member of Parliament's ability to represent communities of interest is an extremely important part of drawing electoral boundaries.

That was reinforced by the Supreme Court of Canada in its ruling of the attorney general for Saskatchewan v. Roger Carter in 1991. In that ruling, the Supreme Court stated, "The purpose of the right to vote enshrined in s. 3 of the Charter is not equality of voting power per se but the right to 'effective representation.'" It goes on to say, "Effective representation and good government in this country compel that factors other than voter parity, such as geography and community interests, be taken into account in setting electoral boundaries."

What this means is that for elected officials to provide effective representation, we take a different approach than the one we see in the United States, with its emphasis on representation by population. Ours is on community interest and geography. Large geography, like the north or even like my mostly rural riding, requires a different time and focus than it does for a suburban or urban member of Parliament.

As an example, I have 11 municipalities; that is 11 mayors and all of the councillors. I have more than 11 legions, and almost 12,000 square kilometres to cover. It is not as large as the riding of the previous speaker from Quebec, but it is still a large area to cover.

● (1745)

Indeed, in the run-up to the last election, as I was campaigning, I drove 42,000 kilometres in that campaign and walked 800 kilometres. If we compare that with a GTA riding, and I have lived part of my life in the GTA, that can be as small as five to 10 minutes to drive across or maybe even just two exits on the Gardiner Expressway. My point is that effective representation must be top of mind when it comes to this type of tweak in our electoral system and our representation. In my mind, this bill does that. I know the member for Winnipeg North will be happy to hear me say that.

The grandfathering clause of 1985 basically ensured that provinces would never have fewer seats than they had in 1985, which was 282 nationally, 11 of which were in Nova Scotia. This was to ensure that in the future no provinces would lose any seats despite the change in growth patterns. This bill essentially amends that provision of 1985 by the Mulroney government by bringing it up to the number in 2021 as the minimum number of seats.

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It is great to see that in this bill the Liberals are actually protecting the essence of the Fair Representation Act, passed in 2011 under Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Despite their criticism of these changes at the time, I think it is wonderful to see the government acknowledge that what Stephen Harper brought in still works and is indeed fair.

It is also wonderful to see that this bill reflects the unanimous consent motion that was moved by the Conservative deputy leader, which states, “That the House oppose any federal electoral redistribution scenario that would cause Quebec or any other province or territory to lose one or more electoral districts in the future, and that the House call on the government to act accordingly.” I am glad the government has acted accordingly. It is clear that the unanimous consent motions that are moved after question period, which we have seen a lot of lately, sometimes are not simply words but do indeed impact the tone of this place and can result in change.

The Conservatives will always push the needle in this place when it comes to advocating for the legislation Canadians want. At the end of the day, Canadians want their fair share. They want to have effective representation so they feel they are not separated from the people they sent to Ottawa to represent them. They do not want to drive for hours to the constituency office. My main constituency office is an hour and a half from one end and two hours from the other, so I had to open up a few other constituency offices in the riding for the first time, as previous members had not done that, to make it more convenient. Constituents do not want to be forgotten by the political establishment of this place in the riding just because they have a long way to go, which is why we need the tweaking under this bill.

Coming out of this pandemic, we are seeing more shifts in population from urban to rural areas. More people are moving out of downtown cores and spreading out into the suburbs and rural parts of this country. Future parliamentarians must remain nimble and always mindful, hopefully, of how these changes will impact their job of effectively representing all Canadians as reflected in our electoral legislation. These shifts are why it is so important that independent commissions are set up every 10 years and that we review and are constantly tinkering with this legislation in order to ensure that we have that balance between proportional representation, community interest and geography.

Canadians should be reminded how important their voices are when it comes to the proposals by their respective boundary commissions. In Nova Scotia, it is a panel of three people who decide the initial proposal, and it is their job to account for the views and feelings of those in our community. We look forward to those public hearings.

This legislation protects the legacy of the Fair Representation Act, ensures that no province will ever decrease in the number of seats it has, and does as little tweaking as possible while upholding, as well as it can, the balance of the principle of effective representation. These are standards that we should and must set for how the electoral map shapes up in the future.

I will be supporting this bill.

• (1750)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, one of the things I heard the member talk about, which I honestly was not familiar with, was the Supreme Court ruling with respect to communities of interest in the makeup of the ridings. I wonder if he could tell the House a bit more about that ruling, how it came to be and what the issue was leading up to it.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, it was a ruling with regard to redistribution that was done in the province of Saskatchewan. It was challenging the way the makeup of that redistribution was done, and whether or not it was truly reflecting representation through population or a demographic approach. It went all the way to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court looked back at the history of what we had done since Confederation, and the variations of the constitutional amendments that we made. It then said that, because of the geography in our original intent, in a country as large as Canada at that time and certainly today with a sparse population, we had to bring other issues into play, such as communities that had similar perspectives.

For example, in my riding, Shelburne County, Queens County and Lunenburg County are all known as the South Shore, and have been for about 270 years. There is a history behind the British settlement that is reflected in the values and makes it easier for whoever represents my riding, or the member's riding, for example. Having a community interest allows the member of Parliament to reflect those views a little more easily than if we had diametrically opposed views. The Supreme Court said we have to take—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have to give other opportunities for questions.

Questions and comments, the hon. member for Courtenay—Alberni.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Madam Speaker, I really love my colleague's riding and enjoy talking to him about protecting wild salmon and of course the lobster stocks in his riding. However, today we are talking about a very important issue. We know the bill is not perfect. I am glad to hear that my Conservative colleague is going to be supporting the bill, because we certainly wanted to see the bill come forward as part of the supply agreement with the Liberals.

There is still more work that needs to be done. The bill is not perfect. Does my colleague agree that we need to work harder together not only to safeguard the number of seats in Quebec, but also the proportion of seats in Quebec, as well?

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague and note that his parliamentary assistant is from my riding, so I know he has a great attachment to it, even with family.

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With regard to protecting proportions, as I went through in my speech, we see that Nova Scotia has dropped from 21 to 11 seats over the course of Confederation. If we had frozen in time Nova Scotia's proportion of seats at that, I think there would be a lot of members here today who would think that was unfair relative to the way the population has grown.

I do not think it is fair to set a percentage for any particular province on the number of seats it should have that would bind us totally in the future, because we see, over 100 years, the way the population shifts. We try to reflect that as best we can. We have as close as possible the quality of vote while still reflecting the fact that we see now, and will see in the next 100 years, more demographic shifts that will change the weight or influence. It would overweight Nova Scotia's seats if we were still at 21 and Quebec, for example, was at 78.

• (1755)

[Translation]

Mr. Maxime Blanchette-Joncas (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ): Madam Speaker, I listened carefully to my colleague's speech. I think we can all agree with some of the things he said, including, of course, maintaining the number of seats in Quebec.

However, I would like to draw his attention to the concept of political weight, that is, the percentage of seats among all other seats in Canada. This was ably explained by my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

Several members in the House have obviously recognized the Quebec nation. I know that there have already been similar challenges for Nova Scotia's Acadian community and that new proposals have been made to create new ridings for the Acadian community. Certain groups in the community have obtained recognition of their specific characteristics.

That is what we are asking for in the House today and with the Bloc Québécois proposals. We are asking for recognition and respect for the Quebec nation, as well as assurances that we—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I have to give the other member an opportunity to respond.

[English]

The hon. member for South Shore—St. Margarets for about 15 seconds.

Mr. Rick Perkins: Madam Speaker, I know that Quebec and the Bloc Québécois had an opportunity, with the Charlottetown Accord, to enshrine a set percentage of 25% of the seats to Quebec in the Constitution. That was an option for the country. Quebec voted 58% against the Charlottetown Accord in the referendum, and I believe the Bloc Québécois at the time campaigned against the Charlottetown Accord, which enshrined 25%. I find it a little confusing that the Bloc now is asking for something in this legislation that the members actually opposed in terms of how they voted and what they campaigned on in 1992.

[Translation]

Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House to debate Bill C-14, which seeks to amend the Constitution Act of 1867 for a very simple purpose: to ensure that no province will have fewer seats than it had in 2021. As a member from Quebec, I want to be sure Quebec will not lose a single seat, which is what Canada's Chief Electoral Officer, the CEO, proposed initially.

As my colleagues are well aware, on October 15, the CEO released a proposal for a new House of Commons seat allocation. The process involved no decisions or discretionary power on the part of the CEO. The seat allocation formula is found in the Constitution Act of 1867. The CEO simply followed the four-step procedure.

I would like to take this opportunity to explain the procedure in detail and talk about the proposed change in our bill.

