



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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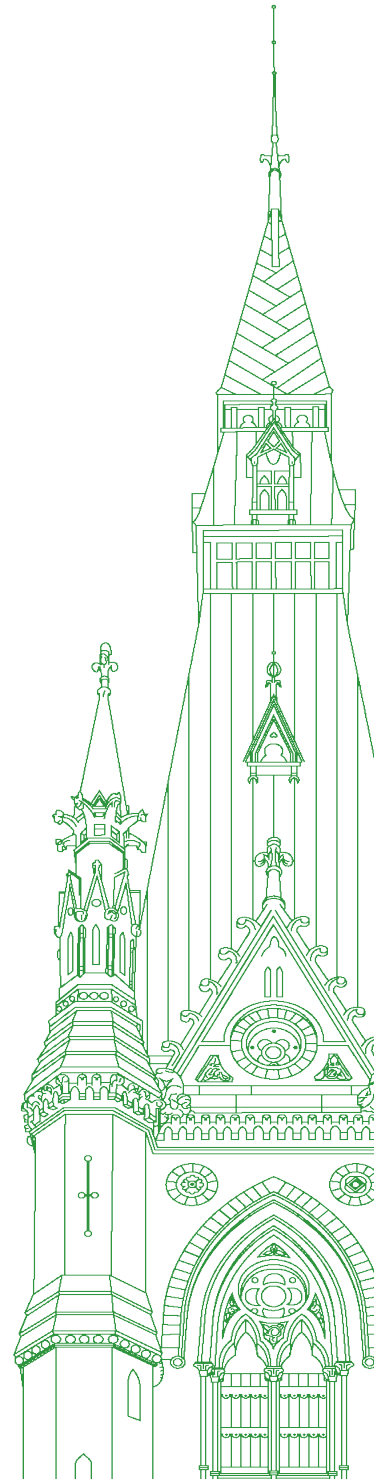
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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, October 3, 2022

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayer

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

• (1100)

[*English*]

COPYRIGHT ACT

The House resumed from April 8 consideration of the motion that Bill C-244, An Act to amend the Copyright Act (diagnosis, maintenance and repair), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Ted Falk (Provencher, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise in the House today to speak to this legislation, Bill C-244. This is a good day. It is not a super common day in the House that all parties come together and, for the most part, agree on the generality or principles of a bill, but I think this happens to be one of those days. That is where Canadians are, and we are here to serve Canadians and to be their voice in getting things done.

The bill seeks to amend the Copyright Act. Whenever we do something like that, we have to be careful to protect the rights of producers, artists and inventors of things that have copyrights, so we do this carefully. However, at the same time, we do this keeping in mind the consumer and the taxpayer. I would like to commend my hon. colleague, the member for Richmond Centre, for his fine work on the legislation and for bringing it forward. I am glad we have the opportunity this morning to discuss it.

I hope we are able to, once this has gone through committee and comes back to the House for its final reading, work in the spirit of camaraderie and do other things like Canadians are asking us to do, such as provide tax relief and, more important, affordability. This is something we cannot lose sight of here, the whole aspect of affordability.

Bill C-244 seeks to amend exactly that, and to amend sections of the Copyright Act, chiefly where existing legislation deals with the subjects of diagnosis, maintenance and repair.

I would like to focus my comments this morning on how the legislation would impact the agriculture industry. Serving on the agriculture committee and being in an area that is very heavily centred on agriculture, this is very applicable, I would like to look at the

legislation through the lens of affordability, as well as address a few of the concerns brought forward by manufacturers.

If we were to put this bill in a nutshell, into everyday language, we could say that if we buy something, we own it. As an owner of a product, whether it is an electronic device, or a household device like a dishwasher or a stove, or an automobile, or a piece of farm machinery or an implement, or a piece of construction machinery or a highway tractor, we, as the owner, have the right to repair it. Assuming we have the knowledge and the ability to do that, there is always a cost benefit of whether we can repair something more cost-effectively than the dealer that represents the original equipment manufacturer.

If we do not personally have that knowledge, we should be able to travel a reasonable distance to have it repaired by someone who does have that knowledge and expertise, and for a reasonable price. There was a time when farmers were also mechanics. If that tractor or combine was not working for them, they had to find some way to jig it up to repair it. Our seasons for planting are short and they can sometimes be very time-sensitive, and our seasons for harvesting can be short and time-sensitive as well. Farmers need to take the crop off when it is mature, when it is ripe, and when conditions allow them to do that.

I live on a bit of an acreage, so I have a John Deere tractor. I am, for the most part, very happy with my tractor, but my tractor needed a bit of work. I took it to my John Deere dealer this past week and I got him to give it a fall tune up and put it back into proper working order. I picked it up and when I looked at the repair bill, I thought I could have done all the work myself for a lot less money. There is that cost benefit, but I do not have the time to do it.

With our parliamentary responsibilities, even the times we are in our ridings, we are very busy in the constituency doing constituency work. However, farmers, owners of a product like a John Deere tractor, should be able to fix that equipment themselves, if they have the ability, the time and the knowledge. The legislation seeks to address that. Not all repairs should be proprietary to the original equipment manufacturer, but it should be incumbent upon the owner to repair that piece of equipment in the most economical way possible.

Farmers were, by necessity, jacks of all trades and as a result of this necessity, they possessed the wherewithal and the knowledge to fix and maintain their own equipment.

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● (1105)

With the major technological advancements and computerization that we have seen in vehicles, farm equipment and appliances over the past two decades, the ability to repair is becoming more and more difficult for farmers. Progress is sometimes a double-edged sword.

When that tractor or combine breaks down in the field today, one needs the proper diagnosis equipment to plug it into the ECM to get a reading to show what is wrong and what needs to be fixed. Often it is beyond the capability or scope of what farmers are able to do, but they should have the ability to call their local repairmen, who do have the tools to plug into the port to get the proper diagnostics, which would allow them to then repair the equipment and do it in a way that would allow those farmers to expeditiously get their crop off the field. Instead of waiting for a technician, who may be four or five hours away and may be tied up with another customer fixing another urgent need, they should be able to have a variety of resources available at their disposal to fix the equipment.

New technology is great, but it also drives up prices. It makes repairs more difficult, all the more so when farmers have only one option. This legislation seeks to create options and diversity of responses and resources for farmers to access repair for their equipment.

We do not think, through the legislation, and I think all parliamentarians agree, that for the diagnostic, repair and maintenance of a machine, it should be a one-source option for repairs, which is often the case in a lot of situations, especially in the farming community. It is not a practical solution. Farmers are often very far from a repair facility, but in their own community there may be a local mechanic who has the ability and wherewithal to fix their equipment, and they should have the option to do that.

As an MP for a rural riding, I must mention the fact that farming is not cheap. In fact, it is very capital-intensive and requires a huge investment. Speaking with farmers this past summer, the cost of a new combine is upwards of \$1 million, and it is loaded with technology. It is good, efficient and productive, but it does cost a lot of money, so farmers need to be very cost-sensitive and able to control their costs.

We know what has happened with the price of seed and now with fertilizer. All of those prices have seemingly skyrocketed in the last two years. There are also taxes, including the carbon tax. I am hoping members on the government side of the House will be able to support Bill C-234 from the member for Huron—Bruce, which would provide a full exemption of the carbon tax for all aspects of farming, including the heating and cooling of livestock facilities, the powering of irrigation pumps and the powering of grain dryers to dry the grain. Those things are missing, and the carbon tax has been a punishing tax for agriculture producers.

On April 2 next year, the Liberal government seeks to triple the carbon tax, which will hit farmers where hurts, and farmers cannot absorb that cost. If they are to absorb the cost, there is only one possible outcome, which is that the cost of food will increase. We need to be very cognizant of the fact that farmers have to pass along the cost of production to the end user, and the end user is all of us. We are the consumer and the people who eat the food. Let us

keep this in mind, that the carbon tax, according to the Liberal plan, will be tripling this coming April.

Bill C-234 would exempt agriculture fuels from all carbon tax, and I hope that, as the bill finds its way through committee, it will get broad support, as the bill before us, Bill C-244, is getting in the House today.

I have one more story I want to relate.

I heard from a farmer who crossed the border just recently to pick up parts in the United States. It used to be that CBSA officers would simply log the part and he would be on his way. Now he says that they insist that he have all the product numbers entered online ahead of time. When he said that he did not know where to find that information or how to do that, he was told to get a farm broker to do it. Now he is expected to spend \$300 on a trip to see a farm broker for a \$10 part. He said that it was just crazy. However, Bill C-244 would allow that farmer to fix his own equipment at home at a reasonable cost.

As Conservatives, Bill C-244 is a bill we want to get behind. We want to support the Liberal member who brought the legislation forward, and I am thankful for the opportunity to speak to it.

● (1110)

[Translation]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to be here today to speak to Bill C-244, which amends the Copyright Act “to allow the circumvention of a technological protection measure in a computer program if the circumvention is solely for the purpose of the diagnosis, maintenance or repair of a product in which the program is embedded.”

If this bill is passed, companies will now be allowed to manufacture, import, distribute, sell or rent technology supplies, devices or components used for diagnostic maintenance or repair.

Ultimately, the Copyright Act is designed to protect literary and artistic property rights and to encourage fair value for the work that is done, and it will continue to do so. Bill C-244 does not allow a person to break the digital locks that prevent copying or altering an artistic work without the consent of the copyright owner. It will allow someone to do so for the sole purpose of repairing the product.

The Bloc Québécois will vote for the bill. Let us not forget that a similar bill was introduced in the last Parliament and it passed unanimously, 330 votes to 0.

I always wonder about bills that pass unanimously. Perhaps we should have acted more swiftly. Members will recall that an election was called and all the bills died on the Order Paper. With the election being called, the analysis of the bill was interrupted right in the middle of its study at the Standing Committee on Industry and Technology, of which I am a member.

Although Quebec has not codified the circular economy, it applies the principles of the circular economy in many of its policies, and most of its major industrial strategies are now developed in accordance with this principle that seeks to reclaim the materials and energy used to produce goods.

It is high time we reconsidered the linear economic model and went back to repairing the goods we consume. Today, education on the environment and sustainable development, starting as early as elementary school, also includes raising awareness about reducing waste, reusing and recycling products and materials, as well as sorting. Equiterre also invites us to sign a petition on its website. To be consistent, we must adopt a new paradigm and stop throwing money in the garbage.

Our societies are catching on to the downsides of creating waste and cluing in to the economic and energy-producing potential of unwanted objects. New legislation and policy in Quebec reflect that awareness. Quebec's National Assembly is currently debating a bill that would actually ban planned obsolescence and force companies to label their products with a sustainability and reparability rating. An ambitious update to the Consumer Protection Act is needed to make companies change their practices in ways that benefit consumers.

Far from interfering with the work of the National Assembly, Bill C-244 will prevent manufacturers from using the federal Copyright Act to thwart Quebec's efforts to protect consumers from this practice better than any other jurisdiction in the world.

A World Bank report entitled "What a waste" lists several initiatives from around the world aimed at reducing the quantity of goods that end up in landfills. In Italy, the competition bureau has fined companies for intentionally making old phones obsolete in order to entice people to buy a new one. Here in Canada, meanwhile, there are stories of people being threatened with lawsuits for fixing a broken product without authorization from the retailer. It makes no sense.

In January, France celebrated one year since its legislation came into effect. It is evolving to force companies to be more ethical and transparent about the reparability of their products. In the United States, several states are discussing it or have already started focusing on the issue of repairs.

The objectives are clear. We have to break free from disposable plastic, better inform consumers, fight waste and, in terms of reusing solid waste, take action against planned obsolescence and demand better production. That is where our future lies.

The future looks bright for repair services. Not only are more and more consumers fed up with the "buy-use-toss" cycle and the immense waste it creates, but repair tutorials and DIY support groups have become extremely popular online and across Quebec. There is now an online platform that compiles DIY repair manuals for a host

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of electronics. I am sure the repair services of this world, such as iFixit, will make consumers very happy.

• (1115)

The movement is taking hold, although several pieces of legislation still need to be modernized. In the meantime, people can still avail themselves of the right to repair by fixing their devices, since they have nothing to lose by trying to repair something that is already broken. Unfortunately, until this right is formally recognized in legislation, consumers will likely resign themselves to the reality of having to throw things away, or at best recycling them, because they were designed and assembled in factories with moulding equipment and parts that cannot be replaced.

This societal shift is being led by ordinary citizens and is gaining momentum. All levels of government must act, because not only is waste a health issue, but it is also key to the green transition, since resources to produce these goods are not available in infinite quantities.

Under section 92.13 of the British North America Act, matters of a private nature are subjects of exclusive provincial legislation. This section has to do with property and civil rights. That is why in Quebec, RECYC-QUÉBEC or the Office de la protection du consommateur programs are invested in this modernization. However, actions under federal law are still possible and this bill is a first step towards limiting them and opening the door to repairing goods. Bill C-244 respects jurisdictions and leaves it to the provinces to define the right-to-repair principle.

Given that technological waste represents a growing environmental concern, several pieces of legislation should be amended to address the issue. Today's debate concerns a small part of this burden, but we must consider making legislative amendments to allow the repair, diagnostics and maintenance of electronic devices in particular. This definitely needs to be considered.

Bill C-244 is an worthwhile measure that confirms the right to repair products that belong to us or to have them repaired and that the people doing the repairs, whether they be mechanics or computer specialists, will no longer risk being sued for copyright infringement. This will open the door to healthy competition and the development of the SMEs that we are so proud of in Quebec.

As an aside, this is particularly important in the regions, where there is not always access to very specialized services for the repair of tractors or Apple devices, for example.

This measure also confirms that we will have other choices besides a company's authorized retailer. This bill will be particularly useful in the regions, where large corporations do not open stores, which means that it is virtually impossible to get products repaired.

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Despite the difficulties facing some companies that want to adopt the principles of the circular economy, we can still make adjustments and promote “repairability”. Little by little, everyone will discover the benefits.

I invite as many people as possible to change their consumer habits before buying a product. I invite them to ask about the availability of parts and whether manufacturers provide repair services. I invite them to choose the manufacturer that can sell them parts and help them have their product repaired. I invite them to encourage businesses that offer repair services for their goods. They could also opt for used or refurbished products that often cost less.

The automobile industry is a model in that regard. Last week, I was able to have a good discussion with representatives of LKQ, who target automotive sites. Automotive manufacturers now own a great deal of strategic data, which is locked. This cuts down on the number of people repairing goods in the regions and also elsewhere. These repair persons are essential and provide services for less. The control device has a repair cost. If the information is so highly controlled, there is a cost that is passed on to the consumer.

I think we also need to modernize the Copyright Act. I am thinking about businesses such as Copibec and Access Copyright, which gave me the opportunity, in meetings last year, to talk about the importance of publishers when it comes to the use of educational materials and the loss of revenue associated with sales in the education sector.

If Minister Champagne is listening, I would encourage him to speed up—

• (1120)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I would remind the hon. member that we cannot refer to members by name.

Mr. Sébastien Lemire: Madam Speaker, thank you. I was referring to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry.

We also need to think about implementing technical measures.

Simply put, we should be able to repair the things we own. We cannot continue to support a culture of disposable goods. The message must be very clear. Let us put an end to strategies that encourage consumers to dispose of their products because they cannot be repaired.

The regulations are progressing slowly, but I am confident that this bill will make its way to committee soon.

[English]

Mr. Taylor Bachrach (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise this morning on behalf of the people of Skeena—Bulkley Valley to speak to this important bill before us, Bill C-244, which deals with the right to repair.

I thought I would direct my remarks perhaps more broadly at this idea of the right to repair. It is an idea that has a lot of resonance for people I speak to, both in northwest B.C. and across the country.

First I want to acknowledge the work of the member for Windsor West, for whom this has been a topic of focus for a number of years, as well as the member for Richmond Centre and the member

for Cambridge, who both brought this bill forward. This is a bill that has a lot of support from across party lines, and that is of course always good to see. I hope that in this Parliament this bill is able to progress and pass into law so the very focused approach it represents can start to have an impact and lead to some of the results that have been promised.

I mentioned that this idea of the right to repair has a real resonance. Intuitively, people are drawn to this idea because it speaks to a set of values from a bygone era, which are these ideas, this ethic, around repairing things instead of throwing them out, around conserving and around ensuring that we are not a wasteful society. I am told that my grandmother used to like to say, “Waste not, want not.” That is something she got from her mother, who of course lived through the Great Depression. Many of these ideas come from that generation, which had to do with less and had to make consumer products last longer by repairing them.

In thinking about this idea of the right to repair, I was remembering some of my experiences with repair. They do not have to do with electronics, which I know is the very directed focus of the bill before us, but I thought I would share them very briefly.

I was thinking about my neighbour Ross Van Horn. I had a lawn mower, one of those real mowers from the great Canadian company Lee Valley, and it was a quality product that was very sturdy. My abuse and misuse of it over the years resulted in the handle breaking, and it still kind of worked but I did not fix it and just kind of made do.

Ross lived across the street. Unfortunately, he passed away a couple of years ago, so I pass on this story in his memory. He would look out his front window and watch me struggling with this broken mower, and one day he came over and took it from me. He took it into his basement, took an old piece of a brass curtain rod and mended it in such a beautiful way and with such care and attention to detail that it was better than it was when it was brand new. It really reminded me of these values of the generations that came before us, values that I fear we have lost to some extent.

We have an obsession in North American culture with the new, the unblemished and the unworn. I was made aware of a tradition in Japan called *kintsugi*, whereby broken pottery is mended using gold instead of transparent glue. This is a way of honouring the life history of the object, of not hiding the fact that it was once broken but mending it in a way that its history is portrayed and shared as part of its beauty. That is something we could learn from in our current throwaway society. I do not know if we can be mending shattered iPhone screens with little bits of gold, but the idea that mending something can actually make it more beautiful is something that can be celebrated.

I was also thinking of an experience I had with a favourite suit of mine. Like many members in this place, I join in a lot of parades in my riding. A couple of years ago, I was mounting an old-fashioned bicycle wearing this suit. For some reason, it was particularly tight at the time, and as I lifted my knee there was a loud ripping sound and a very embarrassing part of the suit burst open. I was forced to ride this bike to the end of the parade in a rather exposed manner. I would show the House the part of the suit in question, but I fear that it may be interpreted as something unparliamentary in this hallowed chamber.

I took the suit back to the retailer and was told by the salesperson that mending the suit in such a way was not the way they wanted their products to be represented out there in the world, which I found a little horrifying. I then took it to a wonderful tailor on, I believe, Queen Street here in Ottawa, and she fixed it up so that it is better than new. I am proud to continue to wear it today.

• (1125)

I am digressing a little from the focus of this bill, but I suppose my point is that if we can embrace this culture and ethic of repairing things, we can create a better society. We can create less waste. We can be a society that really takes care of our resources and acts in a way that is responsible.

I know that many members have cited the amount of electronic waste that makes its way into our landfills every year. This is an issue of great concern for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the impact on our changing climate. So many of the emissions from our consumer products, particularly electronics, are created in the mining and manufacturing processes, rather than in the use over the lifetime of a product.

The statistics I saw showed that for Apple products, 83% of the life cycle of greenhouse gas emissions come from the original manufacturing processes. That was a 2010 statistic so perhaps that has changed, but there is progress to be made in this regard. By fixing things, we can use fewer things, we can extend the lifetime of these products and we can release less emissions.

This bill seeks to make a very specific change to the Copyright Act. It seems that a number of companies are using the Copyright Act in a manner that it was never intended for. Essentially, these processes, called technological protection measures or TPMs, are ways in which electronics companies essentially lock their products and prevent third party repair people from getting into them and fixing what is wrong.

Today, of course, the repairs that we are talking about do not use pieces of brass curtain rod and pop rivets. They are more likely to use lines of code or very specialized electronic parts. It seems like this is an important step, but it is only one step in ensuring that the right to repair and these restrictions on repairability are addressed.

In doing some background reading on this bill, I came across a report by the Federal Trade Commission in the United States. It lists the number of repair restrictions out there that prevent people from repairing products: product designs that complicate or prevent repair, unavailability of parts and repair information, designs that make independent repairs less safe, policies or statements that steer consumers to manufacturer repair networks, application of patents

rights and enforcement of trademarks, and disparagement of non-OEM parts and independent repair. The last one they mention, which is the one this bill deals with, is software locks and firmware updates. We have a lot of work to do, and I am hopeful that we will see other legislation that tackles these other barriers to repairability.

Of course, when we talk about the right to repair, the history of these pieces of legislation has seen quite a bit of opposition from the companies that stand to benefit from these mini-monopolies over their user base. If we cannot get into a product to repair it and if we are forced to take that product back to the original manufacturer, that puts a significant amount of power in the hands of those companies. That is power they do not want to lose, so we see push-back from all sorts of companies, whether it is Apple, Panasonic or John Deere, which is of course a very common example in the agricultural sector. In the same study I mentioned, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission looked into these arguments made by companies and found that “there is scant evidence to support manufacturers’ justifications for repair restrictions.”

This is a change that very much needs to be made. I think it could be construed as being against economic growth, but I would offer that the repair economy is, in fact, a very important part of our overall economy. There are so many small businesses that earn a living repairing goods, and that is a part of our economy that we can stimulate through bills like this one, which seeks to expand the right to repair.