Step one is to determine the initial provincial seat allocation. To do so, the CEO looks at population estimates provided by Canada's chief statistician. The numbers that apply in this case are from the July 1, 2021, population estimates. The CEO compares these estimates to the previous estimates from 2011. This comparison tells us the average demographic growth across the country.

Then, the population of each province is divided by the new electoral quotient, which provides the initial provincial seat allocation. Calculations at this stage are based solely on total population and demographic change in the provinces to determine proportional seat allocation. This step results in variations in the number of seats. These entirely mathematical variations have caused a number of problems, which is why the second step protects the provinces' minimum number of seats.

First of all, the senatorial clause, which has been in place since 1915, ensures that provinces do not have fewer seats in the House of Commons than they have in the Senate. Accordingly, provinces that received fewer seats in the initial allocation, such as New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, were given additional seats. Over time, it was considered necessary to further strengthen these protections.

That is why Parliament introduced the grandfather clause in 1985, which today prevents provinces from having fewer seats than they had in 1985. Much like the senatorial clause, provinces that receive fewer seats than they had in 1985 are given additional seats. Under this grandfather clause from 1985, Quebec is guaranteed 75 seats. While at the first stage Quebec received 71 seats, the grandfather clause gives it four additional seats, for a total of 75.

This is what brings me to rise and address the House today. Our government is proposing a small but very important update to the grandfather clause. Bill C-14 seeks to amend this part of the Constitution Act of 1867 so that the threshold in the grandfather clause is changed to be based on the 2021 distribution instead of the 1985 one. It is a thoughtful and targeted proposal that will guarantee that no province will have fewer seats than it had in 2021. This means that Quebec will not lose a single seat in this or any future redistribution.

• (1800)

The third step in the formula is the representation rule, which applies to a province whose population was overrepresented in the House of Commons at the completion of the previous redistribution process, but which becomes under-represented following the above calculations. This clause ensures that the share of seats allocated to a province in this situation remains equal to or greater than its share of the Canadian population.

It is absolutely vital that the debates in the House reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of our country in both content and language. I am proud to repeat, whenever I have the opportunity, that Quebec is a nation within a united Canada. We must ensure that this nation that co-founded our federation continues to have a strong voice in the House, here in Ottawa. Whether through the 35 Liberal MPs from Quebec, the 32 Bloc Québécois members, the 10 Quebec Conservatives or our one Quebec NDP colleague, both Quebec and Canada as a whole will benefit from the contributions of our Quebec delegation in the House.

I say to my esteemed colleagues that our government is committed to recognizing and protecting Quebec as a nation. It is vital that our country preserve our Quebec culture and our French language, and that involves protecting Quebec's representation in all our institutions, including, of course, the House of Commons. Our Bill C-14 does exactly that.

For Quebec, this means that it would retain 78 seats instead of 77. For the other provinces, this gives them a new reference point limiting future decreases based on upcoming demographic changes. It results in the following allocation of seats: four seats for Prince Edward Island instead of two; seven seats for Newfoundland and Labrador instead of five; 10 seats for New Brunswick instead of seven; 11 seats for Nova Scotia instead of nine; 14 seats for Saskatchewan instead of 10; 14 seats for Manitoba instead of 12; 37 seats for Alberta; 43 seats for British Columbia; 78 seats for Quebec instead of 71; 122 seats for Ontario; and, finally, one seat each for Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, for a total of 343 seats.

This means just one seat would be added to the House of Commons, for a total of 343 seats instead of 342. This proposal reflects the provinces' demographic growth, and it also recognizes the importance of Quebec within our federation. I remind members that this federation was founded on the partnership between two peoples, between what were then known as Upper Canada and Lower Canada, between English-speaking Canada and French-speaking Canada. Because of our history, we have a duty to safeguard and protect this fragile balance. This proposal does not change the way seats are allocated, and it is consistent with other protections that

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have been established in the past. We are proposing a solution to protect the seats now, before the next election, without amending the Constitution. This would avoid endless constitutional debates that would result in Quebec losing a seat in the interim.

We are proposing a well-thought-out measure, and I encourage my colleagues to support it.

• (1805)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, I would like to comment on the member's speech.

This bill is about amending the Constitution. I think what she meant to say was that this is not an amendment that would require the agreement of seven of the 10 provinces, or 50% plus one of the Canadian population.

Speaking of population, Alberta is under-represented in the House based on its democratic weight and the weight of its seats. The member said that there should be 37 members from Alberta. It is true that based on the redistribution carried out under former prime minister Stephen Harper, we have nine new seats in the House that have been added since 2012. In reality, based on Alberta's demographic weight, it should have 40 seats.

I would like to hear my colleague's thoughts on that. What does she see happening in the future? Would she agree with me that we need to ensure the western provinces are well represented in the House?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, I greatly appreciate that question. I think that it is absolutely true that we need to continue to protect western representation in the House.

I am also prepared to listen to any proposal my colleague may want to make. I do not know if he proposed an amendment to our Bill C-14 to that effect, but I would be pleased to discuss that with him.

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Outremont for her speech. As people know, I think debate in the House is very important. We have different arguments, but at least we are able to debate them.

That reminds me that, when my colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia was delivering her speech, my colleague from Winnipeg North did not listen for one second. To add insult to injury, he then asked a question on a speech that he did not listen to.

The question I want to ask my colleague is quite simple. Does this not prove that Quebec's political weight is not important to the Liberals?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I do not agree at all with my colleague on that point. During my 10-minute speech, I talked about how important it is.

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Every member of our caucus agrees. Our government introduced this bill because we believe that the political weight is important. As I have said many times, Quebec's representation in the House is paramount. I hope that the Bloc will support our proposal because our bill seeks to ensure that Quebec does not lose any seats in the House. It is important.

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I know my colleague, the member for Outremont, to be a very strong member of the foreign affairs committee, and I have enjoyed working with her on that committee.

My question is in regard to what she would recommend or what steps we could take to deal with the fact that in Canada we are increasingly seeing urbanization, yet we still have a strong need for rural representation. How do we balance the needs of our rural communities to be well represented with the increasing urbanization of our country?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for the incredible work she has done on the foreign affairs committee. I would have to agree it is an issue we need to turn our minds to. I can cross my riding, which is in the heart of Montreal, in about an hour. I understand for many of my rural colleague MPs it could take between seven and eight hours to cross their ridings.

Making sure rural Canada is well represented is absolutely a priority. What we are seeing is a demographic shift. I have seen in Quebec, over the course of the pandemic, that many people living in urban centres have moved to more rural areas. We need to continue to follow the data and see that every Canadian is well represented in the House of Commons.

• (1810)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, why does the parliamentary secretary believe it is so important we pass this legislation, given that we have these active commissions going on across the country?

Ms. Rachel Bendayan: Madam Speaker, the process is indeed under way, and I believe it is urgent we get to a vote on this bill. I was quite disappointed to see, over the course of the last number of days, opposition members on the Conservative side trying to delay the vote on this bill. It is critical we settle the matter once and for all.

[Translation]

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to speak to Bill C-14 today. We are talking about representative democracy, and representative democracy is about being present, being seen and being heard.

The numerous studies on demography tell us that democracies today must have three characteristics to be worthy of this moniker. Those three characteristics are representativeness, trustworthiness and legitimacy.

As far as representativeness is concerned, Bill C-14 proposes to maintain Quebec's seat count. That is representative, to a degree. However, there is a loss of political weight, so it somewhat misses

the mark in terms of representativeness. As far as trustworthiness is concerned, we are living in an untrustworthy world. Finally, as far as legitimacy is concerned, doubts are creeping in about democracy.

It is therefore very important to be able to determine exactly what is coming down the line. There is consensus about maintaining the 78 seats, as requested by Quebec. However, not maintaining Quebec's weight is unacceptable to us. I simply cannot wholeheartedly endorse this bill.

If we allow Quebec's weight to decline, there will—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I apologize to the member for interrupting, but I must ask the House to quiet down. I would like to hear the member.

Mr. René Villemure: Madam Speaker, if we allow Quebec's political weight to decline, there will be heightened vigilance. What is vigilance? Vigilance is keeping a close eye out to attenuate or avoid harm. We will have to be vigilant, especially with respect to the French language, culture and the economic Francophonie.

Last weekend, I participated in a meeting to evaluate the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie's statutes. We had a chance to put some questions to a representative of the OECD, which is headquartered in Paris, and she told us about a set of principles on artificial intelligence. When we read the principles, I asked her who had done the work. She said that people from Egypt, Barcelona, anglophones and some people from Montreal, such as Mr. Bengio, had gone to Paris. I asked her what language people used to talk about the principles in Paris, and she said that the discussion took place in English. Imagine. All those people gathered in Paris, speaking English.

What was interesting was that you could see from reading the principles that the work was bilingual. I have nothing against the English language, but there is a thought process at work in the English language, just as there is a thought process at work in the French language. What I object to is the single mindset. If we are forced to operate more and more in English, we lose some of the thinking involved. Researchers who write and create in French and who translate their own thoughts lose out a little, but it is society as a whole that really loses out.

When I talk about being vigilant and maintaining our political weight, I am also talking about preserving a way of thinking, a capacity to create, a capacity to be different for the common good of all. The appointment of a Governor General who speaks only English and a similar situation in New Brunswick have been denounced in the House.

This also brings to mind the whole Julie Payette scandal from two years ago, when she was Governor General. I asked the Privy Council Office for a copy of the investigation report, but I was told, and I quote:

[English]

“The report...was produced in English [and] is being released in the language in which it exists.”

[Translation]

That makes no sense. The report was later translated at my insistence, since it was available only in English. I am not saying that it was conceived in English, but that it was not available in French. I can read English, but this was unacceptable.

It is because of things like this that I talk about vigilance, about monitoring, in order to avoid or mitigate harm. Bill C-14 does not meet Quebec's demands. With this bill, we do not lose seats, but we begin to disintegrate. At some point, we will assimilate and disappear. What will we be able to say once we have lost our voice? The answer is nothing.

Before we reach the point where we are able to do nothing more than wave in the hope that some benevolent soul offers help, we must act and we must resist. For Quebec, Bill C-14 is a call to resistance, a call to not give in to uniformity of thought in terms of tastes, ideas, and existence. Fernando Pessoa once said that to die is to slip out of view. With Bill C-14, Quebec slips out of view.

• (1815)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): It being 6:16 p.m., pursuant to order made Tuesday, May 17, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill now before the House.

The question is on the motion. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I would request that we carry that unanimously.

Mr. John Brassard: On division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The vote is therefore carried on division.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader (Senate) had asked if we could have the vote carried unanimously, and the response to that was no, they would like to have a recorded vote.

Mr. John Brassard: No. We actually said, "On division."

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Yes. There is a difference between—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. parliamentary secretary said, "Unanimously." That was the request I received. The hon. member for Barrie—Innisfil then said, "On division."

I was asking for guidance because it is the first time I have been faced with that. I was told that it would be carried on division.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader (Senate).

Private Members' Business

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, in that case I would request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I do not think we can go back. I have already said, "On division."

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the Table and you can obviously correct me if I am wrong, but I requested unanimous carrying of the vote; it was rejected; the Conservatives then put forward the option of having it carried on division, and I am now rejecting that and asking for a recorded division. I could be wrong. Please correct me.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The table officers confirm that I did say that it was carried on division, so that is how it stands.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6:30 p.m. so we can move to Private Members' Business.

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

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): It being 6:32 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1820)

[English]

FIGHTING AGAINST FORCED LABOUR AND CHILD LABOUR IN SUPPLY CHAINS ACT

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.) moved that Bill S-211, An Act to enact the Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chains Act and to amend the Customs Tariff, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Madam Speaker, I want to thank an abundance of colleagues who have been very instrumental in getting this bill to where it is now. First and foremost I thank Senator Miville-Dechéne, who shepherded this through the Senate of Canada, and my friend and colleague, the member for Thunder Bay—Rainy River, who has been very helpful as well.

I also want to acknowledge other friends, who are in the chamber as we speak. I expect they are supportive of this initiative and I want to thank them. I am rather hoping that just before the end of the hour, the debate will cease and we will move to have a recorded division at the first available opportunity.

Private Members' Business

First and foremost, I want members to feel the garments they are wearing. Do we know for certain that the garments we are wearing are free of supply chain slavery? When we go home tonight and open a can of tomato paste or a seafood dish, will we be absolutely certain that there is no element of slavery in the supply chain that brought that product to us?

A lot of us take pride in trying to reduce our GHG emissions, so I, like many others, have a couple of solar panel arrays. Am I sure that the components of those solar panels, or the solar panels themselves, are free of supply chain slavery?

I ask these questions because cotton, solar panels, tomato paste and seafood products have all been traced to slave-like conditions overseas. Report after report and American customs officials indicate that these products and many others are produced by forced labour and/or child labour, and we innocent, or maybe ignorant, Canadian consumers are complicit in this noxious practice.

In 2016, it was estimated that 34 billion dollars' worth of goods sold by over 1,200 Canadian companies were infected by supply chain slavery. A World Vision survey estimates that four billion dollars' worth of food products, primarily from Mexico, including coffee, fish, tomatoes, cane sugar and cocoa, are among the most common products of slave labour.

Cotton from Xinjiang is produced by Uighur slaves. Cobalt from the Congo is mined by children, and it goes into all the electric vehicles we are hoping to produce. In Canada, agricultural workers are particularly at risk, as are hotel maintenance workers.

I could use up my entire time here listing the human rights abuses of our fellow global citizens. The assumption of this bill is that different consumption choices would be made if there was a readily available source of knowledge. Neither I nor anybody else wishes to be the unwitting supporters of slavery. As William Wilberforce, possibly the greatest parliamentarian of the British Westminster system, once said, we may choose to look the other way, but we can never say we did not know.

What is to be done? Bill S-211 is a modest proposal to bring transparency to our supply chains, and if properly implemented, it could actually make a big impact. The preamble defines the issue and cites numerous international labour conventions to which Canada is a signatory. The purpose clause imposes reporting requirements on governments and business entities in Canada.

Part 1 binds government institutions in the bill. As legislators, we could hardly expect the companies of Canada to be bound by this kind of legislation if we are not prepared to bind ourselves. Part 2 binds entities producing or selling in Canada with similar reporting obligations as governments. The business entities must either be listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange or meet two out of three criteria: \$20 million in assets, \$40 million in sales or 250 employees.

• (1825)

The next part of the legislation sets out the annual report, what it needs to say and who can sign it. We see this as a rough equivalent to a letter to the auditor. We then outline the authority of the Minister of Public Safety, including his or her right to examine and seize records and the ability to compel compliance.

The final section deals with offences and punishment. Some may query why the \$250,000 fine is so low. The reason is that we feel that transparency and accountability is far more of a sanction. In other words, the real teeth in the bill are the abilities to name and shame. The bill would also allow for the imposition of a fine levied against the directors and not just the company.

Part 3 proposes an electronic registry that is publicly accessible, along with a report to Parliament and a five-year review thereafter. It is almost a certainty that future parliamentarians will want to improve and strengthen this bill, as we all gain some experience with it.

Finally, I want to review the journey of this bill. I, as well as other members, have been around here long enough to remember our friend Bob Nault. The journey of this bill began in his office when he introduced us to British parliamentarians who had just implemented a bill such as this in 2015, which was subsequently improved upon in 2019. The Australian Parliament passed a similar bill in 2018. France has an extremely tough bill, but it applies only to very large corporations. In 2019, the Netherlands passed a child labour due diligence act, and six months ago, Germany did much the same.

In the last election, both the Conservative and Liberal parties made platform commitments to introduce legislation to “eradicate forced labour from Canadian supply chains”. Four ministers have similar commitments in their mandate letters. In the 42nd Parliament, the foreign affairs committee submitted a report and a recommendation for such a bill.

Eighty-seven per cent of Canadians say that they want something done, and 75% of respondents from the Schulich School of Business said that a transparency law would drive change and benefit their businesses. This is an idea whose time has come, and it may be that the Canadian public is actually way ahead of us.

I will end with what my good friend Senator Miville-Dechéne had to say as she concluded her remarks in the other place. She said, “I would say that S-211 seeks to make a modest contribution to a broader and longer-term objective”. This is, according to the senator, namely aligning our businesses “and economic activities with the imperatives of social and environmental sustainability.” She says, “Canada has made many commitments internationally, but we have yet to [translate] them in our [national] legislation.”

It is worth repeating that we are a little late. Senator Miville-Dechêne continued, “Canada is a rich, free and modern society” committed “in principle” to the defence of human rights. She says that if we are unable to act forcefully “to limit modern slavery practices in our supply chains, we...risk...losing the moral [stature] that we cherish”, and we would look like “hypocrites”. She states that does not want that.

So said my friend, Senator Miville-Dechêne, and I second her sentiments.

I am looking forward to questions, and I am also looking forward to an early referral of this bill to the foreign affairs committee. As I said, I look forward to what colleagues might say. I am thankful for their time and attention.