• (1130)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, what a pleasure it is to be able to speak to such an important piece of legislation. I am really encouraged. We often talk about consumer rights and what we can do to help our constituents. The member for Richmond Centre has brought forward a piece of legislation that really makes a difference. I applaud him for his efforts in wanting to make life better for all of us who like to use our hands to fix our products.

That is what this legislation is all about. When we stop and think about it, if we purchase something, as a consumer we should have the ability to play around with it and fix it if it breaks down. That is the essence of this bill. It is very much a consumers' rights piece of legislation. It would give people who purchase a product, should it break down in a month, two months or a year later for whatever reason, the ability to repair it.

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I think my colleague from Avalon was in appliance repairs for 20-plus years. We can see how technology changes things. When I was 12 years old and pumping gas, I had a deep admiration for cars. I could pop a hood, change the spark plugs and do an oil change, and I began to understand how a motor worked. I did a lot of things with automobiles through my teenage years and into my twenties. It was simple to understand.

Nowadays, when we pop the hood, we are looking at computer technology. Some of these advancements are good for our environment. For example, I now have a turbo booster as opposed to an eight cylinder. We can do a lot of wonderful things. However, one thing we cannot do as much is the type of repair we could do in the past. Technology changes things. As the member for Richmond Centre emphasized, there are technological protection measures. Those TPMs are put into place by the appliance manufacturer to intentionally prevent people from doing the type of work they would have been able to do in the past.

That is why this important legislation is before us today. Others have attempted to get legislation through. I have a feeling that, given his persistence, the member for Richmond Centre will be successful in getting it through.

I believe the standing committee has a role to play. We understand the importance of the Copyright Act. We want to ensure that there is a creative environment in Canada and that people are investing in technology and other things and feel comfortable knowing their creativity will be supported by the government. It is one of the reasons I think it is important that it go to the standing committee. Based on the discussions and debate I have heard on this legislation, I am expecting it to pass second reading unanimously. Once it gets to the standing committee, I think we need to have a good, healthy discussion. I know the member is open to amendments that might make the legislation healthier for us.

Like the Conservative member who spoke about the agricultural community, a community with which I am so familiar, we also recognize, understand and appreciate the frustration the jacks and janes of all trades feel with respect to these products that are being purchased. Whether it is a cellphone, an automobile, a tractor, a combine or a combination thereof, or any form of consumer product that is out there, there are attempts by manufacturers to prevent those products from being fixed at the local level or, at the very least, to make them very expensive to fix.

• (1135)

As a direct result, we often start to see this “buy and throw out” mentality. I remember when people bought a colour TV back in the day, if something went wrong with it, they would get a TV repair person to come out. Whether it was a tube or the clicker or whatever it might be, it would get fixed and they would continue to use the TV. Nowadays, people buy a 30” flat-screen TV for about \$150, because if they shop around they can get some pretty good deals. When that TV breaks down, it is off to the garbage. Hopefully it gets recycled. There is this whole idea of buying something that, when it breaks, costs too much to fix. People just buy a replacement. That happens far too often in our society.

We have heard some members talk about the environment, whether it is our landfill sites or even our recycle depots. Could we

be doing a better job? Bill C-244 provides that opportunity to ensure that we have a healthier environment, that our consumers are better protected and that we allow for creativity. The government is not trying to prevent creativity and the protection of copyrights. It is important to recognize that. That is why I believe in having the bill go to the standing committee. It would be nice to hear from industry representatives, to see what they have to say about the products they actually produce. This is not an attempt to go after industry per se as much as it is to ensure that consumer rights are being protected. There is a difference.

Canada is a trading nation. We are very much dependent on and in need of expanding our borders by exporting our products and obviously importing the merchandise that Canadians desire. It is important that we maintain that two-way flow of trade. We have seen a great deal of that trade over the last number of years, and we have reached record numbers of trade agreements being signed.

When we talk about Bill C-244, what we need to keep in mind more than anything else is that it allows consumers to repair a product they own without violating the Copyright Act. That is what the legislation does. We are talking about the right to repair when someone acquires or purchases a widget, so that they are able to do the fixing at a much more affordable cost.

As well, a lot of people like to be able to fix or play around with the products they acquire. If any demonstration of that is needed, all one needs to do is look at social media, maybe by googling “how to” and whatever it is one wants to do. There are videos out there.

We need to encourage this bill all the way through. I look forward to seeing it come back to the House and ultimately get royal assent. It would have a profoundly positive impact on our communities throughout the country, and that is why I will vote in favour of this bill's going to committee at this time.

• (1140)

Hon. Erin O'Toole (Durham, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to stand today and speak to Bill C-244, an act to amend the Copyright Act.

This bill is pretty much the same bill that Parliament expressed a majority opinion in favour of in the last Parliament, with Bill C-272. Copyright law is something I have worked with professionally since my time as a lawyer in the private sector. It is an important part of our intellectual property regime. All of these laws should make sure to keep pace with technology, with change and with consumer need. That is why I am in favour of this private member's bill going to committee and being studied.

The short form for this bill is enshrining the right of repair. Why is that important? There are two fundamental areas in which it is critically important for us to modernize our approach to repairing technology. The first is for consumers. We use intellectual property to grant extraordinary commercial rights, almost monopoly-like protections, and we do this to encourage innovation and to make sure we have smart phones and technology that make our lives easier and our economy more productive.

However, that monopoly protection, for a period of time, will also lead to higher prices and less competition. In the case of technology that cannot be repaired because of digital locks, technology manuals and other things that are being kept secret, that is providing a monopoly protection for that technology, thereby not allowing someone to have a device repaired. When we have spent a lot of money on a device, we are then going to be forced to either buy a new one or have the repair done only by an authorized dealer. What does that mean? It means higher prices for consumers.

The biggest thing we will see a lot of parties in this House supporting Bill C-244 on is this consumer protection. In the previous Parliament, that is why the official opposition and I supported it. It is for consumers to have more choice and have that right to repair something themselves. I doubt there is an MP in here who is technologically proficient enough to fix their smart phone or anything else. I am sure everyone would agree. However, we can have a third party do that for us, an agent we take our device to. They can fix it.

It is important for any Canadians who might be following this debate to know that this is beyond just getting a smart phone fixed. There are so many computer operating systems, semiconductors and chips. We have seen a shortage of them in the last year, causing a backlog in orders from cars to recreational vehicles and farming machinery. These devices are manufactured and we think of them as industrial goods, but they are so heavily dependent on consumer programs. If we then have digital locks on those programs, we will not be able to repair them, and when there is a supply chain shortage, we will have trouble replacing an item.

The first reason I think Bill C-244 should go to committee is this consumer protection, small business, and the ability to have lower prices and reuse materials. We are going to hear that some industry players in the automotive field, in farming implements and in computer devices are opposed to this. If someone has an intellectual property monopoly, of course they are not going to want more competition and they are going to say we should not allow a digital lock to be opened to allow someone to repair something.

Our society needs this, because this is now the state of the consumer. Every large purchase we make, like that of a home, vehicle or business, will be impacted by these intellectual property provisions, and it is time for industry to get with the program. We have to encourage an ability to repair for the consumer and more competition on the repair space. Industry will adjust to this change, which is necessary after a few decades of rapid technological advancement.

• (1145)

The second reason the right to repair is so important, and I think we will hear a lot of advocacy groups around the country talk about the environment, is if we are not repairing items, they will often be discarded. Therefore, not only is the consumer or small business paying more, but piles and piles of electronic waste are being created, which are far too often finding their way to jurisdictions in China, or other parts of the developing world, where they are not really being recycled.

They are just paying to destroy or dispose of these items. It is out of sight, out of mind for us, and we go on to the next purchase, but

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this is then allowing our waste to be a problem in an area of the world that certainly does not have the ability to deal with it. The developed world has to get in line with the philosophy behind the right to repair, not just for the consumer, as I said, but also for the environment.

We are also seeing our friends do this. Of our friends and trading partners, there is no bigger one than the United States. Updates it made to its Digital Millennium Copyright Act are providing the ability for a right to repair. Right now, the United States is limiting that to the consumer level, so if it sees a large company buy a large manufacturing CNC type of machine, it is not providing that right of repair in the industrial commercial setting, but it is providing it for the consumers. It is extending in copyright what is known as fair use rights, allowing fair use to include the diagnosis, repair or maintenance of operating systems within a device or some sort of machinery. A consumer has that right, the fair use of copyrighted material, to diagnose a problem and fix it.

That is what should be done with our copyright regime to allow fair-dealing exceptions at the consumer level. This bill really does not tackle the right to repair from the standpoint that the Americans have, but at least it is a start. This private member's bill would actually define or redefine what it means to circumvent a computer operating system, thereby making sure that the right to repair does not attract violations of the Copyright Act. At committee, one of the things that would be explored is whether we should be in line with western countries that respect intellectual property rights and create this right to diagnose and repair as a fair-dealing exception.

I must note for fun, having done copyright work when I was legal counsel to Proctor & Gamble and with two large law firms, that copyright and fair use have always been areas that I have watched, including fighting counterfeit goods, which is people using trademarks and copyrighted material to trade off the goodwill of other brands when they are selling phoney products.

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In fact, the most leading case in Canada on the fair-dealing exception, the most recent major legal development, was in the case of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation v. Conservative Party of Canada, where the Conservative Party of Canada was successful in defeating the claim by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that television commercials that use clips from CBC's news programs somehow violated its copyright. Certainly a public broadcaster should not really have the same intellectual property strategies as the private broadcasters, but, in any event, the court recognized that criticism, political debate and questioning allowed for a fair-dealing exception to use those clips.

We see now this copyright usage on YouTube videos and a whole range of things, where small clips can be used in someone's production as long as they are just being used for news, commentary and criticism. These are exceptions that have developed within copyright as our society developed, as social media grew and as technology grew. As copyright changes with the times, for the benefit of both the consumer and the environment, we need fair use exceptions or changes to allow a right of reply. That is why it is encouraging that Bill C-244 builds on the work done under Bill C-272 in the last Parliament to give Canadians this right of repair.

• (1150)

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will be brief since I only have four minutes for my speech.

First, I want to recognize the sponsor of this bill, the member for Richmond Centre, as well as the member for Cambridge who preceded him and the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley, who provided some quirky and rather amusing examples. I would have a few of my own to share, but unfortunately, four minutes is not enough time to do so.

The bill we will be voting on is very important. I am quite pleasantly surprised by the unanimous support it is receiving in the House. There are some bills that make so much sense that everyone just lines up behind them. I have a feeling this one will pass unanimously. At least, that is the impression I am getting from this morning's debate.

In the little time I have left, I would like to stress the importance of copyright. It allows artists to make a living off their art, allows creators to continue creating. It is therefore essential, and we must be cautious when studying Bill C-244.

However, abusing a right is never acceptable. Right now, multinational corporations take advantage of their economic power to control people. Cellphone upgrades are just one example. How many of us have bought a new cellphone, not because the old one was not working, but because it was too slow? The same goes for personal computers. We are constantly updating the darn things. Eventually, two, three, four or five years later, the device still works, but it is sluggish because the inner workings get bogged down over time.

That is all planned. Take home appliances. I myself have fixed a lot of things in my life. For example, a thin, tiny little piece of plastic located below my huge, heavy washer broke when the machine

was seven years old. I went to buy a metal one at Aux 1001 pièces d'Électroménager, where the staff give the kind of good advice I appreciate. The washer worked for another 10 years.

That is part of the economic system, and we need a hard reset. The goal is not to break companies' backs; the goal is to enable the reasonable use of goods and to protect our environment, which is also essential. How many tonnes of waste end up in our trash cans every year, even just counting e-waste, which is the most harmful? We need to collect that waste properly and in the right places. In Quebec, everyone knows about the Serpuairens, our very own official e-waste depots. There are other designated e-waste drop-off locations everywhere else.

It looks like my time is up. This bill is good for everyone. Let us send it to committee.

• (1155)

[English]

Mr. Wilson Miao (Richmond Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House today in support of my private member's bill, Bill C-244, an act to amend the Copyright Act, which would allow all Canadians the right to diagnosis, maintenance and repair, and I am very excited to see this bill come up for a vote very soon.

The concerns of this bill impact the lives of Canadians in almost every aspect, from the tools and equipment we rely on in our day-to-day lives, to the transportation we use and commute with and the environment we care a lot about, for now and our future. The most notably impacts would be to Canadians' consumer rights, allowing consumers to gain autonomy over the goods they purchase. The support received for Bill C-244 is commendable, and we all understand that this issue is non-partisan and does not fall within one demographic but to every Canadian from coast to coast to coast.

This piece of legislation spearheads the conversation on the right to repair, and I hope to see it being discussed and studied at the standing committee in the near future. Bill C-244 addresses concerns regarding digital devices that have become increasingly prevalent over the past decade. As digital technology continues to advance, we are more connected than ever, as technology has become a fundamental part of life.

The Copyright Act as it stands today does not account for the right to repair and is preventing repairs from being done on copy-righted products, even when nothing is being copied or distributed, and today we are seeing more and more of the Internet of things in the products we purchased, all of which are protected by copyright through technological protection measures, also known as TPMs, and any circumvention to them would be considered illegal, violating the Copyright Act, and could potentially lead to charges of breaking a federal law.

This is the reason Bill C-244 would create a pathway to a broadened right to repair framework, allowing provincial and territorial governments to create their own right to repair legislation however they see fit and ensure sustainability for future generations to come.

I will give an example. The phone I have costs over \$1,000, and members can guess what would happen if I were to break my screen. I would have to go to an authorized dealer repair shop to have it repaired, with an estimated cost of \$329, as shown online. What would happen if I were to go to an unauthorized repair store to have it fixed for less than the estimate? The problem I might encounter is that there would be a pop-up on the screen showing that unauthorized or non-genuine parts are detected, possibly voiding any warranties moving forward.

Similar situations would apply when replacing an LED touch screen panel on a refrigerator or maintaining a new electric vehicle that someone just purchased. These technological protection measures can inadvertently prevent repairs and limit the lifespan of a product's useful life.

Canadians should have the option to repair the products they purchase and own. The circumvention of technological protection measures we are discussing, and which would be allowed under Bill C-244, would be for the sole purpose of diagnosis, maintenance and repair only. Any other circumvention would be considered illegal under the Copyright Act.

Before I end my words, I like to thank the member for Cambridge for the work he has done in the last Parliament and all of those who have shared their comments about Bill C-244 with me, with the hope of seeing this bill pass in the coming vote.

I thank them for their support, and I thank the members for their debate today.

• (1200)

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]

Mr. Wilson Miao: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded vote.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred until Wednesday, October 5, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

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[English]

COST OF LIVING RELIEF ACT, NO. 2

The House resumed from September 26 consideration of the motion that Bill C-31, An Act respecting cost of living relief measures related to dental care and rental housing, be read the second time and referred to a committee, and of the amendment.

Mr. Michael Cooper (St. Albert—Edmonton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-31, which is legislation styled as an act respecting cost of living relief measures. I emphasize “styled” as an act respecting cost of living relief measures, because the measures put forward in the bill can at best be described as half-measures and band-aid solutions that fail to address the root causes of the cost of living crisis faced by everyday Canadians.

The bill offers measures by throwing some money here and throwing some money there, all in a desperate effort by a desperate government to make it appear that it is doing something, anything, to address the cost of living crisis, a crisis of this Liberal government's own making. I have to say that it is a bit ironic that, even though the bill is styled as legislation to address the cost of living crisis, it would, in fact, exacerbate the cost of living crisis. It would do so because it comes with a price tag of several billion dollars that would be borrowed and would pour fuel on the inflationary fire that is at the heart of Canada's cost of living crisis.

The cost of living crisis cannot be understated. It is happening. It is real, and Canadians are hurting like never before. Inflation is at a 40-year high. It hit 8.1% in June. Inflation for essentials such as food is even higher. Grocery prices are increasing at a faster rate than we have seen in 40 years, with food inflation hitting 10.8%. When one looks at some dietary essentials, prices have gone up even more. Fresh fruit is up 13.2%. Eggs are up 10.9%. Bread is up 17.6%. Pasta is up 32.4%. I could go on. The average family of four is now spending \$1,200 more this year over last for groceries. That is \$1,200 more this year over last year just to put food on the table.

While members opposite and their coalition partners in the NDP will undoubtedly pat themselves on the back for handing out \$500 rent cheques, which, by the way, most renters would not even qualify for, that is a mere fraction of the increased cost that Canadians are paying just to put food on the table. It underscores the severity of the cost of living crisis and the empty response on the part of this government in tackling it.

How did we get into this mess in the first place? Undoubtedly there are a number of factors, but perhaps the biggest factor is the government's reckless fiscal policies and the government's out-of-control spending. Never in Canadian history have we had a government that has spent more, borrowed more and added more debt. To put it in some context, in the past seven years, the Prime Minister has accumulated more debt than all the debt accumulated in the 148 years of Canada's history leading up to the election of this government.

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• (1205)

The Prime Minister has added more debt than all previous prime ministers combined. That is staggering. It demonstrates a total lack of prudence and a complete recklessness on the part of the government, which has now resulted in this cost of living crisis with 40-year-high inflation. The government told us not to worry and that it can spend and spend some more because interest rates are low, until they are not.

We saw the highest increase in interest rates in a quarter of a century last summer and interest rates are undoubtedly going to go up even further. The Liberals say they had no choice because of COVID, except when one looks at the facts, the government cannot hide behind COVID as an excuse for its out-of-control spending.

Let us look at some of those facts. To begin with, the government added \$100 billion in debt in its first five years in office, before COVID hit. In other words, the government added more debt during the good times, indeed, more debt than any government had accumulated during that period of time, leaving the cupboard bare.

Of the half a trillion dollars in new spending that we have seen over the past two years, this fire hose of spending, the Parliamentary Budget Officer has determined that more than 40% of that is unrelated to COVID. The Liberals say it is because of COVID, yet hundreds of billions of dollars of the half a trillion dollars of new spending, according to the PBO, is unrelated to COVID.

Then, in January, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that the stimulus spending was not serving its intended purpose anymore. The PBO effectively called on the government to stop the new spending. What was the government's response to the Parliamentary Budget Officer? It was to do exactly the opposite. The government did the only thing the government knows how to do and that is to spend other people's money, with \$71 billion of new spending with Bill C-8, \$60 billion in new spending with budget 2022 and now billions more dollars with this inflationary spending bill.

To pay for it all, the government, through the Bank of Canada, did something that no other government has done before, and that is quantitative easing or, in other words, the printing of money. After all of the spending, all of the debt and all of the money printing, there has been a cost. That is the cost of 40-year-high inflation. The more the government spends, the more the cost of living goes up. The more the government spends, the costlier it is for Canadians to purchase goods. Canadians are making less in their paycheques and their purchasing power is being diminished, all because of the government's reckless fiscal policies.

Although we find ourselves in this position of 40-year-high inflation, fuelled by the government's reckless spending, one must say that it ought not have been a surprise to the government that it would find itself in this place. After all, it was quite foreseeable. When we have more money chasing fewer goods, we are going to get inflation. That is called economics 101.

• (1210)

The leader of the official opposition, when he was the shadow minister of finance, called on the government to monitor inflation. He predicted that, if the government did not get spending under control, we would see inflation. What was the response from the

finance minister and the Prime Minister? It was to completely ignore the Leader of the Opposition. They said to not worry about inflation and that, if anything, we must be concerned about deflation. How wrong they were.

I guess it is a consequence of having a prime minister who has admitted that he does not think much about monetary policy. Perhaps if he thought a little about monetary policy, we would not find ourselves and the country in this fiscal mess and the consequent cost of living crisis that everyday Canadians are enduring. If the government was serious about addressing the cost of living crisis, it would not be doing what it is doing, but it is doubling down on the same failed approach that got us into this mess in the first place, with even more spending.

What the government should be doing is heeding the advice of the Leader of the Opposition by reining in spending, by restoring a fiscally responsible policy and a sound monetary policy, by finding savings and by rooting out waste in government. There is no shortage of waste to root out.

If the Prime Minister was serious about tackling the cost of living crisis, which begins with tackling the out-of-control spending of the government, the Prime Minister would be doing what the Leader of the Opposition has called on the government to do, which is to introduce legislation such as "pay as you go", whereby the government must find a dollar of savings for every new dollar of spending.

Some Liberals might scoff at the notion of "pay as you go" legislation, but it has worked. It has worked in the largest democracy and the largest economy in the world, that of the United States. More than 20 years ago, a Republican Congress passed and a Democrat president, Bill Clinton, signed into law "pay as you go" legislation. What was the result? It was a balanced budget for the first time in decades, and the United States paid down more than \$400 billion of debt.

Do not expect the current government to implement measures such as this. Do not expect it to rein in spending. Do not expect it to reflect on its failed policies and reverse course, because, on issue after issue, the government's measure of success, as it measures success, is based upon how much it has spent.

We see this with respect to housing. The government has spent billions of dollars, more than \$40 billion, on housing. Billions more were announced in budget 2022. What have been the results?