• (1830)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I thank the member for his hard work on the file. Also, I would like to recognize the all-party parliamentary group that has worked together on these issues as well as, of course, Senator Miville-Dechêne, who put the bill forward in the other place. Conservatives are supportive of Bill S-211. We are also supportive of being able to move quickly on the bill in light of the urgency on the issue.

There is one notable difference between Bill S-211 and a previous version, which is that the bill before us would impose obligations on government entities with respect to preventing forced labour in their supply chains, as well as on businesses. From the perspective of the Conservative Party, the inclusion of that obligation on government is very important. We should not be asking the private sector to do things in this regard if the government itself is not prepared to step up to do.

I wonder if the member could speak to the importance of government, in its own procurement, to step up as well.

Hon. John McKay: Madam Speaker, first of all, with respect to the all-party group, I too would like to acknowledge the willingness of many colleagues from the Conservative Party and the Bloc, and our friends in the NDP and the Liberal Party, to push forward a couple of important initiatives, with this being one of them. It has been quite effective in its advocacy.

Second, with respect to the inclusion of governments, we have gone through a period of time in the last two or three years when we may have sourced goods which we, in other instances, may not or would not have sourced. They were from dubious sources, shall we say. As I said in my speech, and as my hon. colleague repeated, we can hardly expect the public of Canada or corporate Canada to adhere to standards that we are not prepared to impose upon ourselves. We have, as a government, not just this government, but all governments, an ability to source and examine supply chains that many corporations do not. Therefore, I would like to hope that we as governments become leaders in this field rather than followers.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his speech. I would like to highlight the great work he does every day on defending interna-

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tional human rights. I sincerely congratulate him. I have worked on files with him, and I am pleased that he spoke on this matter today.

Does he believe that Bill S-211 solves everything? He will probably answer that it does not.

Does he believe that Canada must pass real legislation on corporate due diligence? Does he agree that this is not part of Canadian law at present?

[English]

Hon. John McKay: Madam Speaker, may I simply say that this is a modest proposal. It is a first step. I do not want perfection to be the enemy of the good. That is why I am soliciting support at this stage. I would anticipate that future parliaments will have an initiative that may be far more extensive than this, perhaps even from my honourable friend, but I would rather take a few steps at this point and anticipate that other steps will be taken at a future date.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I would like to echo some of my colleagues in this place in thanking the member for bringing forward this legislation and to thank him for the work he has done protecting human rights around the world. I have been a fan of his work since before I was elected.

I do have some concerns, though, in that we have heard that the United States has been able to stop goods made with slave labour or potential forced labour. Over 14,000 shipments have been stopped, yet in Canada, that is not the case. There has, in fact, only been one case. We have been told that the CBSA has no capacity to do that, so I am wondering how the member anticipates getting over that particular hurdle.

Hon. John McKay: Madam Speaker, in this particular instance, this bill would only aid the Canadian authorities and hopefully help them recognize slave-based product coming into Canada. The member's analysis is perfectly correct. The Americans seize far more goods than we do. Because of that, they probably have a better feel for the entire product lines that are coming into Canada. I am rather hoping that this bill pushes that analysis and pushes the Canadian authorities to seize more product.

However, I understand, and this bill does not deal with this, that there are differences. The American standard to seize is lower than the Canadian standard to seize. The analogy I would draw is the difference between the criminal standard of proof that is beyond reasonable doubt versus that which is on the balance of probabilities. I think that is actually the core problem with our own legislation. Again, I would encourage my hon. colleague and friend, whom I also admire for her work, to bring forth a private member's bill that might suggest something along those lines.

• (1835)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I always find it a little bit disorienting when a love-in emerges in the House of Commons.

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I want to say that I am in support of this legislation. I think it is important that we try to allow debate to collapse today so that the bill can move forward to committee and we can begin the work of studying it at committee and proposing constructive amendments. Our party believes that stronger action is required to address the issue of supply chain slavery, the issue of it happening in the private sector and issues in government procurement.

The member quite ably spoke to the fact that many parties have spoken about this. I think it has also been acknowledged that this bill is not going to solve every problem. It is an important step. Let us work to pass the bill and strengthen it. Then let us also think about other things that may be required to move this work forward.

I have a couple of other points about the issue of supply chain slavery that I want to put on the record.

I think the points on the capacity of other countries and the need for strengthened international co-operation in combatting these issues are very important. We are one country. We are trying to do a similar thing that other like-minded countries are trying to do, which is address issues of forced labour. Why can we not collaborate more in identifying where the problems are and in sharing information to strengthen our enforcement?

I will mention as well that in the United States, the House has passed the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, which designates the East Turkestan region as a place where we know there is a great deal of forced labour happening. It says that in the case of that region, there is a reverse onus: It is presumed that slave labour is involved unless proven otherwise, because there is such a significant problem in that place. I would support that kind of measure and/or a mechanism of regional designation allowing a government of the day to say that a particular country or region is a place where there is a huge problem, so we need to treat products coming out of this region in a different way. That is not in the bill, but I think the process of regional designation is something we should explore as a Parliament.

One of the proposals put forward by the business community in this area is for the government to create an entities list to identify suppliers that are known to be problematic. I think that would be very helpful. Some small businesses would fall below the threshold in this legislation, and there are obviously challenges in trying to identify where the problems are in supply chains. If the government could work on an entities list to support the work that is required, that would be helpful as well.

In general, I look forward to the discussion at committee. This is important legislation. I think it moves the ball forward, and we need to continue the conversation to do all we can to advance justice and human rights. I look forward to working with colleagues and all parties to try to do that.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexis Brunelle-Duceppe (Lac-Saint-Jean, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the senators and members who have gotten involved, directly or indirectly, in tackling the issue of human trafficking, slavery and forced labour in Canada and Quebec and elsewhere in the world. I sincerely thank Senator Miville-Dechéne, in particular, for her commitment. I do not think my colleagues will

hear me thanking senators in the House very often. I am, however, capable of doing so, because what we are talking about today is so important.

The bill we are debating sets out what we need to do to make our supply chains more ethical and to rid them of the scourge of forced labour and child labour. Not many members in the House had to listen to testimony from Uighurs who fled China. I participated in the study conducted by the Subcommittee on International Human Rights. I had to look into the eyes of these victims who lived under a totalitarian regime. I struggled to hold back tears as they described the abuse they suffered at the hands of those tormenting and exploiting them in Xinjiang. I was speechless as I listened to their stories. Then, I was forced to tell them that Canada is doing nothing to deter their tormentors and exploiters. The most optimistic among us would say that we are not doing much, but the truth is that we are doing nothing.

Less than a week ago, I tabled a motion about recognizing the genocide being perpetrated by the People's Republic of China against the Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims in East Turkestan. Although no one could claim to be unaware of the situation, my motion was rejected by many Liberals, who refused to even let me read it. The status quo is a powerful thing. That is why this bill is so necessary. Even if it is incomplete, as my colleague said earlier, it is a first step that must be taken.

Very early on, as children, we are taught that making a purchase is not a trivial act. It is a decision. It comes with significant power: the power to choose. However, in order to choose, we need to be fully informed and make sure that we compare the available options. That is why, when we choose between two items, we want to know where they come from, how much they cost. When we choose between two foods, we want to know how much they weigh, how many calories they have. For some things, however, it is not that simple.

This might seem obvious. We know that anything made in Canada is made by paid workers, not forced labour. Unfortunately, not everything sold in Canada comes with that certainty. Even though we live in a modern state with progressive labour laws and an aversion to all forms of slavery, believe it or not, a consumer cannot take it for granted that a given sweater or pair of gloves was not made by a person forced to work, not even here.

Given everything we know about China and similar regimes, it is high time we made sure that no product tainted by forced labour shows up on store shelves in Quebec or Canada. The people who elected us to represent them expect us to at least try to make progress on this issue. Unfortunately, Canada often lags behind on these issues. Let me share one example. While the Americans block entire containers of goods and demand proof that they are not the product of forced labour, we wait for the phone to ring. We wait for a call from border services saying that they have evidence of forced labour for a given container from Xinjiang. That is when it is seized. How ridiculous.

While Parliament knows that a genocide is happening in Xinjiang and has acknowledged it, Ottawa waits for a phone call. While members of the House, including myself, have heard disturbing testimony about forced labour, Ottawa waits for a phone call. While international experts and our neighbours act consistently in the face of well-documented facts, Ottawa waits for a phone call.

Worse still, I can say that a shortage of telephone operators is not the problem. Last fall, the Canada Border Services Agency seized, for the first and only time, a shipment of clothing produced using forced labour. No big alarm bells are ringing. Meanwhile, the United States has intercepted over 1,400 shipments. If that is not proof of the inefficiency of the Canadian system and the need to improve it, I do not know what is.