To begin with, the average Canadian is now paying roughly half of their monthly paycheque to cover their monthly housing costs. When the government came to office, the average Canadian was paying roughly 32% of their paycheque. They are now paying 50% of their paycheque. As well, housing prices have doubled. They have gone up 52% in just the past two years.

• (1215)

We have the most land in the G7, and yet we have the fewest houses in the G7 on a per capita basis. The Liberals can pat themselves on the back for spending all this money in housing, but when we look at the results, we have the fewest houses in the G7, among the highest prices, which have doubled under the government's watch, and now Canadians are paying half their paycheques just to put a roof over their heads. I would call that a policy of failure. Canadians certainly have not received good value for all that money that went out the door.

If the government were serious about tackling housing affordability, it, again, would be turning to the Leader of the Opposition, who has put forward a comprehensive plan to make housing more affordable so Canadians can purchase a home or rent a unit, by, among other things, tackling supply, increasing supply, by selling off a portion of the federal government's real estate portfolio to build more housing units and by incentivizing municipalities to allow more houses to be built, including tying federal infrastructure dollars to municipalities based upon new units built. These are reasonable solutions to try to address a very real problem that is impacting so many Canadians.

What is the government's solution? To hand out a \$500-rent cheque. Its solution is a \$500-rent cheque that does not even cover one week's rent in most Canadian cities. Not only that, more than six out of 10 renters will not even qualify for the cheque, and those who do will see whatever short-term benefit of that \$500 eviscerated with the Liberals' inflation, rising interest rates and, most significant, planned Liberal tax hikes in the new year.

At a time when Canadians are paying more in taxes than in housing, transportation, food and clothing combined, at a time when Canadians are faced with 40-year-high inflation, the Liberal government has suddenly decided it is a good time to increase payroll taxes and triple the mother of all taxes, the tax on everything, the hated carbon tax, which, by the way, is contributing to inflation.

It demonstrates that the government is not serious about addressing affordability. If it were, as a starting point, it would heed the advice of the Leader of the Opposition and cancel the planned tax hikes. It will not, so we have a government that is with one hand handing out some cheques to some Canadians only to take whatever benefit away with the other hand in the way of planned Liberal tax hikes.

This legislation may be styled as an act respecting cost of living relief measures, but this is not a serious plan to address the cost of living; it is more Liberal smoke and mirrors. It is an empty PR exercise in the absence of a real plan. It is why I will be opposing the bill.

• (1220)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in listening to the Conservatives, people would think that the Liberal Government of Canada is causing rapid inflation around the world, that all the problems, whether it is the pandemic or the war in Europe, have no effect on what is happening in Canada.

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The reality is quite different. Canada is concerned about inflation, as we should be. However, in comparison to the United States, the European Union or England, our inflation rate is lower. When we look at the legislation we are debating today, it is about providing dental care for kids under the age of 12. People would not know that if they are listening to the members speaking to the legislation.

Does the member not see the value of providing dental care for children under the age of 12? Does he not believe that the children he represents would benefit from the program being proposed in the legislation?

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, I would note that nine out of 10 provinces already have dental plans and supports for children, so in that respect this is a duplicative measure.

The hon. member talked about the reality of what is happening in Canada. The reality is that we have 40-year high inflation, and it is being fuelled by the government's out-of-control spending. The member is quite right that Canada is not alone. Other countries also have inflation. Why? Because they have pursued the very same policies as the Liberal government. If the same reckless policies are pursued, there will be the same reckless results.

The parliamentary secretary cited the United States. It—

[*Translation*]

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

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, my colleague delivered yet another of the very well-organized speeches we have come to expect from him, so it is clear to me that the Conservatives oppose Bill C-31. I get it; the bill is very poorly written. However, given that they would rather the federal government essentially cease to exist, I assume they are also against giving money to Quebec so it can improve its own system.

That being the case, is the Conservative Party now against transfers, including upping provincial health transfers to 35%? Are they now against what Quebec and all the provinces want?

[*English*]

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Mirabel is quite right that the premiers have called on the federal government to increase health transfers to the provinces. The Prime Minister has refused to even sit down with the premiers and has come up with this bill instead of addressing the needs of the provinces.

We do have deficiencies in our health care system that need to be addressed. Those deficiencies were exposed during COVID. What is required is federal leadership working collaboratively with the provinces, and that starts with sitting down with the premiers, something the Prime Minister has failed to do.

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Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, I want to be very clear on this point. The CPP and EI are not taxes. These are social programs. They are part of a social safety net that ultimately helps workers.

The opposition party is consistently saying that these are taxes, but these are deductions that help people. The Conservatives are saying that they want to save workers, on average, about \$11 a month by cutting their pensions and EI. What they are not saying to people is that this would save corporations billions. They are trying to sell them on something that is not true.

Ultimately we are trying, through the government and our work with it, to create long-lasting equity-driven social programs, like dental care.

There is a difference, but the Conservatives are calling for tax cuts that would benefit a very small group of people. What we are seeing in the U.K. is that this clearly is not working. This is clearly—

● (1225)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I have to give the hon. member time to answer.

The hon. member for St. Albert—Edmonton.

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, the member for London—Fanshawe has said that these payroll tax hikes are not tax hikes, yet her leader, the member for Papineau, has said that they are. The Government of Canada website states that they are.

This is the reality for everyday Canadians. These payroll tax hikes will mean that the average person will take less of his or her paycheque home. In the new year, people will be taking even less home when, on top of the payroll tax hikes, the government, with the backing of the member for London—Fanshawe and the NDP, is going to triple the carbon tax.

The policy of the NDP is one of taking more money out of the pockets of Canadians and making life less affordable. Our position is to put more money back in the hands of Canadians by cutting taxes, which is a very different approach, indeed.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I know the member for St. Albert—Edmonton has been interested in finding common ground in the chamber. Just last week, he proposed and sponsored a bill from the Senate that was passed here unanimously.

In this spirit, when he speaks about the cost of housing, we both agree that much more needs to be done to address increased unaffordability. One issue I hope he could comment on is the rules of the market that currently favour corporate investors, such as real estate investment trusts.

I have two questions. Does the member agree that homes should be for people to live in and not commodities for investors to trade? Is he not similarly concerned that more needs to be done to tilt the market back toward regular Canadians, young people, for example, who are looking to afford rental housing in communities across the country?

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, I appreciate working collaboratively with the member for Kitchener Centre on some issues of common ground.

The root of the problem of which the member speaks goes back to the half a trillion dollars that the government pumped out over the past two years, money that went into the mortgage and finance systems, which was borrowed out to investors who bought up properties and bid up prices. As a consequence, housing prices have gone up 52% because of that policy.

Mr. Bob Zimmer (Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies, CPC): Madam Speaker, we just heard a comment from the NDP that suggested that taxpayers just like those big, bad corporations were the bad guys. I would like the member to reflect on this. In essence, every tax dollar comes out of the pockets of taxpayers.

Could he reflect on where the money comes from for these payroll taxes?

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, it comes from the earnings of Canadians, who will be taking home less in January, again, thanks to the Liberal and NDP planned payroll tax hikes and the tripling of the carbon tax. They could not have come up with a worse policy at a time of this cost-of-living crisis in the face of 40-year high inflation. By the way, as the—

● (1230)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have time for one last question.

The hon. parliamentary secretary to the leader of the government in the House.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest when the member talked about the price on pollution, the carbon tax, as though it was brand new. The reality is that party has run on having a price on pollution in three elections. In fact, the member, under the Conservative banner, also ran in favour of a price on pollution in the last election in 2021.

Could he explain to the House why he is so critical of a plan that he ran on just one year ago?

Mr. Michael Cooper: Madam Speaker, the parliamentary secretary is simply wrong. I have always opposed the carbon tax. The Conservative Party has always opposed a carbon tax, and we will scrap it if elected.

Ms. Jenny Kwan (Vancouver East, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am sharing my time with my good colleague, the member for Edmonton Strathcona.

What are we talking about here this morning in the House of Commons? We are debating Bill C-31. It is a bill that wants to see Canadians get the support they need. What are those supports? We are talking about ensuring that low-income families and children get access to dental care. We are talking about providing a housing benefit for low-income individuals and families, although a one-time housing benefit. Nonetheless, it is some support that is desperately needed for people in our communities.

Where are we? We just heard from the Conservatives that they are opposed to providing low-income families and their children access to dental care. They say we cannot afford it, yet they are completely fine seeing the big oil and gas industry continue to get subsidies from the government. Last year alone, the oil and gas sector made over \$147 billion in profits, and the Conservatives want to see that they continue to get subsidies from the government. Meanwhile, they are saying no to children under 12 from families that cannot afford to get dental care.

We have to give our heads a shake and ask what is wrong with this picture. The Conservatives just elected a new leader, and every day we hear in this House each one of the Conservatives get up and make a statement to talk about how they stand on the side of the people and how they have people's backs. Whose backs do they have? It would be those of the wealthy CEOs and big corporations that are making humongous windfall profits—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): We have a point of order from the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River—Northern Rockies.

Mr. Bob Zimmer: Madam Speaker, I think the member is confused. The Conservatives are not in government. It is actually the Liberal Party that is in government now.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): That is not a point of order; that is debate.

The hon. member for Vancouver East.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Madam Speaker, the member is trying to interrupt my speech with a false point of order, but that does not change the fact that the Conservatives are on the side of wealthy CEOs. It does not change the fact that they are not on the side of everyday people who need access to dental care. They are not on the side of children who face tooth decay and cannot access dental care because their families cannot afford it.

In fact, tooth decay is the number one reason children miss school. The highest number of surgeries children face are for tooth decay, and it is not just pain they have to endure. Oral health has huge implications, long-term health implications, and this means we need to treat things early on. However, the Conservatives are not there for them.

The Conservatives voted against the NDP's push to get dental services to everyday Canadians last year, not once but twice. I might add that the Liberals joined them last year and voted against the NDP plan, not once but twice. It was because of 25 New Democrats in the House that we were able to force the government to take action. That is why we have this bill before us today. That is why Canadians who cannot afford access to dental care and who do not have dental services are going to get some help starting this

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year. That is why children under 12 in low-income families that are eligible will be able to get some support this year.

That is why next year, seniors and people with disabilities will be able to get access to dental services. I have met seniors in my riding and across the province and the country who have told me devastating stories of how they cannot eat because they do not have proper oral health and do not have teeth. Can anyone imagine seniors in their seventies or eighties having to blend their food as though they were infants because they cannot chew their food as they do not have proper teeth? Who in the House would say no to those seniors accessing dental support? That is what is coming next year. The Conservatives are saying no to children this year. Next year, are they going to say no to seniors who need dental care? Are they going to say no to people with disabilities who need dental care? I hope not.

I hope the new leader will wake up, stand on the side of people and stop saying we cannot afford it. What we cannot afford is to continue to allow wealthy CEOs to get their fat bonuses. What we cannot afford is allowing this situation to continue when big corporations have huge windfalls in profit during a pandemic period. We need to put in an excessive profit tax to support these kinds of programs and to support people.

The Conservatives will say that they are there for people on housing. We just heard them talk about how they have this great plan. Really? They talk about a plan, yet they do not talk about the need for affordability. That is where people are at. It is not just any supply. It is not about luxury condos. It is about people who are paying 30% or more of their total incomes for their housing costs. One in five Canadians is in that situation right now and needs help right now.

It was the Conservatives under the Mulroney government and then the Liberals under the Chrétien government who axed housing programs. In fact, the Liberals outright cancelled the national affordable housing program in 1993. That is why we have a housing crisis before us. The \$500 housing subsidy is a small measure and a good gesture. It is something the NDP was able to force the government to take action on, and I am glad about that, but more needs to be done. Make no mistake about that.

● (1235)

Both the Conservatives and the Liberals need to support the NDP's push to ensure that real estate investment trusts stop getting the tax benefits they are enjoying. We need to stop the financialization of housing. We need to stop treating housing as a stock market. We need to make sure that housing is there for people as a basic human right. That is what we need to do.

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We need to make sure that the government stops helping big corporations make more and more money. These investors are making more money and getting a tax benefit from it without a return to the people. That is what we have to do and that is what we have to talk about. The Conservatives are so petty that they even say low-income individuals and families should not even get a one-time \$500 housing benefit at this time of unprecedented inflation. Who does that?

Look at what is going on in the streets. In my riding of Vancouver East, we have people who are homeless and living in tents. They need help and support and they need it now. Let us focus on the needs of the people and put them ahead of wealthy corporations and wealthy CEOs. Let us make sure they get the help they need.

The New Democrats will continue to push for more and fight for more.

• (1240)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have two quick questions.

No one on this side disagrees with the propensity and need to help provide dental care for those who are the most vulnerable, but the NDP position seems really focused on a federally administered program. We know that health care is a provincial domain. We know that many organizations and programs are run out of provincial health co-operation. Why does the NDP want this to absolutely be a federally administered program, beyond the obvious choices of indigenous communities and military families?

The second piece is on CEOs. It is very clear the NDP is concerned about corporate profits. The leader of the NDP has almost made it seem as though CEOs are rigging the system. Does she believe that all corporate leaders in this country are rigging the system or are there some in particular? I worry about that broad characterization of all corporate leaders in this country.

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Madam Speaker, on the delivery of health care, it is a shared jurisdictional issue. Under the Canada Health Act, this should be afforded to all Canadians.

On the dental health care plan that the NDP is pushing forward, it was something that Tommy Douglas dreamt of 60 years ago. We are trying to complete that dream with this. We want it delivered, and the federal government can and should deliver the service. At the same time, it should also increase transfer payments. That is what it must do to ensure the delivery of cohesive health care services for all Canadians.

On the second question around bonuses for wealthy CEOs and big corporations, it is time for them to pay their share. That is why we are calling for an excessive profiteering tax, which the UN Secretary-General is calling for across the globe.

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, last week, I gave a speech about Bill C-31 in which I said that it does provide some relief.

What does my colleague like about the proposed temporary solution to the dental care issue? Quebec has tackled it, and all the provinces really need to do likewise.

[English]

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Madam Speaker, as I indicated earlier, the delivery of health care is a shared jurisdictional issue. This is the first step. This is not the only step. This is the bottom and not the ceiling. We will continue to take action to force the government to deliver support to Canadians. That is what we are doing here. Without us, they would not even get this dental care service for those 12 and under, and then next year for seniors, people with disabilities and people 18 and under. They would not get this one-time housing benefit.

We will continue to push the government to act. We will demand action and force the government to provide support to Canadians.

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I want to start by saying how much I appreciate the member for Vancouver East for her advocacy in addressing the root causes of the housing crisis. I wonder if she could share a bit more specifically with respect to corporate investors and the extent to which there is preferential tax treatment for them, as they are gutting out the core affordable housing supply, which we so desperately need.

• (1245)

Ms. Jenny Kwan: Madam Speaker, what we are seeing in the housing crisis is this: We are losing housing stock faster than we can build it.

The reality is that wealthy investors are coming in and buying up the stock, and in that process, under the real estate investment trusts, for example, they get preferential tax treatment. They do not have to pay taxes at the corporate rate, so these investors are getting a windfall, and we have to stop that practice.

Housing should not be treated as a commodity. It should be ensured that it will be there to house people. That is why the NDP is calling for the government to put a moratorium on the financialization of housing, support non-profits to get into the market to buy the stock and stop the preferential tax treatment.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Madam Speaker, I learn so much from my colleague from Vancouver East about housing. She is such an expert on housing. We all should listen to her and hear the call that she brings to this place.

I am going to start today with a bit of a story because we are in the House debating this bill and the need for dental care for Canadians, which would bring some relief for Canadians who are struggling right now. I have told this story before, but I want to share it again.

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I spend a lot of time door knocking in my constituency. It is very important for members of Parliament to speak to their constituents as often as possible to find out what those concerns and issues are. One day I knocked on a door in one of my neighbourhoods. It was a pretty affluent neighbourhood. I knocked on the door and was talking to a gentleman who was telling me about the fact that the issue of dental care was a massive issue for him. He had a dental plan, and his children had access to dental care. His family was fine, but his concern was for the children who were going to school with his daughter who did not have those things.

I think about that a lot when I stand in this place. I think a lot about the fact that, as parliamentarians, our job is not to get things to make our lives better. Our job here is not to do things to benefit ourselves and those who are our friends. Our job as parliamentarians, and the reason I am a New Democrat, is to make lives better for all Canadians so we can help folks who are struggling. That is our job in this place, so I think about that gentleman an awful lot and the fact that his concern was around others. I am so proud to represent people like him in Edmonton Strathcona, those who care about their neighbours.

I am a mother. I have children. They are not as young as they once were, which is the way growing up works. I do want to acknowledge that I come to work in this place and I have this incredible privilege to ensure that my children will always have access to dental care. That is something that all of us in this place need to reflect on, and I am going to go back to that in a few minutes.

Our public health care system is full of holes. It does not make sense that our public health care system does not include dental care. It does not make sense that our public health care system does not include pharmacare or mental health care. At what point did we decide that parts of our bodies needed to be protected and covered and other parts did not? It does not make any sense.

It does not make sense to pretend that our teeth are not actually part of our body. From a health perspective, it does not make sense, and from an economic and fiscal perspective, it does not make sense. If I had the power right now to fix those gaps in our health care system and I could do that today, I would. It is one of the most important things, as parliamentarians, we should be doing.

Today, we have an opportunity to fix one of those gaps. I am incredibly proud to support Bill C-31 to get dental care for some of the people in Canada who need it the most, children under 12. If we do our job in this place, we could get half a million kids the dental care they desperately need. We can get them that dental care. We can get it for them and for all kids, not just the kids in families that can afford it. We have known for decades that dental care belongs in our health care system. It has been 58 years since the Royal Commission on Health Services called for dental care to be included in our public system.

I have said this before as well, but the most common surgery performed on preschool children at most pediatric hospitals in Canada is for the treatment of dental decay and the health implications that stem from that. We are asking families in this country to make heartbreaking decisions on protecting their children's health and their teeth or paying their bills, paying for groceries and paying for

gas for their vehicles. That is a decision we should never be asking people in Canada to make.

• (1250)

I said earlier that I know that I stand in this place as somebody who has a great deal of privilege. I have a wonderful salary. I have a wonderful benefits program. My husband has a well-paying job. He has a dental program. My children will never have to worry about their teeth or about having dental care accessible to them. I feel deeply fortunate for that.

All of us sitting in the House should feel deeply fortunate for that. The dental plans that we have cover us and our families. What kind of people would we be if we did not want all children in the country to have the things our children have? What kind of person would I be if I could look at my daughter and say, "Thank goodness that my daughter Keltie has dental care," and then look at someone else's daughter and not want that for them? How could I do that?

I will tell members that there are Conservatives sitting in the House right now who have already voted twice against dental care for children. I want them to know that I see them. Canadians see them.

Conservatives voted against health care 50 years ago. They voted against one of the things that Canadians see as fundamental to our identity and fundamental to who we are as a country. Fifty years ago, Conservatives voted against that, and now they are voting against dental care. They are fine having dental care for their families, and they are fine having dental care for themselves, but they do not want dental care for the children across the country in their constituencies and in their ridings. I have no idea what they must say to the people in their ridings to justify this. I have no idea how they can say, "For me, it is great. For you, not so much."

It is horrendous. All children deserve dental care. Every MP who voted against dental care in the last Parliament, and I will acknowledge that that included Liberals, is saying that what they have access to, what they are entitled to, others are not. That is disgusting.

Another thing that I want to bring up within the bill, Bill C-31, is the support for rent. Winter is coming. We know that. Winter comes with so many more challenges for vulnerable people in Edmonton.

This year is going to be, as we will imagine, harder than most because everything costs so much more. We already have a homeless crisis in my city and in cities across the country. Things are getting worse.

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The support in the bill for renters and for low-income people who rely on the GST rebate is really not that much: \$500 for renters and a temporary doubling of the rebate. It is not that much money overall, but the difference in one's life, when one is living on the edge, would be enormous. The opportunity to prevent people from becoming homeless and to help people who are really struggling right now is enormous. We have to do what we can for these people.

The support in the bill would be the difference between holding onto a place to live and becoming homeless for hundreds and maybe even thousands of Canadians. It would be the difference between buying groceries and going without. It would be the difference between hope and despair.

People are struggling to pay for everything right now. Groceries are more expensive. Rent is more expensive. Gas is more expensive. I know that it can feel overwhelming for many Canadians right now. That is what these programs are about. Universal dental care, and social programs like it, raises people up. They give people opportunities.

After all, that is ultimately what the democratic government is supposed to be. It is supposed to be people coming together to make laws, make rules and make programs that create a stronger, healthier and happier Canada.

I like to hope that we are all in this place wanting to make a positive difference in our communities and for our constituents. I know we do not all agree on what that looks like, but I believe in the power and the equity of social programs delivered by government, and the power of people lifting each other up. I am proud today to say that, because of the work of New Democrats, Bill C-31 would do that.

• (1255)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am curious about the member's thoughts on something the member for St. Albert—Edmonton mentioned when he was speaking a few moments ago. He talked about dental care, and if I heard him correctly he said that nine out of 10 children under the age of 12 already have some form of insurance or a way to have their dental care paid for.

To me, that would be an argument why one would make it universal, because almost everybody already has it. However, the argument was almost being made that if nine out of 10 already have it then it is only one out of 10 who do not. I am curious about the member's comments on that. Does she think, when we get to a certain threshold, that in order to provide that equality we do need to make something like this universal?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, I do not understand where the Conservatives get some of their data and information from. We do have a program in Alberta. If a family is living just pennies above the poverty line, if someone is making just pennies above minimum wage, they will get some support for dental care, but realistically, the vast majority of Canadians who are living on under \$90,000 a year cannot access dental care.

Yes, I agree with him that one in 10 is too many, but I do not think it is one in 10. The number of people who are not able to access dental care is much greater in this country. Strangely, the Conservatives think that about all kinds of things, that we should not worry because it is covered. It is not covered, which is why we need to put this legislation in place. I do not understand.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Madam Speaker, on the rental subsidy that is included in Bill C-31, it is \$500. In my riding, for a two-bedroom condo or a very small two-bedroom home, we are effectively talking about one week of rent. This is just a patchwork. It is giving false hope to people that Bill C-31 is going to solve all their problems.

If we add up the cost of inflation to basic necessities like home heating and groceries, we are talking about \$1,200 annually. This money will be completely gobbled up unless we get inflation under control.

The member is from Edmonton, where inflation on rent is not as bad as Calgary's, but does she really think one week's worth of a rental subsidy is actually giving hope to renters that the government will get national inflation under control?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, I know the member is being very thoughtful, but is his question basically whether we should give them nothing because we are not giving them enough? Is that the expectation? What I am seeing is that we have a program that was not put in place by the New Democrats, because of course the New Democrats would have done this much differently and would have had a much more robust program for folks, but this is still some support for people who need it.

For people living on the edge, as I mentioned in my comments, these are folks for whom \$500 will make a significant difference. I do not understand why the Conservatives would say \$500 is not going to help families who are struggling. I do not understand how they can look at that additional add to one's budget and say it will not help. Of course it will help. It will not do enough, and my colleague from Vancouver East mentioned that this is the floor and not the ceiling, but it is help for people on the edge.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Madam Speaker, any time we vote on bills in this place, we in the Bloc Québécois are always careful to vote with our conscience. There may be times when we vote against certain bills not because of their principle, but because we respect jurisdictions.

I have a question for my hon. colleague. I am concerned about this temporary solution, given how vulnerable people are. As we have said from the beginning, we support providing this assistance, but how are we going to ensure that people who need assistance for both housing and dental care can access this money?

That is what worries me.

• (1300)

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson: Madam Speaker, my colleague and I have worked quite closely on certain files and I know her to be an excellent member of Parliament who certainly chooses to vote with her conscience.

This is an urgent issue for which we can get some help out to Canadians quickly. We brought forward dental care in the previous Parliament. If that had been supported at that time, we would have had this in place already. The fact that it has taken—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): Debate.

The hon. member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP): Madam Speaker, it is really a true honour and a pleasure to speak to Bill C-31. For my wonderful constituents back in Cowichan—Malahat—Langford who are watching, today's debate is on the legislative framework the NDP has forced the Liberal government to bring in to establish an interim dental benefit for children under the age of 12 and also to provide an important subsidy to people who are struggling to pay their rent.

It is a moment of great pride because, in the last election, dental care was a very key focus of mine during the campaign. I am filled with gratitude to be able to stand in this House and tell constituents that we are actually delivering on something that would make a real difference.

I have been here for seven years now, and one thing I have learned about the House of Commons is that memories can be short in this place, so I think it is important that we take a little walk down memory lane and set the table of this debate with what happened just last year in the previous 43rd Parliament. I have to give credit to our former colleague Jack Harris, the former New Democratic member of Parliament for St. John's East, because it was last year in the spring session that he brought forward Motion No. 62.

Motion No. 62 called upon the federal government to put in a dental care plan as soon as possible for families earning less than \$90,000, as an interim measure. We debated that in May and June, and when it came to a vote on June 16 of last year, unfortunately it did not pass the House. In fact, the final vote tally was 285 votes against and 36 in support. I will acknowledge the 10 Liberal MPs who did find it in their conscience to see this as a benefit and vote with us, but the vast majority of the Liberal Party and all of the Conservatives voted against it.

What a difference a year makes. Here we are now in this 44th Parliament, and we are actually debating a real legislative agenda, a government bill, that hopefully will make its way to committee soon and then through the legislative process so that we can get this established. It would establish, as an interim measure, an important dental care benefit for children under the age of 12. That would be expanded next year to include children under the age of 18, seniors and persons with disabilities. Of course our plan is to have the full thing running by the end of this Parliament, the 44th, so that all families earning under \$90,000 can access much-needed dental care benefits.

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If we were to take a poll of words used in this chamber, we all know that “inflation” is occupying every member's mind right now. We hear it constantly from our constituents. It is all over the media. We can see it every time we go and fill up our car or go shopping for food. The cost of living is becoming unbearable for too many families, and that includes those in my own riding of Cowichan—Malahat—Langford.

However, what is not being spoken of enough is its primary causes. Not enough people in this place are talking about how corporate greed is driving inflation. I listen to my Conservative colleagues complain about the high price of gas, but they say nothing about the massive corporate profits that are happening in the oil and gas sector or about how those companies are profiting off the backs of working families in their ridings. Instead, they want to continue the argument over carbon pricing.

It is a position the Conservatives once supported under former leader Preston Manning. They briefly flirted with it in the previous election before abandoning it. They want to continue having that conversation, but they also do not talk about the inflationary effects of climate change. I live in British Columbia. Last year, just months apart, we had devastating wildfires and catastrophic floods that cut off Vancouver from the rest of the country. They caused billions of dollars of damage and we are still, to this day, trying to clean up from them.

The Conservatives' answer is to try to target people's employment insurance and the Canada pension plan. They, incorrectly in my view, call those “payroll taxes”. I do not know of any other tax that pays me a deferred wage when I retire like the Canada pension plan does. I do not know why one would go after a retirement vehicle that so many Canadians depend on for their retirements and so many Canadians who find themselves with a disability depend on, or an insurance program that is there for when one loses their job.

• (1305)

Granted, employment insurance does have a lot of problems. Certainly our party, the NDP, has been very vocal about those problems. However, the concept of the program is a sound one, even if it does need some drastic improvements. The concept of having to pay a little into an insurance program for that day when a person may lose their job through no fault of their own is a sound concept. That program and CPP are programs that we need to build upon to lift each other up and to truly support Canadians who are in need.

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I want to stay focused on Bill C-31 and the need for dental care. It is very important in this country. If we look at the statistics, population-wide, millions of Canadians have reported skipping going to the dentist because of the cost. There has been a lot of talk in this place about too much money chasing too few goods. I would agree with the first part: There is too much money. There is too much money lining corporate bank accounts, and there is too much money being paid out in bonuses to CEOs. This is at a time when people are making incredibly tough choices at the grocery store.

I will make no secret of the fact that, at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, I hope my colleagues will join me to investigate the corporate profits that exist in the grocery sector, a sector of which more than 80% is dominated by three companies. However, we are not paying enough attention to how that is driving inflation. We could look at the markups that are going on with food. They are rising far faster than the general average.

With dental care, this is a moral issue for me. We are debating an amendment today that was put forward by the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, a Conservative MP, which would essentially kill Bill C-31. That is where the Conservatives are today. Their big response to dental care is to move a motion to kill the bill outright. What they do not talk about enough is the fact that Conservative MPs, like every MP in this place, gets to enjoy the benefits of taxpayer-funded dental care and their immediate family members get that. Essentially their motto in this place is “it is good for me but not for thee”. They will not fight to provide their constituents with the same level of benefits they enjoy as sitting members of Parliament, and I need to call them out on that because that is shameful.

It is absolutely shameful that we live in a country where families are having to make that difficult choice of whether they can afford to send their kids to see the dentist. We know that poor oral health is an indicator of worse health problems. If those problems are not looked after at an early age, if they are not detected at an early stage, they get worse and they cost our system more money. The answer is in preventative health care. It is in making sure that kids can access those services.

I know that I am in the final minute of my speech, and I just want to end on a number: 25. There are 25 NDP MPs, less than 10% of the seats in this House, and today we are debating a bill that we campaigned on. We are talking about an agenda that we have been driving. I will say this to my constituents: If 25 New Democrats in this place can punch above our weight and get this kind of action going, which would benefit so many Canadians from coast to coast to coast, imagine what a lot more could do. With that, I will conclude.

• (1310)

Mr. Kody Blois (Kings—Hants, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have to disagree with my colleague. I think the number in the House right now is just perfect and we do not need any more.

I want to ask the member two questions. Going back to dental care, I understand that the NDP and the government want to make sure the federal government is helping to provide support for dental care. It seems as though the NDP wants it to be federally administered. I am not against the idea of the Government of Canada

putting money in, similar to what we did on child care, to establish a national framework, but it does not seem that is the NDP position.

Could the member explain his view, the NDP's view, on why he wants it to be federally administered as opposed to federally funded on the outcomes?

The second piece is around the CEOs. I respect the fact that the member has brought a motion in our committee on agriculture. I want to go to the message from the leader of the NDP that went out four days ago, saying, “they've rigged the system to take wealth away from you.” I understand if the NDP wants to put a policy in place that charges CEOs more, but is he worried about the narrative that we are targeting CEOs in a reckless way that does not necessarily respect all corporate leadership in this country?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, I have heard the member's question before, as it has been asked of some of my colleagues. I will start with the first part on the federal role in health care delivery.

I am a member of the federal House of Commons, and I am doing what I can in this place. Yes, I understand that provinces have jurisdiction over health care, but it is a shared jurisdiction and we need to look no further than the federal Canada Health Act.

Different provinces have different benefits, but a Canadian who lives in Prince Edward Island should have the same access to services as someone who lives in my home province of B.C. The federal government is the one and only government that has the ability to put in a program to ensure those benefits have equality.

On the member's second question, CEOs get bonuses for delivering higher profits. I am trying to make the connection between higher corporate profits and the inflation that so many Canadians are suffering. We need a parliamentary inquiry into this. Therefore, I will continue with the narrative that we need to look at corporations, CEOs and the status quo.

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Madam Speaker, I am puzzled by my hon. member's speech. NDP members have said that they want dental care for all Canadians who currently do not have coverage, so I do not understand why they have agreed to this program that only covers children under 12 in some families, when many provinces already cover that, and that the rest will be post-2025 after the election when the Liberals do not need the NDP anymore. Why did he support it?

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, to use a poker analogy, “You play the cards you are dealt.” We were dealt a minority government courtesy of the Liberals. We are going to use our legislative agenda in this place to deliver.

In answer to her question, absolutely, our goal one day is a universal program. This is the floor, not the ceiling. What I will say, though, is that children in her riding, and children under the age of 18 next year and seniors, are all going to benefit from this. I hope she finds it in her heart to support it.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Denis Garon (Mirabel, BQ): Madam Speaker, I want to make an observation. Until last spring, only one party in the House was concerned about inflation: the Bloc Québécois.

For years now, inflation in health care costs has been running at 6%. Year after year, the Bloc Québécois has fought for what the provinces and Quebec want, specifically increases in health transfers, because this inflation prevents us from providing care to our people. It has existed for years in the health care system.

I would like to ask my colleague why he is not prepared to support increasing health transfers up to 35% of the cost of the system. That must be the top priority for anyone who cares about inflation and about people.

• (1315)

[English]

Mr. Alistair MacGregor: Madam Speaker, I disagree strongly with my colleague. The Bloc is not the only party that has been fighting for this. In fact, my constituent, Premier John Horgan of British Columbia, was recently the chair of the Council of the Federation. He was there leading all the premiers in asking for more health transfers from the federal government. I am in lockstep with what he has been asking for. If my hon. colleague from the Bloc checks the parliamentary record, he will see that New Democrats have been very clear in this place on the need for stronger health transfers from the feds to the provinces.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (Senate), Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to the amendment that has been put forward by the member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

I disagree with the comment that the member for Cowichan—Malahat—Langford made earlier about the Conservatives introducing an amendment to kill the bill, although I appreciate him giving that credit to them. What they are really doing is introducing an amendment so they can start to put up speakers again and reset the speaker roster on this to run out the clock.

Despite the fact that Conservatives are against this, that does not mean they are ready to vote for it. Why would they ever do that when they can use this as an opportunity to endlessly burn away the hours, which we regard as being so precious in this place to debate important legislation? What is more important to the Conservatives than going against dental care? What is more important to the Conservatives than doing anything for Canadians? What is absolutely paramount to them is to ensure that the legislative process in this place cannot function. That is why we are here today, in my opin-

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ion, to talk about this amendment, which basically would do nothing other than effectively vote against the bill itself.

Nonetheless, this is a very important bill. I want to congratulate my colleagues in the NDP for being so passionate about this and for bringing it forward. I certainly would agree with them that they have done a good job of playing their role in the House of Commons. They have identified the fact that they do hold the balance of power. Rather than using that in an obstructionist fashion, like the members from across the way, they have used it as a way to determine how we can do good things for Canadians that line up with their values and priorities. That is why I have no problem in allowing them to take some credit for what is being proposed today. Would I go as far as to say that the NDP forced the government into doing this? I think that is a bit of a stretch, but I respect the fact that its members are using the terminology they believe best fits the narrative of the day.

What this really comes down to is the fact that currently 55% of Canadians have their dental care coverage through some form of private insurance policy; 6% are insured through some form of public insurance policy, perhaps for the most vulnerable in our communities; and the balance, 39%, are literally paying out of their pockets for dental care. Among that 39%, there is a portion of those people who have family incomes of \$90,000 or less. They are the ones really being targeted in this.

We recognize the fact that we need take care of the most vulnerable in our communities. That is an underlying principle of just about all of the legislation that has come forward from this side of the House. We understand that when we build up individuals who are struggling, when we give opportunities and when we provide incentives to participate in the economic activity and the social well-being of our country, it is for the benefit of not just those individuals but, indeed, for all Canadians. That is why I personally think that this is such important legislation.

I would note, though, that it is not just about helping to pay for the cost of dental care when people need to see the dentist. We have to recognize that all provinces and territories will cover emergency dental services. If someone goes into a hospital and it is directly related to that person's health and that service is needed right away, that will be covered by the province and/or territory.

This is important because it is about investing in the future. Rather than waiting until it jeopardizes somebody's health, we should be helping to pay for preventative measures. That is what a dental care program would do.

• (1320)

The reality of the situation is that a lot of folks who this would apply to, people in families that earn less than \$90,000 a year, are going to make tough decisions when it comes to what to spend their money on. If they have to make the decision between getting a regular checkup at the dentist or getting a cavity filled that perhaps is not really bothering them, they might just push it aside and instead spend that money on something they need more.

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The result of not having that preventive work done up front is that they end up in a situation where they are in much more dire need and the costs become a lot more expensive. In some cases, they end up in emergency rooms where the provinces and territories will take care of them in any event. My point is that there is an opportunity here to help people with the preventive assistance to ensure they do not have those problems later on.

In the bigger picture of affordability, I find it very interesting that Conservatives who come in here on a daily basis and talk about Canadians who are struggling do not seem to be interested in any of the programs that we have put forward to assist those Canadians, with the exception of the increased GST rebate. They have said that they will support that, but they have not given any indication whatsoever about when they will allow a vote on the bill to take place. With the exception of that particular legislation, the Conservatives do not seem to be interested in affordability as it relates to genuinely assisting people. They just seem to want to come in here and give grandiose speeches about why this government has made life so difficult for people, without presenting any concrete ideas or building on any concrete policies that have been brought forward by this side of the House.

I find it very rich and very ironic that the Conservative seem to be willing to turn their backs on those who need it the most, yet in question period, which is in less than an hour from now, I am sure we will hear them repeatedly asking about why we are not helping or not doing more those individuals. That is the irony and the reality of what takes place on this.

I am very happy to see this legislation come forward. I am very glad to see that the governing party is able to work with the NDP to advance initiatives that are in both of our interests and, indeed, in this case, something for which the NDP has been fighting for many years. I am glad to see we are at the place where we can work together, because it is always nice to tell Canadians that we have worked with other parties in a minority government to get things done.

The fact is that if we look back historically, a lot of the big decisions in our country were made during minority governments, such as health care and the CPP. Even the creation of our flag was done during a minority government. I am very happy we are able to do this with the NDP.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have a very simple question for the hon. member with respect to the government's plan to triple the carbon tax. He is laughing because he thinks it is funny. Canadians who are struggling to afford gas, groceries and home heating do not think it is funny.

The government is intent on tripling the carbon tax, and Canadians are already struggling under the impact of the carbon tax. Will the member acknowledge that the purpose of the carbon tax is to raise the price of gas? The argument for a carbon tax by those who support it is that they want a higher price of gas to discourage people from driving. Of course, the gas price is influenced by a variety of different factors, but one of those factors is the carbon tax, which has been put in place, by design, to increase the price of gas.

Will the member acknowledge that his government's carbon tax plan is designed to raise the price of gas?

• (1325)

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I did start laughing when the member asked that question. Why? Because we have a bill that is about dental care specifically. Not only that, the member moved an amendment to the bill on this very legislation. I then spoke for 10 minutes on the legislation, as it relates to dental care and his amendment on it. Then he stands and asks me a question that is completely unrelated to the bill, and he cannot understand why I might find that to be slightly humorous.

The Conservatives just do not want to talk about making life affordable for Canadians. They want to talk about issues that are not within the realm of what is actually going on in the room. They want to divert completely away from the substance of what we are talking about.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. I would like him to know that when it comes down to it, no one is against children receiving dental care or low-income people receiving help to pay their rent. That is why we were in favour of the bill at first reading.

However, I have a question for him. Will his government be open-minded and consider transferring the money for this program to the provinces and Quebec?

Obviously I am referring to the fact that Quebec already has a dental insurance program. It is not perfect, of course, but it could be improved.

There is already a structure in place. Will the government insist on imposing another, or will it respect the jurisdictions?

[English]

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, I will not insist on anything. I will let the committee do its work and look at the question the member is raising. Am I open to it? I am, especially when we talk about health care, which is so complex and is done between the federal and provincial governments. I am certainly open to letting those discussions take place and seeing where they land.

The reality of the situation is this. We want to ensure the money we give to provinces to help with this kind of thing, whether given to them directly or through the CRA, which this is proposing to do, actually gets into the hands of those who need it, helps with affordability, and does not allow provinces to take it and not use it for that intended purpose but rather for subsidizing what they are already spending.

Ms. Lindsay Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP): Madam Speaker, one thing that has been missing from the dialogue today is a conversation about what dental care and this program will put back into the entire health care system. We know from the doctors, the nurses and the patients that our health care system is struggling. Even I do not have a family doctor. There are a lot of things we need to do to grow that. Dental care can save a lot of money. I would like to hear what the member has to say with respect to helping our overall health care system.

Mr. Mark Gerretsen: Madam Speaker, that was one of the things I was trying to touch on in my speech. If we invest in people early on, before their dental issues become extremely severe and require emergency medical attention, we are investing in our health care system. We are relieving some of the stress that will come later down the road for the health care professionals who would otherwise have to deal with it as a result of our not investing or not helping to prevent issues from arising in the future. One thing we have to consider in the cost analysis of this is the savings we will get down the road as a result of investing in people now.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC): Madam Speaker, the members opposite have finally become aware of a problem that is obvious to every Canadian except for the Prime Minister and his cabinet. Inflation is a problem. Canadians are being hurt by it. Liberal government policies are making things worse.

I am pleased that the Liberals have finally realized inflation is a problem for our country. I am less pleased with their solution. Apparently, they do not understand that their attempts to fix the problem, a problem they created with reckless government spending, will only make things worse.

I can understand that there is confusion across the aisle when I say that. How can I say their well-meaning plan will not only not work but will make things worse? This does not make sense to them. For those who truly believe that budgets balance themselves, I can understand that the concept of inflation is also a little difficult to understand. Therefore, perhaps we should take a look first at just what we are talking about. According to Wikipedia:

...inflation is a general increase in the prices of goods and services in an economy. When the general price level rises, each unit of currency buys fewer goods and services; consequently, inflation corresponds to a reduction in the purchasing power of money.

Wikipedia also tells us:

High or unpredictable inflation rates are regarded as harmful to an overall economy. They add inefficiencies in the market, and make it difficult for companies to budget or plan long-term. Inflation can act as a drag on productivity as companies are forced to shift resources away from products and services to focus on profit and losses from currency inflation. Uncertainty about the future purchasing power of money discourages investment and saving. Inflation can also impose hidden tax increases. For instance, inflated earnings push taxpayers into higher income tax rates unless the tax brackets are indexed to inflation.

With high inflation, purchasing power is redistributed from those on fixed nominal incomes, such as some pensioners whose pensions are not indexed to the price level, towards those with variable incomes whose earnings may better keep pace with the inflation. This redistribution of purchasing power will also occur between international trading partners. Where fixed exchange rates are imposed, higher inflation in one economy than another will cause the first economy's exports to become more expensive and affect the balance of trade. There can also be negative effects to trade from an increased instability in currency exchange prices caused by unpredictable inflation.

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This is Wikipedia. It is common information there, but the difference is that some understand it and some do not. Some refuse to even look at it or understand it. To put it simply, in terms that even a Liberal can understand, inflation harms the economy and hurts the people of Canada. Government policies should not make inflation higher. That should be a common understanding. It is simple and should be something that we all should live by.