The problem does not start at the border; it starts with our companies. Consider for example the genocide in China. Canadian companies are among the top five investors in the Xinjiang region. Canadian companies are not only failing to control goods from forced labour, they are actually encouraging and participating in modern slavery. The problem is obviously not limited to China, but this is a clear example. The truth is that Quebecers and Canadians are unaware of the extent to which successive federal governments have allowed the problem to escalate, as though supply chains built on forced labour did not affect us. Guess what? They do affect us.

• (1840)

For 2020 alone, World Vision estimates that 7% of goods imported to Canada were produced by child labour or forced labour.

If we believe the actions that have been taken to date, or rather, the one action that has been taken to date, Quebecers and Canadians ought to be reassured, but that is not at all the case.

The Bloc Québécois is in favour of this bill for the simple reason that it will lead to greater transparency on the measures companies are taking or not taking to combat the use of forced labour, whether in Canada or abroad.

Bill S-211 would create an inspection regime and confer additional powers on the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, including the power to require an entity to provide certain information about its application of the legislation. Each year, the minister will also have to table in each House of Parliament a report on the measures taken to prevent and reduce the risk that forced labour is used.

All of that is good. This is progress, but obviously it is not enough. We have to do what the Americans are doing and reverse the burden of proof if we want to discourage forced labour. We also have to coordinate with our other allies on several other related issues. What are we currently doing about the ineffectiveness of border services, about businesses that are underpaying their staff, and about those corrupting local authorities? We are doing nothing. It is unavoidable: The House will have to take an overall look at corporate due diligence.

Bill S-211 is a step in the right direction, but only as we wait for the rest of Canada's laws to be given more teeth. If anyone in the House believes that we need to do no more than what is in this bill, I would advise them to speak to the Uighurs or any other peoples

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who are victims of exploitation. I would advise them to go to speak to activists fighting western mining companies that abuse their power to violate human rights, usually under the Canadian flag. I would advise them to speak to the people at the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability, which does an outstanding job of informing elected representatives and citizens.

I hope that in their interventions, my hon. colleagues will not forget that voting for Bill S-211 is not a sign of leadership, but just the bare minimum they must do to be able to look in the mirror. I know that I have mentioned this dozens of times, but when I get up in the morning, the first thing I see is a little note that says: "Who do you work for?" I work for the people who gave me a mandate to represent their values and their interests to the best of my abilities.

Quebeckers believe in fairness. As kids, they learn that they should not do to others what they would not want done to themselves. They know that it is important to surround themselves with people who respect each individual's human rights. They want their elected officials to walk the talk, to be consistent and to fight for what is right.

Frankly, our public policies fall short of what we project on the international stage. This bill brings us closer to that level, but it is hardly worth bragging about. It is not as binding as the due diligence laws that already exist or are being debated in European parliaments. This bill is the bare minimum, as I was saying, and we will have to move in the same direction as the Europeans and pass human rights due diligence laws. Requiring accountability is a start.

We will soon have to enforce real, harsh requirements to change bad practices. By tolerating the commission of, or even participation in, human rights violations of any kind, we are complicit in actions that are against the law in Canada. This would also provide a solution to the limitations of import controls, which can no longer be ignored, and would prevent consumers from purchasing products manufactured through modern-day slavery.

I urge our hon. colleagues to support the demands of 150 civil society organizations from around the world, which have published model due diligence legislation. Much of the work has already been done. Now we just have to rise to the occasion. We need to act, we need to be effective and, above all, we need to be fair.

• (1845)

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, again, I would like to thank the member for bringing this important legislation forward. I have listened to my colleagues in the House today, and I am struck by the fact that so many of us are working so hard on human rights legislation and trying to move further, trying to do more and trying to make things happen faster for people around the world who are suffering injustice; particularly injustice that is happening at the hands of Canadian companies.

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I feel hope when I see that there are members from all parties who are working on this. I feel encouraged by the words I have heard from my colleagues. However, I do want to say that as a member of the opposition, my role is to continue to push and to continue to ask the government to do more. While I will be supporting this legislation, when it goes to the foreign affairs committee I will be proposing many recommendations and amendments, because while I am happy that this legislation is coming forward and it is timely and necessary, in typical NDP fashion, I do not think that this legislation goes far enough.

Around 11% of the world's child population, 168 million children between the ages of five and 17, are forced to work or denied the opportunity to go to school. According to Article 32 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, child labour should be protected from economic exploitation and any harmful work. Furthermore, the article declares that "state parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation" of restrictions.

We know, for example, that research conducted in 2016 found that over 1,200 companies operating in Canada at the time were importing goods that were at high risk of being produced by a child or through forced labour. The majority of these companies disclosed very little, if any, information on the policies, practices and processes they had in place to address these rules.

As parliamentarians, we need to think about what we would do to make sure that these people are protected, and we have an obligation to ensure that Canadian companies are held to account. We know that Canadians treasure our reputation as human rights defenders. We treasure our reputation as playing a role in the world where we recognize human rights: we call them out and we stand for them. Unfortunately, that has not been the reality in many parts of the world for some time. I am, as I said, encouraged that we are coming back to a place where we are looking at some of these issues.

Bill S-211 is a starting point. I think that has been said in the House already, and I will repeat that. It is a starting point. It means that the federal government can lead companies to improve and expand capacity to address supply chain risks as corporate governance standards are increased over time. However, an effective bill to address forced labour and other human rights abuses would require companies to prevent harm from happening, and not just file an annual report. It would require companies to change their behaviour and do due diligence, and not just report it. It would give victims of abuse access to remedy, and not just let the companies continue business as usual.

As it stands now, Bill S-211 needs to be revised so that it actually can help prevent forced and child labour rather than simply act as a diversion. Members may think that I am speaking cynically. I have to say that I feel that my cynicism is somewhat justified. Prior to being elected in the House, I worked in civil society. I worked very hard on human rights for people around the world who suffered at the hands of Canadian mining companies.

I have watched the Conservative government, and I have watched the Liberal government put in place legislation to supposedly help protect indigenous groups, women and those who are

marginalized from the impacts of bad corporate actors that are predominantly, as I said, in mining and textiles.

• (1850)

Neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals did a good job of that. Neither of those governments put in place an ombudsperson who could do the job. The talk was there and the words were there, particularly from our current government, but none of the action was there.

I brought forward a piece of private member's legislation that I certainly hope people in this House would support. It would ask that the CORE ombudsperson have the ability to compel testimony.

This legislation, and I know it is a beginning step, is weaker than the NDP's proposed legislation on human rights and corporate responsibility. My colleague, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, brought forward Bill C-262. My bill is Bill C-263. These bills are what is truly required if Canada is going to walk the talk on human rights. Mandatory human rights due diligence legislation, as proposed in Bill C-262, is the global best practice. It takes what we have learned from France, Germany and Norway, what is now being proposed in the European Union and what ought to be Canada's stated end goal.

As I said, I am going to bring forward amendments, but I have some concerns about the implementation. The member from the government mentioned earlier that there is work being done because there are things in ministers' mandate letters. Unfortunately, none of that work has happened.

Every day, there is genocide happening against the Uighur people. We have not acted on that in this place. Those mandate letter commitments have not been followed through on. Every day, we talk about it in the House, express outrage and send thoughts and prayers, but when it actually comes down to doing the work to stop the products made with slave labour, we have not done that at the government level yet. The mandate letters have not been fulfilled.

As I said, Canadians so strongly believe in the need for human rights legislation. They so strongly believe in the importance of protecting human rights. Of course we are happy to see this first step. Of course this is an important piece for us. New Democrats have always called for the end of child labour and forced labour. Of course we want to ensure that products imported into Canada are not produced with forced or child labour. Of course we want to make sure that companies are reporting on the measures they are taking to prevent and reduce risk.

We have worked long on that file, as New Democrats. As I said earlier, we proposed strong legislation. Members from the New Democratic Party have stood in this place and brought forward ideas and legislation. They have pushed to have the CORE ombudsperson. They have pushed to have some of these things done in a more sustainable and more effective way.

I will be working with CNCA, the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability. I will be working with civil society. I will be working with a number of different groups that focus on corporate accountability, and I will be bringing forward the amendments they are proposing to strengthen this legislation and to make sure that what we actually pass, what we actually bring forward, will do the job that needs to be done.

If we are given the tools in this place to hold the government to account, if we are given the tools to hold business and Canadian companies to account, we can actually make a difference. We can actually protect people around the world. We have that obligation. We are running out of time.

While I thank the member for bringing this forward, this bill is not complete. I look forward to working with him and many others to make sure that this is a much more complete bill.

● (1855)

Mr. Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to speak to Bill S-211 and be part of this in-person and virtual love-in, although I have to say that my good colleagues, and they are good colleagues, from the NDP and the Bloc have been a bit stingy with giving us their love.

As some in the House will know, I forwarded a similar bill to this a few months ago. As luck would have it, this bill by Senator Julie Miville-Dechéne rapidly worked its way through the Senate. It quickly became apparent that the best way to get the legislation passed was to support this bill.

I do not think it really matters whether the bill originated in the Senate or in the House. Either way, I am happy to support the senator and my fine colleague for Scarborough—Guildwood, who is really the father of this legislation. I am more like the second cousin, twice removed.

An hon. member: The grandfather.

Mr. Marcus Powlowski: The grandfather. Madam Speaker, I thank the member for that comment.

This bill is obviously about trying to ensure that companies' supply chains are void of forced labour or child labour. I do not think it is at all surprising that we need such laws given the nature of capitalism, given the global nature of business and given the fact that the rule of law in many countries is rather weak.

The nature of capitalism is certainly that companies want to maximize their profits. How do they do this? There are really two ways, generally. They can increase the amount they ask for a product, but in a competitive world there are limits to how far they can go with that. However, they can also decrease the cost of production.

If my company makes suits and I sew my suits here in Canada, I would want to ensure that each of the components that goes into

making those suits is as cheap as it can be for the requisite quality that people are looking for.

That may mean that the cloth is from China, but perhaps the liner is from Indonesia. Maybe the buttons are from Mexico. This is a supply chain. Certainly, each of the companies in the supply chain has its own supply chain. For example, although the cloth may be from Shanghai, the cotton actually comes from Xinjiang province and perhaps the dye comes from Hebei province.

Again, in order to maximize profits, companies want to make sure that in each step of the supply chain, they are getting the best bang for their buck. It is in order to maximize their profits. Buying the cheapest option often means they are going to buy a product from a country where labour is cheap, but in such countries, labour standards are often poor if not non-existent. The police and judiciary may be corrupt, inefficient or just not that interested in upholding the interests of the poorest members of society.

If this is combined with unscrupulous employers, and the fact that there are often large numbers of very poor people, it creates a ripe environment for the evolution of forced labour and child labour.

What constitutes child labour is a question I am not going to go into. Forced labour can be different things. Certainly, it can be the Uighurs placed in prison or internment camps in China and forced to work in their factories. However, more common is something called debt bondage.

Debt bondage is when an employee, often from a very poor country, has to pay sometimes thousands of dollars to a third party to get a job, sometimes in a slightly wealthier country. The employee, not having any money, cannot pay back that third party, so the debt comes out of their wages. As a result, they may end up working for years, often in horrendous conditions, in order to pay back that debt.

If they do not like it, often it is tough luck. They have a debt and they have an employer who may not be averse to using violence and/or keeping their travel documents, which makes it hard to leave.

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Let me say that I think the vast majority of Canadians would not support this kind of unscrupulous practice and would not knowingly buy products made by either forced labour or child labour. However, as my colleague for Scarborough—Guildwood has said, we often do not know what kind of labour practices go into the products we buy. I do not know who made my suit or who made my shoes. Furthermore, I think the reality is that a lot of companies and consumers do not really want to look too deeply into the labour practices of the companies that make the products. Herein lies the problem and the need for this law.

Let me say that it is not only the pursuit of the almighty dollar that leads to these problems. Sometimes it is government action. Forced labour may sadly be the result of coercive government action. For example, it is estimated that over a million Uighurs in Xinjiang internment camps or prisons are likely used for forced labour.

The International Labour Organization estimates that 25 million people globally are victims of forced labour, and 150 million children are victims of child labour.

• (1900)

Let me summarize. Many products in supply chains come from poor countries. People there, who do not make a lot of money, make those products, and in a lot of those countries either forced labour or child labour exists. The simple fact is that we often do not know which companies use these deplorable practices, which is again the reason why we need this law. The essence of this legislation is something called supply chain transparency legislation, which requires companies to publicly disclose their efforts to prevent forced labour and child labour. Not only is there a requirement to send reports to the government, but there is also a requirement to make these reports public: to put them on the companies' websites and also to include the reports as part of their annual financial statements.

Notably, there is no actual requirement to totally eliminate forced labour or child labour, but there is a very strong requirement that companies say and reveal publicly what they have done to check whether there are such practices within their supply chains, and to say what they have done to address the situation. I know some, who may no longer be here, may say that this legislation is too soft, but I would suggest that this legislation goes a far way in addressing this issue: I think consumers, shareholders and stock markets will not look very favourably upon companies that do not address this issue.

I know that I, as a Canadian, and most Canadians, would not want to either buy products from, or own shares in, a company that does these practices.

I have been talking about companies, but as has already been mentioned, this act imposes the same requirement on the government, and that is only fair. If the government wants to impose a requirement on a company in the business world, it is only fair that it imposes the same requirement upon itself.

We have heard tonight that this bill does not go far enough, and so be it. Perhaps that is true. I certainly agree that the devil is in the details, but this is a vote at second reading to get this to committee where those things can be discussed and debated.

It is certainly important to act. Certainly a lot of other countries have, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Australia and Germany. I have to say that I did not know Bob Nault was involved in this to begin with, but I am honoured to be following in his footsteps as a fellow citizen of northwestern Ontario in getting this legislation done. Good for Bob Nault.

Thankfully, child labour and forced labour are either rare or do not exist in Canada. This is mostly a problem in developing countries. All Canadians deplore such practices, and would be shocked to know that buying the things they buy may actually help to perpetuate this problem. Although we, as legislators, do not have the ability to legislate in other countries, this fine legislation by Senator Miville-Dechéne and the member for Scarborough—Guildwood will make a difference and help some of the world's most destitute people to make their lives a little better.

I would like to thank the members from all parties. I really appreciate the fact that this has such wide support. It is really nice to see.

• (1905)

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, I too will add my voice to this debate. I want to thank Senator Miville-Dechéne for her hard work in steering this bill through the committee twice. We serve as co-chairs of the All Party Parliamentary Group to End Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. From the inception of this group back in 2018, four co-chairs, including the member for Shefford and the member for Scarborough—Guildwood, have worked together across party lines to raise awareness about modern slavery and pushed for changes to Bill S-211. We succeeded in convincing both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party to add this kind of legislation to their platforms in the last election, and I want to thank all of my colleagues for their hard work on this.

I want to acknowledge the relentless work of the member for Scarborough—Guildwood for pushing this issue in the House for a long time: Like William Wilberforce, whom he referenced in his speech, he has been introducing legislation like this for years in this place since long before some of us were elected and perhaps even before some of us were born. He never gives up on securing the freedoms of others. I want to thank him for his hard work, as well.

There are many things that divide us. Ending slavery should not be one of them, so I urge all of my hon. colleagues to support this bill.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): There being no further debate, the hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood now has the right to reply.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank all of my colleagues who spoke tonight. I particularly appreciated that our friend from the Bloc got over his aversion to the Senate. Good causes require drastic action.

This has been a long journey. It was a four-year journey. For others, it has been longer than that. At this point, it is an achievable bill. It is something that we can get into legislation. I buy entirely the arguments that colleagues are making about improvements. Certainly, on the support for the improvements, I hope it is there and we will carry on with the harmonious state of the House at this point.

Before this radical harmony breaks out any further, I think I should sit down and we can go back to our usual business. I thank my colleagues and appreciate everyone's hard work.

• (1910)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The question is on the motion.

[*Translation*]

If a member of a recognized party present in the House wishes to request a recorded division or that the motion be adopted on division, I would invite them to rise and indicate it to the Chair.

[*English*]

The hon. member for Scarborough—Guildwood.

Hon. John McKay: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Pursuant to order made on Thursday, November 25, 2021, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, June 1, 2022, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

[*English*]

LABOUR

Mr. Scott Reid (Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am returning to a question that I raised and that had an unsatisfactory answer by the Minister of Public Safety, who is responsible for Corrections Canada, relating to the prison farm proposals for Joyceville and Collins Bay.

CORCAN, Corrections Canada, has indicated an intention to establish a for-profit prison farm, with initial plans to establish a 12,000-goat commercial operation to produce baby formula for export. The parliamentary secretary assures us that this has been taken off the table and that only cattle would be present. I am not sure she is correct about that, by the way, but the issue of it being a for-profit operation has not been dealt with by the government.

The prison farm was defended by the minister in his response to my initial question on two grounds: first, that it builds employment skills for inmates, and second, that it builds humane life skills and characteristics among inmates. Both of these are incorrect. The first of them is contradicted by CORCAN itself.