This now brings us to the Liberals' response to inflation, which is to create Bill C-31, an act respecting cost of living relief measures related to dental care and rental housing. The Liberals, with their imperfect understanding of inflation, are trying to make things better. They are ignoring the economic experts who say that increasing government spending adds to inflation. The Liberals' solution does not fix the problem, but will just make it worse.

It may come as a surprise to the Liberals, but their children's dental care is not a high priority for many Canadian families these days. Parents wish they could be more concerned about dental health and the state of their children's teeth, but when they are having difficulties finding the money to feed their children they are not spending much time booking dentist appointments.

● (1330)

The Prime Minister, as we discovered a couple of years ago, does not know the cost of a pound of bacon. Just to let him know, it has gone up again. Grocery prices are up by 10.8% on average, rising at the fastest pace in 40 years. Fish is up 10%. Butter is up 16%. Milk is up 21%. Eggs are up 10%. Margarine is up 37%. Bread, rolls and buns are up 17%. Dry or fresh pasta is up 32%. Fresh fruit is up by 13%. Oranges are up by 11%. Apples are up by 18%. Coffee is up by 14%. Soup is up by 19%. Lettuce is up by 12%. Potatoes are up by 10%. A family of four are spending an average of \$1,200 more a year for groceries than they did in 2021. As well as record food prices, they have to deal with increases in heating, gasoline and housing costs.

Canadians are having to make hard choices about whether to put gas in the car in order to get to work in the morning, or put food on the table. This should not be happening in one of the wealthiest countries in the world. The government does not seem to understand that it is part of the problem. It says to spend, spend, spend and hopes that the problem will go away. If we ask any economist, they will tell us a government cannot curtail inflation by spending.

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The Liberal government is driving up the cost of living. The government's proposals do little to solve the problem. Proposals on dental care and housing will provide jobs for civil servants, but will not help most Canadians. The GST rebate will provide some welcome relief, but it is short-term and will not address the real problem: Inflationary deficits and taxes are driving up costs at the fastest rate in nearly 40 years, and that rebate will not pay for very many groceries.

As government spending increases, the deficit rises and the national debt increases. Today's spending will be paid for by our children and grandchildren, who will not thank us for our actions today.

If the Prime Minister was serious about making life more affordable for workers, families and seniors, he would cancel his planned carbon tax increases immediately. The Prime Minister is increasing the carbon tax on Canadians by three times, tripling it, and he is suggesting that he wants to help Canadians. If he wanted to help Canadians, he would not increase the carbon tax three times.

Canadian families are struggling with rising costs due to Liberal inflation. Now is not the time to raise their tax burden and make their lives worse. Instead of freezing taxes, the government is raising taxes on people who are struggling to make ends meet. Inflation is making groceries unaffordable for many people. The government is making things worse with its taxes and inflationary spending.

Those things combined are raising the stress on millions of Canadians. Many are turning to food banks as the only way to feed their families. Here in Ottawa, inflation is being blamed for record-high food bank usage. Food banks in Toronto say they are facing the highest demand in their history. In Edmonton, the University of Alberta's Campus Food Bank reported 200 new clients in September alone.

Raising the tax burden on Canadians so they have to turn to food banks to feed their children may be the Liberal policy, but it is not the policy of a compassionate government. Last year, the Prime Minister asked Canadians to forgive him for not thinking of the monetary policy. Given the fiscal trouble individual Canadians and the entire nation face, I do not think we are going to do that.

• (1335)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, whether it was during private members' hour, when a member raised the issue of the price on pollution, or here, where we are talking about dental care for children under the age of 12, as the bill is all about providing insurance for those children, the Conservatives just want to talk about the carbon tax, or the price on pollution.

Do the Conservative members of Parliament recall that just last year, every one of them was knocking on doors saying that if people elect a Conservative government, they are going to have a price on pollution? What a flip-flop. Within a year, the Conservative Party is against a price on pollution. They are going backwards. As every other Canadian is thinking more about the environment and moving forward, the Conservatives are taking a flip to the back.

Does the hon. member not realize that the Conservative Party, and he in particular, along with other candidates, actually cam-

paigned in favour of a price on pollution in the last election? Why are they breaking that promise?

• (1340)

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif: Madam Speaker, I thought bringing the definition of inflation to the member and his government would make him understand exactly what he is doing. What his government is doing is bringing in taxes at a time of inflation and spending money where it should not be spending. It is putting fuel on the fire at the wrong time.

If I had known that I would get from him that kind of question, I would never have brought up the explanation and description of inflation itself. The members opposite are putting in the wrong policy and have the wrong approach at the wrong time. They should think otherwise.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Madam Speaker, not so long ago, my colleagues in the Conservative Party seemed to agree with increasing health transfers for all the provinces and Quebec. I seem to recall that there was support from the Conservative benches. I am not sure whether it is the change in leadership, but ever since there has been a new leader, we no longer hear them talk about this.

I would like to know: Do they agree with increasing health transfers for the provinces and Quebec to improve coverage for our constituents?

[English]

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif: Madam Speaker, I would advise the hon. member to wait for our platform on this issue, because everyone wants a better health care system for Canadians, all of us. No one would disagree on that. This is just about how we are going to approach that and how to bring better quality health care to Canadians. That will always remain the debate among all parties. The one that has a better approach is, I think, the one that is going to grab the attention of Canadians.

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Madam Speaker, I just want to share with the House that I recently had some constituents come into my office. It was a larger family. One of the children was complaining again and again of having some pain. When we dug down a little more, we found out that the reason this child was in pain was an infected tooth. The family was very ashamed to share that they did not have the money to afford to get help.

This is not an unusual story in this country. We know that there are a lot of families out there today that cannot make sure their kids get very basic dental care. They are working hard but they do not have the resources to get it done. It is hard to be someone who loves their child but is not able to get them the support they need. Often, when they do, they have to take them to the hospital and the only option is to have a tooth completely removed.

I am wondering if the hon. member could please explain to Canadians with children under 12 why they do not deserve health care for their mouths.

Mr. Ziad Aboultaif: Madam Speaker, in the drama show of the NDP, it is trying to take credit for everything that is happening today, especially with this bill. NDP members say they just forced the government to do this.

Everybody cares about the health of Canadians. It does not matter what that aspect is, whether it is dental or other health care things. Every one of us has stories from our own riding when it comes to that. Let us not make this a drama.

We are saying there is an approach to policy that is maybe taking a long time, and right now the policy is short of solving the problem. This is the argument. We are not arguing whether we would love for all Canadians to have health care or dental care. What we are arguing about is the approach, the cost and how this approach can truly solve the problem, instead of making the hopes of some Canadians high when the reality—

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

Mrs. Salma Zahid (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill C-31, an act respecting cost of living relief measures related to dental care and rental housing. This legislation would help address some of the concerns that many of my constituents have shared with me around the rising cost of living and the increasing difficulty they are facing in making ends meet.

All of us in this House and in this country are seized with the issue of inflation. Indeed, the world is seized with the issue of inflation because it is a global phenomenon. Forces like high oil prices ripple through the supply chain and so do supply chain disruptions, leading to a scarcity of goods and rising prices for them. The economy is still recovering from the pandemic. We are all feeling the pinch.

Canada has done better than most G7 countries and is doing better than our American neighbours and peers, such as the United Kingdom and Germany. We have seen prices come down at the pumps, but according to the latest Statistics Canada numbers and what we are seeing at the grocery store, food inflation remains a serious problem.

While inflation is, as I said, a global phenomenon and a temporary one that will ease in time, that does not make the burden on Canadians today any less real and any less serious. While my colleagues and I in this place can afford to absorb the temporary higher prices, not all Canadians are that fortunate. They need our help, and just as we always have been, since the first act of our government after the 2015 election to lower taxes for the middle class and

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those working hard to join it by asking the top 1% to pay just a little more, we will be there for Canadians who need help the most.

Canadians are looking to their elected representatives for help, and I was pleased to see Bill C-30 receive speedy support and passage at second reading so that it could go to committee for further study. This is an important part of our government's response to the affordability challenges that Canadians are facing.

If passed, Bill C-30 will double the goods and services tax credit for six months, delivering \$2.5 billion in additional support to roughly 11 million lower-income Canadians. For a typical family, this could mean up to \$612, plus \$161 for each child under the age of 19. I hope the co-operative spirit continues and we see this legislation passed soon so that Canadians can get this much-needed help to cope with higher prices. I also hope that this same co-operative spirit can prevail in this place with Bill C-31, because it delivers much-needed help for lower-income Canadians struggling with higher prices. They do not want to see politicians stalling on the help they need with political games.

There are two main components in Bill C-31, and the first relates to dental care. While we here in this place benefit from generous employer-provided dental plans that cover us and our dependants, many Canadians are not so lucky. They are forced to pay for needed dental services out-of-pocket, including for their children. Beyond the cost of a regular cleaning for their children, dental emergencies can become financial emergencies and force very hard choices.

Making life more affordable for families across the country must include making oral health care accessible for all. Dental care is an important part of overall health, yet in Canada, one-third of the population cannot afford it.

Creating a proper national dental system from coast to coast to coast that is integrated as part of Canada's health care system will take time, co-operation and coordination with the provinces and territories. However, in recognizing that we need to start helping Canadians with these costs now, this legislation proposes a new, temporary Canada dental benefit. The benefit would provide dental care for uninsured Canadians with a family income of less than \$90,000 annually, starting with children under 12 years old in 2022.

Government Orders

• (1345)

The Canada dental benefit would allow all eligible parents to access direct payments totalling up to \$1,300 per eligible child under 12, up to \$650 per year, to support the costs of dental care services. Once the program is live, Canadians will be able to access the Canada dental benefit through their CRA accounts. The CRA is prepared to deliver and make it as easy as possible for eligible Canadians to get the money they need for oral health care.

Dental health is an important part of our overall health and should not be sacrificed for financial reasons. With this bill, we would be taking an important first step and putting more money back in the pockets of Canadians who need it the most.

The second major component of Bill C-31 relates to housing. Affordable housing and the high cost of safe and suitable housing is one of the biggest issues for the residents of my riding of Scarborough Centre. This legislation addresses one of the major components of housing that is so often ignored by the official opposition: rental housing. While they have a lot to say about home ownership, they have little to say and little to offer to those who rent their homes.

I have a lot of renters in my community of Scarborough, and many of them are trapped in inadequate and substandard rental housing that does not meet their needs. I say they are trapped because they cannot afford to move to a bigger unit or a nicer unit that could better suit their needs because market rent is now well beyond their means. If they were to leave their current unit, it would be rented out for many hundreds of dollars a month more.

Even within the guidelines, rent increases, in combination with all the other high prices families are facing, are difficult to manage. As part of the national housing strategy—

• (1350)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Alexandra Mendès): I apologize for interrupting the hon. member.

I ask hon. members to please keep the sound low so we can listen to the speech the hon. member is making.

Mrs. Salma Zahid: Madam Speaker, as part of the national housing strategy, we are addressing the issue of affordability and the lack of rental housing construction and capacity. We have introduced the rapid housing initiative, a \$2.5-billion program to finance the construction of modular housing as well as the acquisition of land and the conversion of existing buildings to affordable housing. The rental construction financing initiative gives developers low-cost loans during the riskiest phases of construction. This helps developers to better predict costs so they are more incentivized to build rental projects, all while meeting important criteria in terms of affordability, accessibility and energy efficiency.

These programs are working, but it will take time to have an impact and begin bringing prices under control. Canadians need help now. That is why this legislation proposes to invest \$1.2 billion to provide a direct federal Canada housing benefit top-up payment of \$500 to 1.8 million renters who are struggling with the cost of housing. This is in addition to the \$4 billion we are already investing to provide an average of \$2,500 in direct financial assistance for

the cost of rent to Canadians across the country through the existing Canada housing benefit.

This new, one-time benefit would be available to applicants with incomes below \$35,000 for families, and \$20,000 for individuals, who pay at least 30% of their income on rent. If this legislation is passed, eligible renters will begin receiving payments before the end of this year. To be eligible, applicants must have filed their 2021 tax return and will need to attest that they are paying at least 30% of their adjusted net income on rent. Families must have a net income of \$35,000, and individuals must have an income of less than \$20,000. An estimated 1.8 million low-income renters, including students, who are struggling with the cost of housing would be eligible for this new support.

This is help that my constituents very much need. It would put more money back into the pockets of lower-income Canadians who need it to help buy groceries and put gas in their car so they can get to work. I urge my colleagues not to delay in passing this important legislation. Let us deliver help to those who need it the most, and let us do it today.

• (1355)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is interesting, going back to the previous Liberal speaker, that Liberals do not want us to be talking about the carbon tax today. It is not surprising that they do not want to hear us talking about their plan to triple the carbon tax.

The reason we are raising this, of course, is that it speaks to the Liberal government's approach to affordability. The Liberals are presenting these measures as their so-called affordability package, but the reality is that they are continuing to increase taxes on Canadians. They have scheduled automatic tax increases for next year. The Liberals plan to raise payroll taxes and triple the carbon tax.

This is central to the debate today because, when the government says it is concerned about inflation and affordability, it was, frankly, not talking about inflation at all until the member for Carleton became Conservative leader. The Liberals were completely ignoring the issue. Now they say they care about it, but they are persisting with tax increases. Why are they persisting with their tax hikes?

Statements by Members

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

• (1400)

[English]

Mrs. Salma Zahid: Madam Speaker, the climate action incentive provides an annual credit for an individual in Ontario, my home province, of \$373 for an individual and \$186 for a spouse or common-law partner, and \$93 per child under the age of 19. Every dollar raised through carbon pricing in Ontario goes back to the residents of Ontario. The less we pollute, the more we save.

When we are talking about affordability and helping Canadians, why does the hon. member want to take hundreds of dollars out of the pockets of Ontario families?

[Translation]

Ms. Marie-Hélène Gaudreau (Laurentides—Labelle, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I listened intently to my colleague across the way as she went on and on about the cost of living relief measures, which are being offered on a one-time basis to help people through today's economic times.

Her government has been in office since 2015. If it had made meaningful, significant investments over the past seven years, the housing shortage would not be as severe as it is today.

How does the member explain that to her constituents?

[English]

Mrs. Salma Zahid: Mr. Speaker, housing is an issue. Since we came into power, we have invested in the national housing strategy. I have seen first-hand an increase in the rental units. Through the rapid housing investments, we have been able to invest. In my own riding there has been an investment of 57 additional units, and we had a groundbreaking ceremony. The money is going into different housing projects. Investing \$2.5 billion in modular housing is increasing rental stocks.

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we stand in this place to talk about how dental care is so important for the health of children under 12, but it is also a financial benefit. It would be beneficial for our health care system, which is under attack and so overburdened, as children would not have to go for emergency care. We could do preventative work.

Could the member comment on the value of that, and perhaps how dental care is similar to things such as mental care and pharmacare, which are also very cost effective preventative measures against further hardships on our health care system?

Mrs. Salma Zahid: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for her advocacy on dental care. Every Canadian deserves good oral health care. It is a key component to overall well-being. That is why we, as a government, are committed to working to build a comprehensive, longer-term national dental care program. It is really very important.

When I talk to families in my riding, it is very heartbreaking to see that some families cannot afford to take their kids to the dentist, even for a simple cleaning. I am really proud to stand in the House today to support the temporary dental benefit, which would provide up to \$1,300 to families to take care of kids' dental needs.

GERMAN HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South—Hespeler, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am excited to rise today to announce that October 1 marked the start of German Heritage Month. What better way to celebrate than by experiencing the Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest, which will be kicking off this Friday with the official keg tapping at Carl Zehr Square in front of Kitchener City Hall. This will mark the start of 10 days of excitement and activities throughout the Waterloo region, including the famous, nationally televised Thanksgiving Day parade on Monday, October 10.

Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is the largest Bavarian festival in North America. Over its 53 years of existence, it has grown to include 40 family and cultural events. I invite all members of this House to join Onkel Hans at one of the six *festhallen* located throughout the region and enjoy wonderful German food, dance and beverages.

Oktoberfest is *wunderbar*. Prost.

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BRADLEY TRUMAN NOEL

Mr. Clifford Small (Coast of Bays—Central—Notre Dame, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I stand here today to pay tribute to the late Dr. Bradley Truman Noel. On September 10 of this year, after partaking in a motorcycle ride to raise money for the Keur Yermende House in Senegal, Dr. Noel lost his life in a moose-vehicle accident while returning home to Springdale.

Doc, as he was affectionately known to his students, was a pastor, teacher, mentor and friend to so many in our province. He had the ability to challenge beliefs on difficult subject matters with love and empathy. An example of this is his recent book, *Tinder, Tattoos, and Tequila: Navigating the Gray Areas of Faith*.

To quote one of his colleagues, “Brad was a mentor and friend to so many regardless of background, religion or age. His death has left a huge hole, but his life’s impact and legacy will live on in those he has invested in and mentored. That is the true measure of a leader.”

May the love of his life, Dr. Melinda Noel, his family and friends, and the hundreds of students who studied under him, know that our hearts and prayers are with them.

Soli Deo gloria.

*Statements by Members**[Translation]***SIMEON POMPEY**

Hon. Marc Garneau (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to highlight Simeon Pompey's significant contribution to his community of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and to the students of Dawson College.

He was honoured by the Forces Avenir recognition program for his mentorship of students at Dawson College and his extensive involvement in the community services provided by Comité Jeunesse Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, the local youth committee.

[English]

Simeon has been a force for good through his leadership of the CJNDG community recreation services. Many of his students at Dawson College find employment at our community recreation centres and parks, where they lead summer camps, reading clubs for kids and bocce for seniors, and animate numerous park activities. Simeon has also expanded his love of golf to include a children's life skills program called "First Tee".

Simeon supports causes and communities with humility, hard work and a commitment to families. It is my great honour to recognize Simeon Pompey as a distinguished teacher, community leader and father in my community.

* * *

*[Translation]***SYLVIE PAQUETTE**

Ms. Andrée Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, one of my constituents, Sylvie Paquette, will receive the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education for her work as an educator for the Mamie Pom early childhood centre in Saint-Césaire.

Quebec is proud of its early childhood centre model. It was established by Quebec's first female premier, Pauline Marois, and is the gold standard in early childhood development and in enabling women to go back to work.

Ms. Paquette is receiving this award in recognition of her efforts, her educational methods and her innovative spirit, as well as her dedication to ensuring that the children have every opportunity to get the best possible start in life. Equal opportunity is part of Quebec's social safety net, and we want to continue promoting it.

Congratulations to Ms. Paquette. I encourage her to continue her partnership with the families who trust her with their children, and I commend her for her creativity.

* * *

● (1405)

WEIGHTLIFTING IN ARGENTEUIL—LA PETITE-NATION

Mr. Stéphane Lauzon (Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and pride that I rise to recognize the achievement of an athlete from my riding of Argenteuil-La Petite-Nation. Weightlifter Étienne Jolicoeur has made a name for himself by winning the North American Open held in Calgary on

September 16 and 17, with lifts totalling 241 kilograms. At just 16 years old, he took gold in the 67-kilogram category. He has a great athletic career ahead of him.

In addition, Matis Blais stood out in the 73-kilogram category, taking 5th place.

Argenteuil—La Petite-Nation has a tradition of excellence in weightlifting. I would be remiss if I did not mention the important work being done by Guy Marineau, who trains young athletes of excellence in this sport.

Congratulations to Étienne and Matis. They are worthy ambassadors for Argenteuil-La Petite-Nation, and I admire them greatly.

* * *

*[English]***NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA**

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are getting sick and tired of this out-of-touch NDP-Liberal coalition government. Their support is plummeting across the country. Canadians see hope in a strong, unified Conservative team that will give them back control of their lives.

It is very telling that the NDP has signed a secret backroom deal to prop up the arrogant Liberal government until 2025, and Canadians will respond accordingly during the next election. It has gotten so bad for the federal NDP out west that its provincial comrades in Saskatchewan do not even want the member for Burnaby South, the current federal leader, around. I cannot believe it. The home of Tommy Douglas decided to uninvite the federal NDP leader to its provincial convention. What is the reason? It is because the NDP leader and his party would rather prop up the Prime Minister and the incompetent government than stand with the hard-working people of Saskatchewan.

Our leader and Conservatives will always put the people first.

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BILL BLAIKIE

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, when the larger-than-life Bill Blaikie, in full Scots regalia, piped in the Robbie Burns dinner, carved the haggis and called down the wrath of Burns in Gaelic, we were absolutely convinced that the perfidious English were storming Parliament Hill. A Scotsman's Scotsman, Bill could have been a stand-in for Hagrid in the *Harry Potter* movies.

I shared a few faith and politics panels with Bill, he the social gospel New Democrat, and me, an endangered species, an evangelical Liberal. Bill's faith and politics were well integrated, but, as I pointed out to him, it is a lot easier when one is in perpetual opposition. No milquetoast, Bill enjoyed carving up pontificating Liberal cabinet ministers as much as the haggis. In a pinch, a Conservative would do just as well. Many a House leader found that Bill knew the rules and procedures of the House better than they did, much to their chagrin.

He was a great man, a great bear of a man, a great parliamentarian and a great Christian. To the member for Elmwood—Transcona, we share in his family's loss.

* * *

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

Hon. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, freedom rallies are taking place around the world to protest the death of Mahsa Amini who went to visit relatives with her family, just like we would do. Instead of receiving a warm embrace from loved ones, she was stopped by the so-called “morality police”, taken into custody and beaten. She died three days later. Mahsa was just 22 years old with her whole life ahead of her, and her death is unforgivable.

To the brave women protesting the death of Mahsa Amini who are met with arrests and bullets, we see them, we hear them and we stand with them. There must be a prompt, impartial investigation into her death. Crackdowns on protesters must stop. Respect for human rights must be upheld, including freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and association.

Human rights are universal, non-negotiable and indivisible. Women's rights are human rights.

* * *

● (1410)

CARBON TAX

Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the new Conservative leader will put the people first: their paycheques, their savings, their homes, their country.

The carbon tax is an utter failure. The Liberal government would have us believe that it will drive emissions down, but emissions have gone up under its tenure. B.C. has had a carbon tax for 14 years and its emissions have gone up four megatonnes. Quebec has had a similar program for 12 years and its emissions have gone up four megatonnes as well.

The reality is that the carbon tax drives the price of everything up and it is punishing on Canadians who can least afford it. The Liberals would have us believe that they will get more money back than they pay, but the Parliamentary Budget Officer has said this is false and many Canadians will pay more. Still the Liberals are planning to triple the carbon tax in April of 2023. Clearly the Prime Minister is experiencing the carbon tax differently than hard-working Canadians.

Help is on the way. A Conservative government with its new leader will scrap the carbon tax.

Statements by Members

[Translation]

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

Mrs. Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoine, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, many of my constituents have written to me to express their horror at the terrible situation currently unfolding in Iran. I was very shocked, as they were, to learn of the death of a 22-year-old Kurdish woman, Mahsa Amini, after being detained by the police. Her crime was not wearing the hijab in accordance with government guidelines.

[English]

The protests that have erupted across Iran since Mahsa's death have been met by unspeakable brutality on the part of Iranian forces, who in some cases have used live ammunition to disperse the crowds, killing dozens. My daughter-in-law's family is from Iran. While I am incredibly thankful that they are here in Canada, enjoying the freedom of our country, I am outraged to see so many innocent people lose their lives simply because they are peacefully protesting in the street.

I call on Iran to put an end to all forms of harassment and discrimination against women and to respect their citizens' right to peaceful protest.

Zan, zendegi, azadi.

* * *

COST OF LIVING

Mr. Scot Davidson (York—Simcoe, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the devastating impact the Liberals are having on our country will be deeply felt this Thanksgiving.

At a time of record-high inflation and rampant unaffordability, many Canadians will struggle to afford their Thanksgiving meals. Others will find it difficult to pay for fuel or fare to visit loved ones, and those travelling by air will be faced with delays and cancellations. Some will be seeing family for the first time in years after being forced apart by a government that cannot even provide basic services to its citizens.

These are the realities facing Canadians. The Liberals deny that they are responsible for any of it, but it is Trudeau.

This Thanksgiving, Canadians will overcome these challenges. They will make sacrifices to gather with family to share a meal and to give thanks. Their perseverance is inspiring and should serve as a reminder that it is not the government that makes Canada what it is.

That is why I am thankful that ordinary Canadians are committed to reclaiming the “can” in Canada.

Statements by Members

The Speaker: Before we go on to the next statement, I just want to remind the hon. members that they are not to mention someone else's name. They can refer to them as their title or the riding that they come from, but not their name. If they are trying to be clever, they cannot do indirectly what they cannot do directly. I do not want to have to cut anybody off on their S.O. 31 because I know how important they are to each individual MP.

The hon. member for Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis.

* * *

[Translation]

COST OF LIVING

Mrs. Dominique Vien (Bellechasse—Les Etchemins—Lévis, CPC): Mr. Speaker, people nowadays feel like they have lost control of both their wallets and their lives. Government spending is driving up the cost of living. This Liberal government has doubled our national debt, which is now more than that of all previous governments put together. It is the most spendthrift government in history. The more it spends, the more prices go up.

As a result, families are being forced to make changes to what they eat in order to deal with the 10% increase in the cost of food. Seniors are delaying their retirement and seeing their savings evaporate with inflation. Students are sleeping in shelters. Thirty-year-olds are living in their parents' basements because of the cost of housing. Single mothers are watering down their children's milk to cope with the 10% increase over the past year.

It is not surprising that people are worried. Most are barely keeping their heads above water. These are citizens of our country. Our duty is to serve them. We must give them hope.

The new Conservative leader will put people first: their paycheques, their savings, their homes and their country.

* * *

• (1415)

ÉLOIZES AWARDS

Mr. Serge Cormier (Acadie—Bathurst, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Petit-Rocher hosted last weekend's 22nd Gala des Éloizes, a celebration of the vibrant, high-quality, original creative work of our professional Acadian artists. This one-of-a-kind gala is Canada's only awards ceremony that hands out prizes for all artistic disciplines, from dance, theatre and music to visual arts, media arts and literature.

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the nominees, especially the winners from my riding, Acadie—Bathurst: Monelle Doiron, artist of the year in dance for *Les oiseaux*; Le Dortoir at Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick for supporting the arts; Renée Blanchar, artist of the year in media arts for the documentary *The Silence*; and Édith Butler, winner of the lifetime achievement award in honour of her more than 50-year career.

I am grateful to the Association acadienne des artistes professionnels et professionnelles du Nouveau Brunswick, its president, Philippe Beaulieu, its executive director, Carmen Gibbs, and their

team for working so hard to promote and protect Acadian artists' rights and interests.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL SENIORS DAY

Ms. Rachel Blaney (North Island—Powell River, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to mark National Seniors Day, a day to celebrate the achievements of older adults and to give thanks for their contributions to society. They are a source of strength, history and support for their loved ones and communities.

I want to give thanks to the retirees who stepped up and joined the workforce during the pandemic to help us get through very difficult times. I promise to continue fighting to raise the bar of dignity for seniors who struggle to make ends meet.

Canada needs a national seniors strategy to ensure that all older adults can live independent, healthy, vibrant lives with access to safe, affordable housing in urban and rural communities, as well as having the financial ability to meet their essential needs. We must address and fix the long-term care crisis in this country so that all seniors can age with dignity.

Today I encourage everyone to think of an elder person who has significantly impacted their lives and thank them for it.

* * *

[Translation]

QUEBEC ELECTION

Mr. Alain Therrien (La Prairie, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebecers have just under six hours left to go and vote.

I encourage everyone who has not yet done so to go and vote right away. I urge everyone to go, whether on foot, by bike or by car, whether alone or with friends, but do go and vote. Quebecers must choose who they want to represent them in the National Assembly, the great institution of Quebec democracy.

I urge them to go and vote because they know what they want or what they do not want. I urge them to go and vote for health, for education, for the environment, for or against higher taxes, for their vision of the economy or because there is a party that resonates with them. There are no wrong reasons.

Election day does not belong to politicians. It belongs to the people. The people are having their say today. The louder their voices, the clearer the message.

We are extraordinarily fortunate to be able to vote freely and as we wish. I hope to see high voter turnout.

[English]

HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for too long we have allowed the tyrants of Tehran and Qom to terrorize the people of Iran and Rojhelat, to steal their rights, engage in extrajudicial arrests and disappearances, crush protests and target women.

The response of Tehran to massive protests at the murder of Zhina Mahsa Amini is the collective punishment of the Kurds in Rojhelat and the persecution of Iranian protesters for simply demanding their rights be respected. Over 2,000 arrests have followed beatings, hangings and a bombing campaign across Bashur and Rojhelat, hitting civilians in places like Koye, Oshnavieh, Marwan and Shno, and sites in Iraq, including areas near Erbil and Sulaymaniyah.

Fifty thousand Canadians took to the streets in Toronto and all across Canada to rally for a free Iran and democratic rights. Millions worldwide have joined in solidarity, demanding justice for Zhina Mahsa Amini. The tip of the autocratic spear oppressing the people of Iran and Rojhelat is the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. There is only one moral, ethical choice for Canada: to list the IRGC as a terrorist organization in Canada.

* * *

● (1420)

HURRICANE FIONA

Mr. Heath MacDonald (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on September 23, hurricane Fiona made landfall as the strongest hurricane in Canadian history. The 48 hours that followed are some that Atlantic Canadians will not soon forget.

Coastal communities where fishing is their primary livelihood have been devastated, with small craft harbours, fishing gear and boats destroyed. Agriculture and farming will take years to build back. In addition to the wrecked barns, silos, crops and equipment, the mental health of farmers who work every day to feed Canadians their quality products has taken a serious blow. Even P.E.I. itself looks different, with some of our iconic coastlines eroding upward of 30 feet. This extreme weather event, intensified by climate change, will affect every single Islander for years to come.

While there are many reasons to feel defeated, the community response has been truly heartwarming. First responders, line crews, Canadian Armed Forces and essential workers have been working around the clock. Municipalities opened reception centres across the island. Businesses donated food to ensure everyone had a hot meal, and neighbours opened their doors to one another to charge a device, use a freezer or have a cup of coffee.

As we rebuild and recover, I call on the federal government to continue to support impacted residents and communities in my riding and across Atlantic Canada every step of the way. I am proud to be an Islander.

Oral Questions

ORAL QUESTIONS

[Translation]

TAXATION

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, since the Liberals came to power, housing prices have doubled. According to the Royal Bank of Canada, it takes 60% of the average paycheque to cover monthly bills for an average house.

That is the highest level in history. The Liberal solution is to triple the carbon tax on gas, heating and groceries. Canadians cannot afford to pay more. Will the government cancel this plan to triple the tax?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the opposition leader for his question. It allows me to talk about the fact that our carbon pricing program is one of the most effective in the world, since it helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which have gone down by 9%, contrary to what we are hearing in the House.

What is more, 100% of the revenue generated from the carbon pricing program returns to the provinces that generated that revenue. That means 90% goes back to families and 10% goes back to businesses, municipalities and indigenous communities.

[English]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the tax has failed. The Liberals have missed every single emissions target they have set since they put it in. According to the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the vast majority of Canadians are paying massively more in carbon tax costs than they get back in rebates. The problem is about to worsen as the government plans to triple the tax on gas, groceries and heat. Canadians are already cutting back on their diets. Adults are living in their folks' basement because they cannot afford a new house.

Will the government cancel this insane plan to triple the tax?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have a riddle. Who said, "We recognize that the most efficient way to reduce our emissions is to use pricing mechanisms?" One could say it was the Minister of the Environment, or my friend and colleague, the Minister of Natural Resources, or the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, but no, it was the member for Durham, and I agree with him. Pricing mechanisms are the most effective way to fight climate change pollution, and he said that in April of 2021.

Oral Questions

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, tripling a tax at a time like this is not just insane it is cruel. This is going to happen even in British Columbia. It has its own tax there, but the federal government, the costly coalition of the NDP and Liberals, want to force B.C. to triple its tax now at a time when gas prices are at \$2.40 a litre.

Once again, for the third time, will they cancel their plan to triple the tax?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for allowing me this opportunity to talk about the fact they were getting their next time. Carbon pricing is good.

What they wanted to put in place was the principle of pay to pollute. That is not how we do it on this side of the House. The principle is polluters pay and not pay to pollute. Next time, when they flip-flop again on carbon pricing, like they have done about 15 times in the last 10 years, pricing pollution is good, the polluter pays principle. They need to go that extra step.

• (1425)

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there they go. The Liberals want to divide and distract. They attacked the little old lady living in rural Newfoundland, calling her a polluter for the crime of heating her home in February. According to the Liberal premier of that province, after the forthcoming increase in the carbon tax, the increased cost of heating the homes of rural Newfoundlanders will have gone up by 80%. Worse yet, the government wants to triple the tax. Why will it not axe the tax?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to announce that we are putting in place a program to help tens of thousands of Canadians get off home heating oil. The price of home heating oil is skyrocketing because of the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia. We will put a quarter of a billion dollars to help tens of thousands of Canadians go to clean, efficient, renewable energy in Canada to heat their homes and save money.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, just what we need, a new government program to help us pay the cost of a government tax. People do not have to worry if they live in the countryside of Atlantic Canada, where 40% of people now live in energy poverty after the government has been in power for seven years, because there is a new government program coming. They do not need to worry about freezing in the dark as this new tax comes in. That is what it wants people to believe.

Canadians are not stupid. Canadians are not polluters. They need to heat their homes and travel in a big cold country.

Will the government cancel its plan to triple the tax?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians understand that climate change is real and Canadians also understand that the global economy is in the midst of a green transition. It is the biggest transition since the industrial revolution.

Our government believes that we need to help Canadians with the green transition. We need to help Canadian companies, like our

auto manufacturers. We need to help Canadian families, like those families in Atlantic Canada that want to get off home heating oil.

We are going to help Canadians with climate action because that is the right thing to do.

* * *

[Translation]

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the decision to make Roxham Road and all its facilities permanent raises some serious ethical questions.

We know that the government awarded two Liberal donors at least seven contracts without a bidding process. We have no idea if there are more.

Since the government refuses to disclose all the contracts, this afternoon, I will be asking the Standing Committee on Ethics to investigate the ethical aspect of awarding contracts.

If the government has nothing to hide, it should disclose these documents itself. Will it make public all the federal contracts tied to Roxham Road?

Hon. Helena Jacek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, transparency and accountability are critically important to our government.

The rental agreement was negotiated based on a fair market value to arrive at a competitive price. Disclosing confidential contractual information would violate the agreement we have with the supplier.

We will continue to work with the departments and agencies to meet their needs through fair and open contracts.

Mr. René Villemure (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Mr. Speaker, honestly, we are not talking about top secret documents here. We are talking about leases signed for land, trailers and hotel rooms.

By refusing to disclose all the contracts tied to Roxham Road on a questionable pretext, the government is the one sowing doubt. The government is the one whose actions are reminding us of the billions of dollars awarded without a call for tenders to the big Liberal family during the pandemic. The government is the one suggesting that there is something to hide.

Why wait to be forced to be transparent? Why not simply disclose the contracts?

• (1430)

[English]

Hon. Helena Jaczek (Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, transparency and accountability are critically important to our government. The rental agreement was negotiated based on fair market value to arrive at a competitive price. Given the location of the land and its proximity to the border, this was an ideal location for CBSA to use for this purpose.

Our government is delivering open, fair and transparent procurement processes, while obtaining the best value for Canadians.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Peter Julian (New Westminster—Burnaby, NDP): Mr. Speaker, tens of thousands of homes and businesses are still without power in Atlantic Canada after hurricane Fiona. People have been unable to leave their homes and go to work. They need urgent help as they continue the long recovery.

The Atlantic provinces are asking for employment insurance to help people get through this crisis, and so far they have had no response from the government.

Will the Liberals do the right thing and move immediately to waive EI rules for Atlantic Canadians so that these families can put food on the table at this critical time?

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the seriousness and the challenges that Atlantic Canadians are facing when it comes to work right now. We are there with them on the ground. Service Canada has waived the requirement for record of employment. We are looking at what we can do to be more helpful. We are on top of this. I can assure members we will be there for Atlantic Canadian workers.

[Translation]

Mr. Alexandre Boulerice (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, they did it for British Columbia. Now it is time to do it for Atlantic Canada.

The Conservative leader is going after workers in order to give millions to CEOs. A contribution is not a tax, it is an investment in the future. It looks as though a recession is inevitable, and families will need protection. Workers are at risk of losing their jobs and the Liberals are dragging their feet on employment insurance. The old system is letting people down, and the Liberals are doing nothing.

We need a modern, effective and accessible system for seasonal workers and the self-employed, and we need it now.

When will the Liberals wake up? In the middle of a recession?

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government understands that EI benefits need to be more fair, more responsive and more adaptable to the needs of Canada's ever-evolving workforce.

Oral Questions

That is why we are committed to delivering a full-scale modernization of Canada's EI system. We look forward to launching our long-term plan to improve the EI system.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Mahsa Amini, two words that echoed around the world over the weekend, as hundreds of thousands of people protested against the terrorist regime in Iran. In Canada we were among the biggest protests, but the Prime Minister did not have the guts to show up, because he did not want to have to explain why he had failed to criminalize the IRGC, the terrorist arm of the Iranian government, which killed over 50 Canadians when it attacked a civilian aircraft.

Will the Prime Minister have the guts to stand today and announce that he is banning this terrorist organization?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we condemn, in the most unequivocal terms, the tragic killing of Mahsa Amini and we stand with the women, her family and her supporters at this very difficult time.

There needs to be consequences for everyone who was responsible for that killing and, indeed, all of the transgressions of human rights in Iran, which is why there are tangible consequences, including, just last week, the Minister of Foreign Affairs listing the morality police as one of those parties that will be sanctioned.

We will continue to explore all options when it comes to holding those responsible and defending human rights here and around the world.

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we do not need symbolic sanctions; we need real action against this terrorist organization, and we need it now.

The minister says that he is still exploring. This terrorist organization murdered over 50 Canadians by shooting down a civilian aircraft over two years ago. The government promised that it would ban that terrorist organization. Not long after that, it still has not done it. It is perfectly legal for that group to raise money and organize logistics on Canadian soil after it killed our people. What kind of prime minister fails to stand up for his own citizens after they have been murdered?

Why will he not stand in this place today and ban this group?

Oral Questions

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is happening in Iran is completely unacceptable. This is the regime that is persecuting women. This is the same regime that decided to down Flight PS752.

Therefore, we are sanctioning the IRGC's core leadership. We are imposing new sanctions and we will do more, because more needs to be done.

* * *

• (1435)

[Translation]

TAXATION

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I attended an event in my riding on Friday morning in support of Wendake's Comptoir Agoshin, which provides food and clothing to those in need. I also attended the grand opening of the Val Bon Coeur community fridge in Val-Bélair.

I wanted to share that because these two important events are both about food aid. This is a challenge many families in Quebec and across Canada are facing. People need to eat, but they cannot afford food.

Will the government recognize that and do the bare minimum, which is not raise taxes?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand that the cost of living is high for families.

That is why we introduced the Canada child benefit in 2015. Since then, it has lifted 450,000 children across the country out of poverty.

We are here for families, we have been here for families, and we will be here for families.

Mr. Gérard Deltell (Louis-Saint-Laurent, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the essentials. We are talking about food. We are talking about families in need. We are talking about people who, as recently as a year ago, were donating food but now need it themselves. That is the reality in Canada today. We are talking about a G7 country.

What the government wants to do is raise taxes.

Could the government at least show some compassion and understand that the answer to the Liberal carbon tax is no, no and no?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand very well that Canadian families are struggling with affordability today.

That is why we are going to increase our inflation relief plan. I am thrilled that the Conservatives have decided to support this measure, which will give Canadian families \$500. Now is also the time for the Conservatives to support our plan for children's dental care and housing payments. That is real support.

[English]

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are two constants with the Liberal government: Lib-

erals have never seen a tax they do not like; they have never seen a tax they will not hike.

Conservatives know that a dollar is better left with Canadians than in the hands of the politicians who taxed it. Therefore, will this government cancel its plan to triple, triple, triple its carbon tax on groceries, gasoline and home energy fuels?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I know math is not the Conservative Party of Canada's forte. I do not understand how going from \$50 to \$65 is a tripling, tripling, tripling.

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government will triple the tax on gasoline, triple the tax on energy and make everything Canadians buy more expensive. Liberals do not have a plan for the environment; they have a bone-crushing tax plan. The carbon tax is costing families more and more each day, and Canadians know it.

A carbon tax is a tax on everything. The Liberals are pushing Canadians to the brink of financial dissolution with their high-tax agenda. Will the government cancel its plans to tax gasoline, energy and home energy fuels?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in fact, B.C. has had a price on carbon for the last 10 years, and its pollution level has gone below 2007 levels. Quebec is 3% below its 1990 levels since it has had a price on pollution. The European Union countries are 24% below their 1990 levels, and they have had a price on pollution for the last 15 years.

In fact, the Parliamentary Budget Officer said that Canadians would be getting more money from the price on carbon this year, next year, the year after that and the year after that.

* * *

[Translation]

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, Quebec's tourism industry is sounding the alarm. The decision to end temporary EI measures without a comprehensive reform of the system is putting Quebec's regions at risk.

For example, let us take a seasonal worker. Ten days ago they qualified for EI with 420 hours of employment. Suddenly, they must now have 700 hours. We are talking about whole industries in the regions where accumulating more than 500 hours in a season is exceptional. Workers have been betrayed.

Will the Minister of Employment and Workforce Development fix this before it is too late?

• (1440)

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly why we decided to extend the pilot project for seasonal workers and why we have committed to fully modernizing Canada's EI system.

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, if the tourism industry is sounding the alarm it is because it is also at risk. It is afraid of losing its workers, as are all of Quebec's seasonal industries.

If the federal government takes away their employees' EI this winter, how many will be able to return next summer? If the employees do not return, where will their replacements come from in the middle of a labour shortage?

When will the minister finally understand that by making workers suffer she is also making seasonal industries suffer?

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we understand the unique challenges facing seasonal workers. That is why we have extended our pilot project for seasonal workers, and that is why we are modernizing our employment insurance system.