I am looking at the French version of a document in which the CEO of CORCAN was making a presentation at an international

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conference. It states, and this is my English translation, that they could not establish any link between offender participation in working in prison farms and obtaining employment upon release. The original in French is as follows.

[*Translation*]

They were unable to demonstrate a direct link between offender involvement while incarcerated and obtaining employment upon release.

[*English*]

That is from the document put out by CORCAN.

With regard to the soft skills or human skills that, the claim is made, are developed for the prisoners, contradiction comes from prisoners themselves. Inmates believe that a clear and unambiguous not-for-profit model would make the farms a much more humane place.

I thought it might be helpful to read from a survey that was circulated to inmates in 2021 by a group called Evolve Our Prison Farms, and to read some of the responses.

Prisoners were asked, “Do you believe CORCAN's new prison farms have the best interests of inmates in mind?” Over 90% who responded said no. The second question was, “Would you like to see the prison farms (a) proceed as they are; (b) shut down; (c) transition to a not-for-profit purpose?” Eighty per cent favoured that option.

The comments are very revealing about the so-called humanity of what we see in this training and employment model. I am quoting from one of the forms. It says, “Private businesses should not benefit from inmates' labour. These kinds of things will only lead to the privatizing of prisons for profit. Inmates would be forced to work in unsuitable conditions instead of truly getting a chance to rehabilitate.”

Here is a second one: “I don't believe that CORCAN Industries per se has the best interests of inmates in mind. It is nothing more than slave labour. Shutting down CORCAN will also shut down federally sponsored slavery.”

Here is a third response, from a third inmate: “They presently are a slave labour force for one company or another, nothing to do with caring or rehabilitation.”

I will stop there.

• (1915)

Ms. Pam Damoff (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am just going to be very blunt. I cannot believe we are back here again, talking about goats. I have repeatedly told the hon. member that there are no goats. There are no contracts.

I will reiterate that he should go and visit the dairy farm. He should actually speak to the head of CORCAN, as I have done. He should actually speak to the inmates there, as I have done. Then maybe we could have a conversation about whether this program is beneficial or not.

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I would like to ask the hon. member where he was when his government mandated corrections to cut hundreds of millions of dollars under the Conservative deficit reduction action plan, DRAP. Under DRAP, the former Conservative government closed all of the prison farms, despite evidence of their value and support from the surrounding community. It got rid of fresh food and real milk, prepared on site to give inmates job skills, and implemented food service modernization, which introduced cook-chill food and powdered milk. Prisons had to get rid of the infrastructure needed to store and prepare fresh food and real milk.

Our government has reinvested in the penitentiary farm program, our prison farms for offenders at Joyceville and Collins Bay. I am proud of that, and I will take no lessons from the Conservatives about their approach to corrections.

Canadians may be wondering why our government has not reversed all of the mean-spirited cuts of the previous Conservative government, and it is because it is a lot easier to cut and slash programs than it is to build them up and invest in the infrastructure that the previous government literally removed from corrections kitchens.

Some of the other mean-spirited cuts the hon. member's government made under DRAP were a reduction in non-essential dental service, and the closure of hundreds of psychiatric hospital beds. It reduced funding for the pilot on alternate dispute resolution, reduced library services and closed the corrections addictions research centre. It imposed new food, accommodation and telephone deductions on inmates' pay. The previous government also thought it was a smart idea to eliminate incentive pay for work in prison industries, so while I welcome the member's new-found commitment to offender pay, I do wish his advocacy extended back to when he was in government.

I will never forget sitting in a committee when one of my hon. Conservative colleagues asked the correctional investigator why inmates should be paid at all. The correctional investigator looked at him and said it was so he could mail a birthday card home to his child, perhaps. We could tell by the look on his face that the Conservative member had never even considered that possibility.

What is abundantly clear is that the Conservatives' "tough on crime" cuts are vindictive and were created to further punish those already incarcerated. That does not lead to better safety; in fact, it worsens outcomes.

When it comes to cuts to corrections, the Conservatives brought in mandatory minimum sentences and increased the cost of a pardon from \$50 to over \$600. They were not protecting public safety; they were just ignoring the fact that the vast majority of those sentenced to federal prisons are released.

I will repeat my offer for the third time to the hon. member to actually visit Joyceville and Collins Bay, to meet with the offenders, to meet with the staff, to talk to CORCAN in person, to see the successful dairy farm that is operating there, and to see for himself the good work that is being done. I will say again, there are no goats; there are no contracts, and there is no goat milk being shipped to China.

• (1920)

Mr. Scott Reid: Madam Speaker, I would very much like to take up the parliamentary secretary on her kind offer. The parliamentary secretary has talked about all the cuddly activities that take place, bottle feeding, calves that have been recently birthed, and so on. That is not when I want to go. I want to go on a Thursday, when there is slaughter activity going on, and I want to make sure I can see what it is like for the inmates to be involved in that.

Will the parliamentary secretary allow me to go on a Thursday, so that I can see that activity? It should be a yes or no answer to that question. I would also like to take along, if I could, a person from Evolve Our Prison Farms to witness this as well. This is a person who has corresponded extensively with the inmates on this issue. Can I do that, yes or no?

Finally, the parliamentary secretary spoke eloquently about the importance of inmates getting adequate pay. I take it that that means she is now stating that the government supports giving inmates market pay, or is she insincere about that? Yes or no, is there full pay for inmates when they are doing market-related work?

Ms. Pam Damoff: Madam Speaker, the hon. member is putting words in my mouth. I have been there, and to my knowledge, there is no slaughterhouse. Perhaps the hon. member should be going down there. As a member of Parliament, he knows full well that he has the ability to visit any prison in Canada any time he wants. He does not need my permission or anybody's permission to go there.

In terms of taking other people with him, I do not know about that, but as an MP, he has the ability, and has had it the whole time he has been elected, to visit. Why has he never visited there himself to see, instead of standing here time and again to ask me about corrections, when he has not cared for the whole time he has been elected?

Mr. Scott Reid: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, it is inappropriate for the member to impute motives. At no point did I impute motives to her. How can she assert that I do not care?

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): There are no points of order or questions of privilege during Adjournment Proceedings.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, CPC): Madam Speaker, I begin my remarks by recognizing the hard-working people who live in the Ontario riding of Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke for their confidence in me as their federal member of Parliament. They are the reason I will not waver in my determination to build a better Canada.

Earlier this year, I asked a very simple and direct question to the Prime Minister regarding the inappropriate use of Canada's women and men who serve in Canada's armed forces to spy on their fellow citizens. Rather than answer in a clear and forthright manner, the Liberal government once again responded with a propaganda technique that Russian madman Vladimir Putin uses to misinform the Russian population about the genocide taking place in Ukraine.

The propaganda technique I am referring to is illuminated in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide as accusation in a mirror. Accusation in a mirror, or AIM, is the rhetorical practice of falsely accusing others of conducting, plotting or committing precisely the same transgressions as one plans to commit against them.

The claim, by the Prime Minister and his senior members in the Liberal Party, that members of the "Freedom Convoy" were racists, misogynists and unacceptable is a textbook example of accusation in a mirror: dehumanizing and demonizing that comes by labelling certain groups in society as undesirable.

Canadians can see the hypocrisy in the Prime Minister accusing others of being racist, as he did today during question period, when the Prime Minister himself enjoys dressing up in costumes and in blackface to make fun of other people's cultures and skin colour.

The accusation-in-a-mirror propaganda technique has been used in non-genocidal and other forms of persecution committed against Jews, Blacks and first nations, among others. He had the audacity of using AIM in this instance to claim conspiracy theories and to hide the misdeed that is actually taking place.

This is not to be confused with IMVE: ideologically motivated violent extremism. IMVE is the term used by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service to identify members of the radical ultraleft who burn churches, violently destroy public infrastructure, attack oil workers with axes in British Columbia and plant car bombs with the express intent to maim and kill, as in the recent incident in Montreal. The fact there have been no arrests for these recent activities would reveal a double standard of the Prime Minister and members of his government and where their sympathies lie.

The Prime Minister called members of the "Freedom Convoy" misogynists, homophobes and racists. He did so out of ignorance, hate and the absence of evidence. The Prime Minister accused my Conservative colleague of using "misinformation and disinformation... and conspiracy theories". That the flight took place is fact; not conspiracy theory.

This fact was confirmed by the Department of National Defence after it was forced to respond to media reports. What an incredible coincidence it was that the day the "Freedom Convoy" began to arrive in Ottawa there just happened to be, according to the government, a preplanned so-called training flight to test top-secret surveillance equipment.