We will always be there for workers.

Ms. Louise Chabot (Thérèse-De Blainville, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the pilot projects do nothing to fix the eligibility criteria. By reverting to the old EI rules without any reform, the minister is putting both workers and employers at risk.

This is a recipe for decline in the regions. The first step is to deprive workers of employment insurance, forcing them to change jobs or move. The next step is to deprive business owners of labour, forcing them to close. This is why Quebec's regions are failing to thrive.

Does the minister realize what she is becoming a party to?

Hon. Carla Qualtrough (Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we are always there for workers.

We have made many changes to our EI system, including extending sickness benefits from 15 to 26 weeks and completely modernizing the EI system.

I will be able to share more details shortly.

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[English]

TAXATION

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, because of Liberal incompetence, the average Canadian family pays more in taxes than it spends on food, shelter and clothing combined. Families across the country are struggling to just get by, and the out-of-touch government just does not care. Our people need a break, so on behalf of Canadians, will the Prime Minister cancel his triple tax hike on gas, groceries and home heating?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we absolutely understand that

Oral Questions

Canadians today are struggling with the cost of living, and that is why we have put forward a plan to give vulnerable Canadians a double GST tax rebate. That will mean nearly \$500 for Canadian families, and 11 million Canadian households will get that support. I am really glad that the Conservatives have come around to support this important plan.

Now is the time for them to also support our program for Canadians struggling to pay their rent and to support Canadian kids under 12 with dental care.

Mr. Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what an arrogant and condescending response. That rebate will be eaten up by home heating costs in a week. Canadians need much more help. It is too little, too late. As we near the coldest months of the year, the incompetent Liberal government is tripling the tax on gas, groceries and home heating. Canadians will have to decide between heating their homes and buying healthy food for their families.

My question is simple: When will the out-of-touch government stop triple-taxing Canadians?

Hon. Karina Gould (Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I see the Conservatives are doubling down on their bad math today.

Let us be clear. The government, in partnership with the Government of Saskatchewan, where that member is from, is helping families right now. In fact, the Government of Saskatchewan announced that through the Canada-wide early learning and child care initiative it has reduced child care fees by up to 70%, well ahead of schedule. In fact, that helps families with the high cost of living, whether it is buying nutritious food, getting winter clothes or whatever it is they need. We are helping families.

I hope the member opposite knows we and the Government of—

• (1445)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Kelowna—Lake Country.

Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is reported that one in six small businesses are having such a tough time that they are considering closing. Restaurants Canada reports that 85% of restaurants have taken on new debt, yet the Liberal government defends forcing payroll tax increases on small businesses. The associate minister of finance said, on payroll tax increases, that small businesses “can afford” this, and the finance minister herself admitted that raising EI premiums would bring in an extra \$2.5 billion.

Oral Questions

Will the government end its planned tax hikes on small businesses?

Mr. Arif Virani (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for her persistence on this issue about supporting small businesses.

We share that persistent prioritization. What we have been doing for the past two and a half years is supporting small businesses through the pandemic with targeted wage supports and supports for rent. What we have been doing since the pandemic is launching a women's entrepreneurship strategy and a Black entrepreneurship strategy, and we are empowering indigenous businesses. We know the power of small businesses will be unleashed through inclusive growth, and that is what we are prioritizing.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are suffering and even dying, because getting help for their mental health is not affordable and wait lists are months or even years long.

This week is Mental Illness Awareness Week, and mental health organizations are once again calling for the government to recognize that there is no health without mental health. During the last election, the Liberals promised to spend \$4.5 billion over five years to expand mental health services and address backlogs. They still have not delivered.

When will the Liberals follow through on their funding promises to improve mental health services for struggling Canadians?

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his ongoing advocacy, particularly during Mental Illness Awareness Week.

Mental health is health, as he said, and our government has made mental health a priority. Since 2015, we have made historic investments in support: \$5 billion to the provinces from 2017, \$600 million every year still ongoing, and almost \$600 million for a distinctions-based mental health and wellness strategy for indigenous people. We know that we need to do more, and we will do more.

* * *

FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are clawing back the Canada child benefit for parents who needed pandemic support, but do members know what they are not clawing back? It is the wage subsidy from corporations that gave out executive bonuses or shareholder dividends, like Air Canada, which got \$554 million and gave out \$10 million in bonuses, or Imperial Oil, which got \$120 million and paid out \$324 million in dividends.

Why are the Liberals clawing back child benefits from single moms trying to feed their kids while letting big corporations off the hook?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government absolutely believes in supporting Canadian children and Canadian families. That is why we have worked so hard to put a national program on early learning and child care in place. That is going to help families with affordability and help our economy. That is why the Canada child benefit, which has lifted hundreds of thousands of Canadian children out of poverty, is such an important program.

We know that everyone in Canada has to pay their fair share. That is why we are imposing a COVID recovery dividend on our banks and insurers.

* * *

HOUSING

Mr. Iqwindar Gaheer (Mississauga—Malton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in my riding of Mississauga—Malton, rent and housing costs have risen for so many, especially working individuals, families and our most vulnerable. They need help, and they need it immediately.

Could the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion please tell the House what our government is doing to help renters and those struggling with the cost of housing through this difficult time?

● (1450)

Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Mississauga—Malton for his important question and hard work on this important file.

We know that the cost of affordable rent is increasingly out of reach for many Canadians. That is why we introduced legislation to introduce a one-time top-up of \$500, which would help 1.8 million renters and would be on top of the existing average \$2,500 as part of the Canada housing benefit.

I urge Conservative members to stop getting in the way and to help us pass this important legislation so that we can get this important rent relief to Canadians as soon as possible.

* * *

TAXATION

Mr. Mel Arnold (North Okanagan—Shuswap, CPC): Mr. Speaker, constituents in B.C. are tired of the Liberal government cutting into their paycheques, yet the Prime Minister plans to triple the carbon tax, raising fuel, heat and grocery costs, and to increase paycheque taxes, killing jobs.

The finance minister even admits that the money would not go into EI but to cover out-of-control government spending. The pay-cheque taxes would take \$2.5 billion extra out of the hands of hard-working Canadians.

Will the government end its planned tax hikes on Canadians' paycheques?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is really important for us to be clear and honest with Canadians about their pensions and about EI.

Right now, at a time of real uncertainty and volatility in the global economy, it would be the height of irresponsibility to cut our contributions to the Canada pension plan and to EI. Too many Canadians depend on both. That is why our government is absolutely committed to supporting Canadian seniors and to supporting Canadian workers who depend on EI.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the inflation crisis in B.C. is exploding. It is not only food and shelter costs that are taking a hit. Vancouver's gasoline prices are now the highest in North America, yet the Prime Minister wants to force B.C. to triple the carbon tax on everything, making life completely unaffordable for families.

While the Prime Minister fiddles around, life has become hopelessly expensive and Canadians are now losing hope. Will the Prime Minister now cancel his plan to triple the carbon tax on gas, groceries and home heating, yes or no?

Hon. Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I think we are all really glad to hear today from the member for Abbotsford, who is an MP we all know and respect. I listened to him carefully during the campaign, when he said:

I am deeply troubled by suggestions by one of our leadership candidates that that candidate would be prepared to interfere already at this stage in the independence of our central bank.

I wonder if the member for Abbotsford has persuaded his new leader to see the wisdom of his previous comment.

Mr. Rob Morrison (Kootenay—Columbia, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this tax-and-spend government plans to raise the carbon tax from the current level of \$50 a tonne to \$170 a tonne by 2030. British Columbians are already stretched thin by an out-of-touch government that is now asking B.C. to triple its carbon tax, making life even more unaffordable.

Will the government back down from forcing B.C. to triple, triple, triple its carbon tax on gas, groceries and home heating?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier during question period, I referred to the member for Durham, who spoke about the benefit of pricing carbon to fight pollution. I would also like to refer to the member for New Brunswick Southwest, who also urged his premier to adopt the federal system because “cheques will begin to roll out to New Brunswick families”. That is exactly right. We can work to fight pollution, work to fight climate change and help Canadian families. I agree with the member for New Brunswick Southwest.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Mr. Richard Lehoux (Beauce, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government is out of touch with reality, with food prices being up more than 10% and the absurd tripling of the carbon tax. That is to say nothing of the 35% tax on fertilizer that many farms are still struggling with. Farmers want to help feed our families with safe and nutritious food, but their input costs just keep going up under this government.

Will the government stop its plan to triple, triple, triple the carbon tax on Canadian farmers?

● (1455)

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for his question.

I know it is a bit complicated, but the federal government's pollution pricing does not apply to Quebec because Quebec has its own cap-and-trade system. We have decided to respect that, and we will do the same for all the other provinces that want to have their own pollution pricing system.

* * *

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, shots were fired in downtown Montreal again last night, and a body was found in the trunk of a burning car. Things are going from bad to worse. The year 2021 was the worst year of the decade for shootings; 2022 is on track to be even worse.

The first step to solving a problem is acknowledging it. The problem in this case is illegal weapons crossing the border.

Is the minister aware that he has not introduced a single measure to effectively tackle arms trafficking?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first of all, our thoughts are with the victims' families. This is a very difficult time.

Over the past year, we have invested \$321 million to strengthen the integrity of our border. That is exactly why we have made so much progress going after criminals attempting to import illegal firearms. This is an issue with a lot of challenges.

We will move forward with our plan, Bill C-21, which will give the police more tools and increase the penalties for those involved in organized crime. We need to pass this bill as soon as possible.

Oral Questions

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, there has not been that much progress. Last year, 1,100 firearms were seized at the border, but at the same time Montreal and Toronto seized 2,500. That is more than double. It just proves that firearms are getting across the border and ending up in our cities.

Last week, Yves Francoeur, from Fraternité des policiers et policières de Montréal, said on the show *Tout le monde en parle* that it has become common to arrest young people with illegal firearms that they purchased out of fear, to defend themselves. That is gun culture. The more firearms there are around, the better armed you need to be. It is a vicious circle.

Does the minister realize that this culture is growing under his governance?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague. We have to end this cycle. That is why we will continue to make investments in collaboration with Quebec, including \$40 million to help police services, with \$18 million going to prevent gun-related violence in Montreal.

We have to go even further by passing Bill C-21, which seeks to provide more resources. We will do this work in collaboration with the Bloc Québécois.

* * *

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this weekend, millions around the world protested the brutal dictatorship in Iran, demanding freedom. Students at Tehran's Sharif University are being brutalized and arrested by the regime. Fifty thousand people came together in Richmond Hill to demand that the IRGC be listed as a terrorist organization, and the Prime Minister did not even bother to respond to the invite.

MPs passed a motion in the House almost four years ago to designate the IRGC as terrorists. We need actions, not words, and broad sanctions, not a free pass. What time today will the government list the IRGC as a terrorist organization in this country?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, obviously we are standing with the courageous women and all the people of Iran who are standing up and fighting for their freedom and, I must say, for their future. That is why I raised this very issue not only at the UN last Monday, but also when I was in Washington on Friday at ICAO and over the weekend with key Iranian women. This morning we also met with families regarding flight PS752.

We will make sure to hold the regime accountable for this. We have imposed sanctions. We will do more. We will be imposing new sanctions very soon.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman (Thornhill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the virtue signalling of the government's fake feminist foreign policy needs to stop. Projecting lights on the buildings of Parliament is not going to punish the brutal dictatorship's morality police from killing women. It will not get justice for the victims of 752.

The government has failed Iranian Canadians. It has failed to protect the freedom of women demanding it. It has failed to stand up against the tyrants in Tehran. Will it finally list the IRGC as terrorists today?

• (1500)

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is not a partisan issue. We are all together in denouncing what is happening in Iran. I really hope I can work with my colleague on this and with all members of the opposition, because, of course, we are united in making sure to hold accountable the perpetrators in this awful regime.

We want to make sure that we do things right—

The Speaker: I am going to interrupt the hon. member.

I appreciate that some hon. members are trying to practice their French during question period, but not while somebody is speaking. It is just not parliamentary.

The hon. minister, please, from the top so we can all hear the answer.

Hon. Mélanie Joly: Mr. Speaker, obviously this is a very important question for Canada. We want to make sure that we work all together in this House. Indeed, we need to make sure that this is not a partisan issue. This is a question of making sure that perpetrators are held accountable at the international level. We need to make sure that we work all together on this. We will work with other countries in the world.

As for those who are going against these women, including those who are responsible for the killing of Gina Mahsa Amini, we will make sure they are—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan.

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the minister speaks about our being “all together”. We were all together four years ago when the Liberals voted with the Conservatives to immediately list the IRGC as a terrorist entity. The minister, the Prime Minister and the entire cabinet voted for my motion to immediately list the IRGC four years ago, yet they did not do it. That is the problem. We have more empty words from the minister and have four years of complete inaction.

PS752 did not move them to action. The murder of Mahsa Amini still has not moved them to action. We need to replace hollow words with real action. It is a—

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in the face of the atrocious violations of human rights, this government has taken concrete action by ensuring that the state is listed as a supporter of terrorist activity, by listing the IRGC Quds Force, because it is a purveyor of terrorism, and by last week ensuring that we sanction the morality police, which are responsible for the killing of Mahsa Amini.

Oral Questions

We need to be united on this and we need to take—

The Speaker: I am going to interrupt the hon. member.

The hon. member asks a question and then shouts while the answer is coming back. I just want to remind him that if he wants to hear the answer, he is going to have to stop shouting. I would appreciate it if he would stop shouting while I am speaking as well.

The hon. minister, from the top.

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I was saying when it comes to the atrocious human rights violations, in the face of that action, we have taken concrete action, including ensuring that Iran is listed as a state supporter of terrorism, ensuring that we list the IRGC Quds Force and ensuring, last week, that we sanction the members of the morality police who were responsible for the killing of Mahsa Amini.

We will never stop defending human rights when it comes to this side of the House. We need to be united on that and not play partisanship.

* * *

[Translation]

JUSTICE

Ms. Arielle Kayabaga (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, protecting all Canadians is an absolute priority for our government. It means working to have a justice system that is effective and fair, and, above all, one that is compassionate towards victims.

Given that it is vital that victims have a strong voice to represent them, can the Minister of Justice tell us more about the recent appointment of the victims ombudsman?

Hon. David Lametti (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for London West for her question and excellent work.

I was proud to announce the appointment of Dr. Benjamin Roebuck as the new ombudsman for victims of crime. He is a renowned expert who has conducted research on victims' rights for 15 years. We will continue to support victims in our justice system in all possible ways, whether by investing in organizations to help them, appointing a new ombudsman with a high degree of expertise or using the system's resources to fight serious crime. We will always support victims.

* * *

• (1505)

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Marty Morantz (Charleswood—St. James—Assiniboia—Headingley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Mahsa Amini is dead for the high crime of showing her hair. Tomorrow marks 1,000 days since the IRGC shot down flight 752, killing 55 Canadians. The U.S. declared the IRGC to be a terrorist organization over three years ago. Sanctioning a few individuals today does not go nearly far enough.

It is time to send the tyrants in Tehran a clear message. When will the government wake up, see the IRGC for what it is and finally list this horrible terrorist entity?

Hon. Marco Mendicino (Minister of Public Safety, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to take concrete action to ensure that no one, whether from Iran or any place in this world, who violates human rights, who commits acts of terrorism or who commits the brutal killing of those like Mahsa Amini, of any other woman or of any other member of a vulnerable group, will have safe haven in this country. We will ensure that those responsible are sanctioned, and we will continue to explore all options to defend human rights here and around the world.

Mrs. Rachael Thomas (Lethbridge, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are talking about murder. Surely that deserves more than simple, empty words from the minister opposite. We are talking about a 22-year-old Iranian woman who was killed because she neglected to wear her hijab properly. The entire world is watching, Canadians are calling for action and the government has empty platitudes to offer. Surely we can do better.

I am calling on the government and asking this on behalf of Canadians: When will the IRGC be determined a terrorist organization?

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, of course, I agree with my colleague and her outrage regarding what is going on in Iran. For all of the Mahsa Aminis in the world, we need to stand up, and we are standing up. That is why we are sanctioning the IRGC and sanctioning the key leaders, the perpetrators, behind this tragedy and these atrocities.

However, we indeed need to do more. We need to shed light on what is going on in Iran. We need to stand with the courageous women who are fighting for their future, and we are. I hope that I can count on my colleagues—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this government never ceases to amaze us. The Liberals lifted the sanctions on Iran in 2016. In response to the murder and torture that has been committed by the Revolutionary Guard Corps, the government has decided to impose fresh sanctions, saying that the Revolutionary Guard Corps committed “egregious actions”. It is easier for the Liberals to speak of egregious actions than to say words like murdering innocent and defenceless women, men and children.

When will the Prime Minister designate the Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist group?

Oral Questions

Hon. Mélanie Joly (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, what is currently happening in Iran is completely unacceptable. This is the regime that is persecuting women. This is the same regime that downed flight PS752. Under the circumstances, impunity is not an option. That is why we have imposed strong sanctions, and that is why we will continue to impose strong sanctions. I hope that my colleague will not play politics, because right now, this is a situation that requires the unanimity of the House. I hope I can work with him.

* * *

[English]

DENTAL CARE

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, last week, the health committee heard conclusively from experts that pediatric dental care is part of the overall children's health plan. The president of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario stated that it has kids in pain because they cannot get dental surgery, the part of it they would see, with seven-eighths of them not getting surgery on time. Why is it that the Conservatives want to obstruct kids from receiving a benefit that would prevent the burden of dental disease?

Can the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health please tell this House the importance of passing Bill C-31 so that children can get the treatment they need this year for good oral health?

Mr. Adam van Koeverden (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Sport, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Guelph for his consistent advocacy, particularly on health-related matters, for his constituents in Guelph.

I was at that meeting last week. According to the Canadian Dental Association, over 2.26 million school days a year are missed because kids are having tooth decay and other tooth-related matters fixed at their dentist and fully one-third of day surgeries account for surgeries on kids between the age of one and five for their teeth.

In addition to that, the burden of dental disease is concentrated in those from low-income families, indigenous children, new immigrants and children with special health-related needs. By putting this benefit in place, our government is taking action. When will the Conservatives—

• (1510)

The Speaker: The hon. member for Timmins—James Bay.

* * *

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, energy workers in western Canada are frustrated because the current government has no credible plan for a just transition. Compared to Joe Biden, who is transforming the American economy with massive investments in clean tech to create what he calls good-paying union jobs, the Prime Minister has missed every single climate target. He has shown no vision for the incredible potential of a clean energy economy.

My question for the environment minister is this. Will the government put the necessary money on the table to create a clean energy future for Canadian workers and their families?

Hon. Seamus O'Regan (Minister of Labour, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the business of lowering emissions is a complex one. It requires people with talent, determination and ingenuity, who will lead and build the energy industries in this country. Energy workers will build CCUS. They will build up lower carbon fuels and hydrogen, and we cannot get to net zero without them.

We are delivering strategic investments in skills and training, regional strategies and projects right across Canada that will create sustainable jobs.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, back in April, even before the government approved the drilling in Bay du Nord, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, pointing out that we were on track to more than double the 1.5°C Paris target, said, "Some Government and business leaders are saying one thing, but doing another. Simply put, they are lying."

Since 1990, our emissions have risen more than any other G7 country. When Antonio Guterres said some government leaders are lying, which countries' leaders do we think he is referencing?

Hon. Steven Guilbeault (Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. member for her dedication to the issue of climate change over many decades.

As the IPCC has said, countries need to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 43% by 2030. We are on track to meeting at least a 40% reduction and on our way to meeting a 45% reduction.

We are doing more right now than any other country in the G7 to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Our investments, on a per-capita basis, are three times what the Americans just announced with the IRA in the U.S.

Ms. Melissa Lantsman: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been consultations among the parties and I believe you will find the unanimous consent of the House for the following motion: That the House stand in solidarity with the people of Iran fighting for their freedom against Iran's tyrannical dictatorship and those protesting the brutal murder of Mahsa Amini at the hands of the morality police, because she dared to confront the Iranian regime and fight for her freedom; express its disappointment that action was not taken by the government on the June 12, 2018, motion adopted by the House, calling for the IRGC to be listed as a terrorist organization; and, once again, call upon the government to list the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization in Canada.

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

An hon. member: Nay.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

● (1515)

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

OPPOSITION MOTION—MORATORIUM ON NEW TAXES

The House resumed from September 29 consideration of the motion.

The Speaker: It being 3:14 p.m., pursuant to order made on Thursday, June 23, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle relating to the business of supply.

The question is as follows. Shall I dispense?