After a clumsy attempt by DND to first disassociate itself from the spy surveillance flights, DND was forced to issue an apology as more information about the spy flight became known. DND claims it instructed the spy plane to refrain from flying over downtown Ottawa during the truckers' strike action.

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Canadians then learned that, as an excuse to get around the DND directive to stay away from the skies over the "Freedom Convoy", Canadian special forces military leaders reportedly used a private defence contractor's military plane to conduct the spy operations. The modified small passenger plane that was conducting spying was outfitted with surveillance equipment allowing for the interception of cell phone calls, radio transmissions and other communications—

• (1925)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence.

Mr. Bryan May (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, Lib.): Madam Speaker, when we stand here in the House of Commons and talk about military equipment such as ships, jets and even boots on the ground, what we are really talking about are national defence security capabilities. These are the tools that make it possible for the Canadian Armed Forces to carry out the missions that are critical to the defence of Canada. To carry out those missions, our military must maintain a state of constant readiness. Being operationally ready means training.

This government expects and depends upon the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces to do what they need to do to maintain their mandated state of readiness and expertise. Having the right personnel properly trained to use equipment, technology and tools is critical to readiness and to our national defence and security. With this in mind, I would like to address the hon. member's question about the Canadian Armed Forces training flight that took place at the same time as the protest on Parliament Hill this past February.

This training flight was undertaken to maintain essential qualifications on airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance-related equipment. It was planned well prior to the protest taking place on Parliament Hill and relied on an existing contract to facilitate. The training was planned as part of an annual training requirement and the aircraft was booked in advance. I can confirm for the House that the training exercise and the protest on Parliament Hill were entirely unrelated.

Canadian Armed Forces members undertake such training to support their operations abroad. In fact, airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities are strictly governed by Canada and international laws. Canadians should be heartened to know that our Canadian Armed Forces members train routinely in and around communities across the country and indeed around the national capital region as well. We should expect no less if we want a military that is ready to defend our country and our way of life.

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During the flight in question, this training exercise took place in the vicinity of the national capital and did travel over the downtown core. The objective was to meet annual training requirements and certification, and there was nothing extraordinary about it. Training with airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities can occur at other times of the year as well. There is nothing unusual about those flights either.

We know from experience that when training gets cancelled there is a negative impact on certifications, qualifications and, by extension, operational readiness. That is why the training went ahead. We must ensure our Canadian Armed Forces members are ready in this time of evolving global uncertainty. This means making sure that we have the right equipment and the right training to meet their skills on the platforms they need to be trained on when they need it.

I thank the members of the Canadian Armed Forces who stand on guard for this country each and every day defending our freedom and our democracy.

• (1930)

Mrs. Cheryl Gallant: Madam Speaker, anytime the Prime Minister or other members of the NDP-Liberal socialist coalition utter the words “conspiracy theory”, their intent is to fictionalize their own conspiracy theories to hide the truth.

Using the Canadian military to spy on its own citizens is a very dangerous act. If the NDP-Liberal socialist coalition the Prime Minister leads actually believes in the transparency and accountability necessary for a functioning democracy, it would provide all the data and flight logs from the spy flights. Let Canadians decide what the truth is.

Did the government spy on its own citizens without the legal or moral authority to do so? The Prime Minister and his socialist coalition partners must be held accountable for their actions.

Mr. Bryan May: Madam Speaker, we demand a lot of our military. We have seen CAF members undertake atypical tasks, such as setting up vaccine distribution systems, supporting health professionals in long-term care facilities and supporting humanitarian efforts, but above all else, our military must stand ready to defend Canada at home and abroad. That means maintaining capabilities, including highly specialized technical surveillance systems that protect our forces when the government sends them into harm's way. It means ensuring that we can move massive volumes of personnel and equipment throughout Canada and around the world. It means conducting humanitarian and search and rescue missions across vast landscapes from coast to coast to coast.

We demand a lot from our military members, and they deliver. The reason they deliver is because they are trained to deliver. I thank all members of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces for their commitment to keeping Canadians safe and protecting the interests of Canadians abroad.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo (Port Moody—Coquitlam, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am here to express, once again, the frustrations of people with disabilities as they continue to wait for a Canada disability benefit act. We know they face too many challenges that are only

increasing with the rising cost of food and the skyrocketing prices of homes and rents.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the obstacles people with disabilities face every day, and with the addition of immunity risks as the mask mandates are lifted, just going out into the community for food or medical appointments is no longer an option for some. The price of PPE is even difficult to manage.

The government must act now to bring the Canada disability benefit bill to the House. Last week, a motion to get this bill to this place without delay was passed with unanimous consent, and with the addition of the Senate being supportive, there is no longer any acceptable reason to withhold tabling a bill.

The government has an obligation to uphold the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to ensure dignity and full equality for all. This includes necessary income supports. Dire financial circumstances are the reality for too many people with disabilities, and the longer they have to wait for the promised Canada disability benefit, the more they are being abandoned by the Liberal government.

I have heard from the minister that getting the Canada disability benefit is difficult based on the logistical challenges of the federal data systems. I have tabled a motion in committee, which was supported by all, to begin solving that. It cannot be a barrier.

The reason for delay appears to be just a lack of prioritization. The Liberal government has not prioritized persons with disabilities. People with disabilities need to be prioritized. They have waited too long.

Right now, based on a moment of unity in the House just last week, the disability community is hopeful. We must respond to that hope, and the government must not disappoint again.

Since 2015, the Liberals have spoken about the importance of lifting people with disabilities out of poverty, yet their actions do not match those words. It is beyond time for the government to do better.

I am asking again today for the government to tell the House when the Canada disability benefit bill will come to the floor, and to confirm that it will come to the House before we rise in June.

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• (1935)

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I want to thank the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam for her tireless advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities. She has been a great champion and also a great partner in the House, as well as in working together on the HUMA standing committee.

Improving the lives of persons with disabilities is a key priority for this government, and that is why since 2015 we have made a series of concrete commitments backed by more than \$1.1 billion in funding to support persons with disabilities.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted inequalities and gaps in our social system, as the member rightfully pointed out in her speech. We took immediate action and in September 2020, we began to develop Canada's first-ever disability inclusion action plan. The plan has four pillars: financial security, employment, accessible and inclusive communities, and a modern approach to disability. In the spirit of "nothing without us", we have been working and will continue to work closely with the disability community on the design and future evolution of this plan.

Budget 2021 included nearly \$131 million over two years for the enabling accessibility fund. It also included \$12 million over three years for consultations on reforming the eligibility process for federal disability programs and benefits, including the disability tax credit. As part of the plan, our government is moving forward with an employment strategy for persons with disabilities.

Budget 2022 proposes funding of more than \$270 million over five years through the opportunities fund. This important investment in the employment strategy would increase labour market participation for persons with disabilities and it would make workplaces more inclusive and more accessible.

In addition, budget 2022 proposes \$25 million over the next five years to support the production of accessible reading materials for Canadians with print disabilities. This funding would help ensure that persons with print disabilities can read and learn without barriers.

We know that Canadians with disabilities face unique challenges, including disproportionate levels of poverty. That is why the creation of a new Canada disability benefit is a top priority and a key priority of this government. The Canada disability benefit will be developed in consultation with the disability community, as well as the provinces and territories. It is a key cornerstone of the disability inclusion action plan.

Once implemented, this benefit will help lift hundreds of thousands of working-age Canadians with disabilities out of poverty. The Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion is committed to reintroducing the Canada disability benefit legislation in the House as soon as possible.

I would like to thank the member once again for her question. Her constituents and persons with disabilities are well served by her tireless advocacy.

Ms. Bonita Zarrillo: Madam Speaker, I want to return my thanks to the parliamentary secretary for outlining all of the important work that needs to be done for persons with disabilities in Canada.

I want to reiterate that the unity in the House last week was important. In a time when we need to bring communities together, when we need to bring Canadians together, when we need to give windows of hope and windows of possibility to people, this was a very, very important moment.

On giving hope and making sure that we do not disappoint, that the government does not disappoint the community, can the parliamentary secretary confirm that the House will see the bill come to the floor before we rise at the end of June?

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague that unity and collaboration are how we get things done in the House. I can assure my hon. colleague that our government is working hard to reduce the poverty levels of working-age Canadians with disabilities. As the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion has stated, she is very confident that the government will move forward with the Canada disability legislation in this place.

Furthermore, as the minister has remarked, a key pillar of our disability inclusion action plan is to reform, modernize and dignify the way people can access Government of Canada disability benefits and supports. This includes the disability tax credit.

Once again, I would like to thank the member for her question and her incredible advocacy on this critical issue for all Canadians.

• (1940)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7:40 p.m.)

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