Some hon. members: No

[*Chair read text of motion to House*]

● (1525)

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

(*Division No. 182*)

YEAS

Members

Aboultaif	Aitchison
Albas	Allison
Arnold	Baldinelli
Barlow	Barrett
Benzen	Bergen
Berthold	Bezan
Block	Bragdon
Brassard	Brock
Calkins	Caputo
Carrie	Chambers
Chong	Cooper
Dalton	Dancho
Davidson	Deltell
d'Entremont	Doherty
Dowdall	Dreeshen
Ellis	Epp
Falk (Battlefords—Lloydminster)	Falk (Provencher)

Fast
Findlay
Généreux
Gladu
Goodridge
Gray
Hoback
Kelly
Kmiec
Kramp-Neuman
Kusie
Lantsman
Lehoux
Lewis (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Lloyd
MacKenzie
Martel
McCauley (Edmonton West)
Melillo
Morantz
Motz
Nater
Patzner
Perkins
Rayes
Reid
Richards
Rood
Scheer
Seeback
Shipley
Soroka
Stewart
Stubbs
Tochor
Uppal
Vecchio
Vien
Vis
Wagantall
Waugh
Williams
Zimmer— 119

Business of Supply

Ferreri
Gallant
Genuis
Godin
Gourde
Hallan
Jeneroux
Kitchen
Kram
Kurek
Lake
Lawrence
Lewis (Essex)
Liepert
Lobb
Maguire
Mazier
McLean
Moore
Morrison
Muys
O'Toole
Paul-Hus
Poilievre
Redekopp
Rempel Garner
Roberts
Ruff
Schmale
Shields
Small
Steinley
Strahl
Thomas
Tolmie
Van Popta
Vidal
Viersen
Vuong
Warkentin
Webber
Williamson

NAYS

Members

Aldag	Alghabra
Ali	Anandasangaree
Angus	Arseneault
Arya	Ashton
Atwin	Bachrach
Badawey	Bains
Baker	Barron
Barsalou-Duval	Battiste
Beaulieu	Beech
Bendayan	Bennett
Bergeron	Bérubé
Bibeau	Bittle
Blair	Blanchet
Blanchette-Joncas	Blaney
Blois	Boissonnault
Boulerice	Bradford
Brière	Brunelle-Duceppe
Cannings	Carr
Casey	Chabot
Chagger	Chahal
Champoux	Chatel
Chen	Chiang
Collins (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek)	Collins (Victoria)
Cormier	Coteau
Dabrusin	Damoff
DeBellefeuille	Desbiens

Routine Proceedings

Desilets	Desjarlais
Dhillon	Diab
Dong	Drouin
Dubourg	Duclos
Duguid	Duncan (Etobicoke North)
Dzerowicz	Ehsassi
El-Khoury	Erskine-Smith
Fergus	Fillmore
Fisher	Fonseca
Fortier	Fortin
Fragiskatos	Fraser
Freeland	Fry
Gaheer	Garneau
Garon	Garrison
Gaudreau	Gazan
Gerretsen	Gill
Gould	Green
Guilbeault	Hajdu
Hanley	Hardie
Hepfner	Holland
Housefather	Hughes
Hussen	Hutchings
Iacono	Idlout
Ien	Jaczek
Johns	Joly
Jones	Jowhari
Julian	Kayabaga
Kelloway	Khalid
Khera	Koutrakis
Kusmierczyk	Kwan
Lalonde	Lametti
Lamoureux	Lapointe
Larouche	Lauzon
LeBlanc	Lebouthillier
Lemire	Lightbound
Long	Longfield
Louis (Kitchener—Conestoga)	MacAulay (Cardigan)
MacDonald (Malpeque)	MacGregor
MacKinnon (Gatineau)	Maloney
Martinez Ferrada	Masse
Mathysen	May (Cambridge)
May (Saanich—Gulf Islands)	McDonald (Avalon)
McGuinty	McKay
McKinnon (Coquitlam—Port Coquitlam)	McLeod
McPherson	Mendès
Mendicino	Miao
Michaud	Miller
Morrice	Morrissey
Murray	Naqvi
Ng	Noormohamed
Normandin	O'Connell
Oliphant	O'Regan
Pauzé	Perron
Petitpas Taylor	Plamondon
Powlowski	Qualtrough
Robillard	Rodriguez
Rogers	Romanado
Sahota	Sajjan
Saks	Sarai
Scarpaleggia	Schiefke
Serré	Sgro
Shanahan	Sheehan
Sidhu (Brampton East)	Sidhu (Brampton South)
Simard	Sinclair-Desgagné
Sorbara	Ste-Marie
St-Onge	Sudds
Tassi	Taylor Roy
Therrien	Thompson
Trudeau	Trudel
Turnbull	Valdez
Van Bynen	van Koevorden
Vandal	Vandenbeld
Vignola	Villemure

Virani	Weiler
Wilkinson	Yip
Zahid	Zarrillo
Zuberi — 205	

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the motion defeated.

I wish to inform the House that because of the deferred recorded division, Government Orders will be extended by 12 minutes.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

● (1530)

[Translation]

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, a report of the Canadian Section of ParliAmericas respecting its participation at the 18th Plenary Assembly. The virtual sessions were held on November 26 and 29 and December 10, 2021.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff who made this event a success, namely, the ParliAmericas secretariat, the association secretary and advisers from the Library of Parliament.

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[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 104 and Standing Order 114, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the membership of committees of the House.

[Translation]

If the House gives its consent, I move that the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in.

[English]

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

An hon. member: No.

The Deputy Speaker: I will come back to the hon. member for Waterloo.

COST OF LIVING RELIEF ACT, NO. 1

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there have been discussions amongst the parties and, if you seek it, I think you will find unanimous consent to adopt the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any standing order or special order or usual practice of the House, Bill C-30, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (temporary enhancement to the Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax credit), be disposed as follows:

(a) the bill shall be deemed concurred in at report stage without further amendment upon presentation of the report by the committee;

(b) a motion for third reading of the bill may be taken up during Government Orders that day; and,

(c) if the bill has been reported back, on Wednesday, October 5, 2022, at the conclusion of the time provided for Government Orders or when no member rises to speak, whichever is earlier, all questions necessary for the disposal of the third reading stage of the bill shall be put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment provided that, if a recorded division is requested, it shall be deferred to the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions on Thursday, October 6, 2022.

• (1535)

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

It is agreed.

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

(Motion agreed to)

* * *

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS**

Hon. Bardish Chagger (Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if the House gives its consent, I move that the 15th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, presented to the House earlier this day, be concurred in.

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

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)

[English]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC) moved:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development presented on Monday, September 26, 2022, be concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague and friend from the riding of Wellington—Halton Hills.

Conservatives are seeking to have the House of Commons condemn the fake so-called “referendums” held in Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine. I was pleased to put this motion forward in the

Routine Proceedings

foreign affairs committee, and I am pleased now to be seeking the concurrence of the House on this important matter.

It has been six months since the start of the further invasion of Ukraine by the Putin regime. This invasion has been horrific, but the response to it has been heroic. Ukrainians have inspired the world and caused authoritarian leaders everywhere to rethink their plans. Vladimir Putin is now both losing and trying to raise the stakes. The heroic Ukrainian people are defending their homeland against a conscript army that does not know why it is fighting or what it is fighting for. The Ukrainian advantage, in terms of purpose, spirit and morale, has led to victory after victory on the battlefield.

However, on the military side this conflict is far from over. Russia is still a much larger country with more people. Ukraine can win and push the Russian army out completely, but Ukraine needs more weaponry from Canada and other allies. While Ukrainians are fighting and dying, sending resources and weapons is the least we can do.

With the weapons they have today, Ukrainians are pushing back. In response, Putin is trying to raise the stakes by artificially labelling occupied Ukrainian territory as Russian territory and then positioning Ukrainian efforts to liberate territory as an attack on Russia itself. He is doing this while hinting that nuclear weapons would be used to defend the Russian homeland. This is the desperate, dishonest game of a regime that started an aggressive war and is now losing.

We all know that these so-called “referendums” are not real. They are being held at gunpoint with virtually no notice, in some cases nominally covering areas Russia does not even control. These events remind me of President Roosevelt's quip. He said, “What I cannot understand about the Russian is the way he will lie when he knows perfectly well that you know he is lying.”

The Putin regime is raising the stakes through nuclear threats, and it is raising the stakes in other ways, through escalating atrocities targeting civilians and through sharpening repression at home that includes conscription, especially targeting Russian minority communities. In response to this violence, this conscription and the threats of nuclear destruction, I call on the Russian people to take a stand against their failing leaders and the senseless destruction that is depriving them of their lives and their children. Ukrainians, Canadians and all of us hope for a day when a free, democratic and prosperous Russia will live in peace with all of its neighbours.

However, I want to return to the Canadian government's own record, when it comes to this war. It is a record, sadly, that is woefully inadequate. I am calling on the government to do more to take the steps that are required to stand with our Ukrainian allies.

Routine Proceedings

There are various things we can do. Of course we can and should send weapons, more weapons, as President Zelenskyy has asked. We could have been providing more weapons, satellite imagery and other forms of support much earlier. In fact Conservatives were asking these questions and raising these issues all the way back to the current government taking power in 2015. We should have been imposing tough sanctions on Putin and his cronies prior to February. Indeed, the invasion of Ukraine started back in 2014, and we should have been tightening sanctions as the escalating threats of war came in prior to the beginning of the further invasion this year.

Weapons and sanctions are important steps we should have been taking earlier and we could be doing more of alongside our allies, but I want to say there is a special Canadian role we should be taking up in response to this invasion. Most of the world's democracies are much more densely populated than we are. Many of the world's democracies are small, densely populated nations, such as in Europe and the Asia-Pacific, with limited access to natural resources.

Canada has a unique place in the democratic world as a sparsely populated country rich in natural resources that can produce and export critical commodities, especially natural gas but also potash and other commodities the democratic world needs in order to be secure.

Sadly, we are living in the wake of seven years of failed energy policy under the current Liberal government. We have not seen not only the economic opportunities associated with our natural resource sectors but also the critical role those sectors can play in contributing to global security. We could have and should have been doing so much more to develop and prepare to export our natural gas to help our friends in Europe and also in the Asia-Pacific be energy secure and not have to be reliant on authoritarian countries such as Russia.

By failing to live up to Canada's responsibility as part of the community of democratic nations, we have left our allies vulnerable to the kind of pressure we have seen from Russia. Russia is funding its war in Ukraine through the export of its natural resources. Canada could be displacing and replacing that energy.

● (1540)

We are seven years behind, but it is now time for Canada to recognize the mistake, step up and take up its responsibilities to support Ukraine, through sanctions, weapons and playing that critical role of developing and exporting vital energy resources.

Rather than recognizing the potential, the opportunity and the responsibility that Canada has in the community of democratic nations, the approach of the government has to been to grant a waiver to sanctions to facilitate the export of Russian gas through a Russian turbine. Why are we allowing exemptions to our sanctions, as one witness told the foreign affairs committee, and allowing our sanctions to be like Swiss cheese, instead of standing firm on those sanctions, preventing Russian energy from being exported and offering our European friends alternatives?

We found out, coming into this summer, that the government had granted an exception to their sanctions, allowing the export of a Gazprom turbines. We got various explanations from the government as to why this was. First, it said it was vitally necessary for

European energy security. Then it became clear that Russia was not even planning on using this turbine, that this was a tool to demonstrate the lack of resolve on the part of the Canadian government, but at the end of the day, the gas is still not flowing. There goes that excuse.

Then the government said it granted this exception to call Vladimir Putin's bluff. It continued to allow the export of those sanctions even after it had already become clear, so the explanation about calling his bluff just does not make any sense.

Then, in court filings, we saw that the government was actually invoking jobs and industrial activity in Montreal, near the minister's own riding, at Siemens Canada facilities, as an explanation for why it had pursued this policy. This is a crying shame, that we find out now that the government was granting a waiver to sanctions on these Gazprom turbines, not because there was any strategic reason to do so, but because the minister thought it was going to be in the interests of economic activity in an area close to her riding. That sends a terrible message to our Ukrainian friends who are fighting and dying for their freedom. We should be standing with them, not granting exemptions to our sanctions.

Our response has been lacking, and I call on the government to stand with the Ukrainian people, send the weapons that are required, end this policy of putting holes in their own sanctions, and condemn these referendums at this critical time.

I want to conclude on a personal note. This motion today is deeply personal for a member of my own staff. Daryna, who is working for me right now in our Conservative lobby, was born in the city of Zaporizhzhia, the administrative centre of the Zaporizhzhia region, and has lived there most of her life. Seventy percent of that region is occupied by Russian troops, but the administrative centre, where she and her family live, is under the control of Ukraine. The house where her parents live is 30 kilometres from the front lines.

Two days ago, Russian troops shelled Zaporizhzhia. At least 30 people, all civilians, were killed in a parking lot, and more than 70 people were injured. Later that afternoon, Putin signed a decree on the annexation of the Zaporizhzhia region to Russia. In other words, he decreed the annexation of a region where he does not even control the administrative centre. As Daryna put it to me, Putin killed 30 civilians in a land not under his control and then announced its ascension to Russia, allegedly at the will of the people who live there.

There are many women and men in Canada today who, like Daryna, are up late at night, waiting for news to confirm that their families are okay. While so many remain in harm's way, Canada's government must step up to condemn these fake referendums and rescind the Gazprom turbine waiver. The government must step up to reform our energy policies so Canada can take up its responsibilities in the world to supply our democratic allies with the energy resources they need, supply Ukraine with all the weapons they require, and help the refugees, who are contributing to Canada and supporting these efforts in so many ways.

Slava Ukraini. Heroyam slava.

• (1545)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, for many years now, since the invasion of Crimea, in a very apolitical fashion, we have tried to deal with supporting Ukraine in very tangible ways. This is going all the way back to 2014.

Over these years, I have witnessed widespread support coming from all sides of the House. It concerns me that the member, with some of the assertions he has made, would try to make it more political.

From the official opposition's perspective, do they feel it is important that the government continues to speak with one voice in condemning Putin and supporting solidarity for Ukraine, whether it is with sanctions, weapons or financial support? Is this not the right thing to be doing, to continue to work with our allied countries?

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, as a principled opposition, we agree with the government when we agree with the government, and we criticize them when we think it is on the wrong path. It has made some decisions on Ukraine that have been good decisions. It has also made some decisions that have not been good. In particular, it is important for us to critique the decision to waive sanctions on Gazprom turbines.

In this, we are allied with our allies in Ukraine. Conservatives are magnifying the voice of the Ukrainian people, who do not understand why the Government of Canada would waive those critical sanctions. It sends a terrible message. It sets a terrible precedent. It undermines our desire to have a unified front in saying no to the weakening of those sanctions. Therefore, I say yes on some issues, but the government is not doing enough.

The government needs to stand firm in the face of Russian pressure and say no to any waivers to sanctions. Holding the line consistently is the only way we will be able to effectively stop resources going to fund the Russian war machine.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on the international trade committee, we did actually have some hearings on Ukraine and trade.

I would like to ask the hon. member about a specific one. He did not mention it in his speech. It is Cyber Security Awareness Month. One of the things I learned from the Ukrainian interns who have been in my office in the past, is that they have a lot of young people who could actually be very effective in the long term for the survival and the betterment of Ukraine, if they were to get trained to prevent Russian cybersecurity hacks and a number of different things.

I would like the member's thoughts about that in general, as to whether there is more we can do after what is taking place right now to help young Ukrainians become experts in cybersecurity, for not only Ukraine, but also the world.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member that there is so much more we need to be doing here in Canada on cybersecurity.

Routine Proceedings

There is more that we need to be doing to combat efforts by various foreign states that interfere in Canadian affairs. We see these efforts take various forms, with cybersecurity, hacking and other kinds of infiltration. The Russian government is doing this. We know there are other countries that are doing it.

On the public safety front, I think the government is behind in recognizing that the primary threat we face to our security now, here in Canada, is foreign state-backed interference in the various forms it takes. Yes, there is much more work that needs to be done.

• (1550)

Mr. Frank Caputo (Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to rise on behalf of the people of Kamloops—Thompson—Cariboo.

During question period, I received word of the passing of Stephen Soll, a lawyer in my riding. I had the honour of being called to the bar in British Columbia on the same day as his son. I would like to recognize his distinguished career and his advocacy, and give his family and loved ones my best wishes.

In terms of a comment, I would like to express gratitude to my colleague to my right for the advocacy he presents to the House, just as Mr. Soll presented for his clients.

Mr. Garnett Genuis: Mr. Speaker, I agree there is so much more work that needs to continue to be done to stand with Ukraine, address this invasion and combat this unprecedented aggression. We will continue to call on the government to step up further and, in particular, condemn these referenda and cancel the sanctions waiver that was granted to the Gazprom turbines.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the referenda Russia conducted in Ukraine were a sham. The referenda held in the four eastern oblasts of Kherson, Donetsk, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia were a sham. First, they were only conducted in parts of those four eastern oblasts because Russian military forces only control parts of those four eastern oblasts.

Second, these referenda were held under force and duress. Voters were coerced to vote. Armed Russian soldiers went door to door to collect the ballots. In many cases, ballots were filled out by Russian soldiers themselves instead of by the households that received them, and there was only one vote given per household. In other words, many individuals in households where there were more than one adult were denied the right to vote. Clearly, the results of these four referenda are a sham.

A real referendum, however, was held in these four eastern regions of Ukraine in 1991, and in that legitimate referendum of that year, these regions overwhelmingly voted to be independent of Russia and to be part of an independent Ukraine. Eighty-three per cent of people in Kherson in 1991 voted for independence, along with 83% of people in Donetsk, 90% of people in Luhansk and 90% of people in Zaporizhzhia.

Routine Proceedings

After these sham referenda were conducted by Russia in parts of these four regions, it illegally annexed these four regions exactly as it did with Crimea some eight years ago, in 2014. These illegal annexations and sham referenda have descended into farce. Today, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said that Russia does not know where Russia's international border is with Ukraine in eastern Ukraine only days after Vladimir Putin proclaimed the annexation of these four eastern oblasts.

Let us think about that. It has annexed territory, on its own terms, that has no clearly defined boundary. This is even more of a farce because the Ukrainian army is actively liberating the very territory that Vladimir Putin claims to have annexed. The liberation of towns like Lyman the day after Putin annexed it shows how ridiculous these illegal referenda and annexations are. In fact, word is coming over social media and through news reports that parts of the Russian front in eastern Ukraine are in total collapse.

These sham referenda and illegal annexations are actually indicative of something else. They are indicative of Vladimir Putin's complete and utter desperation. It is a sign of desperation that four referenda were held in the chaos of a collapsing front in eastern Ukraine. The front is collapsing as Russian soldiers flee back toward Russia. It is a sign of desperation that, in the middle of the chaos of the Russian army collapsing in eastern Ukraine, Putin proclaimed the annexation of these four eastern Ukrainian oblasts. It is a sign of desperation that Vladimir Putin has initiated a mass mobilization.

It is clear that none of these things is going to help Vladimir Putin in eastern Ukraine, as the Ukrainian army, with the support of the west, is valiantly fighting the unjust and illegal war of Russia in Ukraine. It is clear that all Vladimir Putin has left is the threat of a nuclear war. Russia's nuclear doctrine has long reserved the right to use tactical nuclear weapons defensively, but this is a war of offence, not defence, no matter how Vladimir Putin tries to spin it.

• (1555)

However, the Kremlin's inability to articulate and communicate a red line means that Ukraine will press on to retake the territory wrongfully taken from it in eastern Ukraine, the very regions that Russia has claimed to annex. It means that Russia's threats to go nuclear are unclear. It also means that we are, as the west, unable to respond to these nuclear threats.

Because these threats are vague and unclear, it is not possible for western powers, in particular the great western power of the United States and others, to respond to them other than capitulation to Vladimir Putin, a capitulation that would set a very dangerous precedent for the future. It would allow every future rogue leader or rogue state to use the threat of a nuclear strike to get their way and to undermine all the order and stability that have been built up over the last eight decades. This would essentially lead to a state of anarchy and a state where the world would be extremely unstable for decades to come.

That is precisely why I encourage members to support the report by voting for the motion to concur in it. These referenda were a sham, these annexations were illegal, the mass mobilization is a sign of desperation and the nuclear threat that Vladimir Putin is di-

recting to the world is not something that is possible for us to respond to.

We need to take a stand as a House on the very serious and existential matter in front of us and indicate clearly that these referenda and these annexations were illegal, that they cannot be allowed to be recognized anywhere in the world, that the referenda, the annexations and the mass mobilization are a sign of desperation, and, finally, that the threat of going nuclear by President Putin is not a threat the west can do something with because it is vague and unclear as to where the red lines are.

For all those reasons, I think this matter is serious enough for the House to be seized with and serious enough that it should go to a vote. The House should make its declaration of support of this report from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his speech. I thought it was thoughtful and important and added to the dignity of this House.

In the member's closing remark, he talked about the importance of ensuring that no country in the world accepts the illegal annexation of those four territories. Is he then implying that it would be important for us to maintain our links with allies on everything to ensure that we are in concert with all our allies on issues? I raise the issue of Gazprom on that point and making sure that we are working in concert with our allies not only on the non-recognition of these illegally annexed territories, but on every other issue that we need to share our energy on.

• (1600)

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, with respect, I disagree with the government's decision on the gas turbines. To be frank, both the Republic of Germany and Canada were duped by the Russians in being convinced to waive the sanctions to send the gas turbines back to Gazprom. The fact is that since the decision has been taken, Russia has proven the point. NATO has concluded that Russia was behind the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipeline through the Baltic Sea into Germany. Russia clearly has no interest in resurrecting this pipeline if it was willing to essentially blow up parts of it, which are leaking dangerous amounts of methane and gas into the atmosphere and the Baltic Sea.

It was the wrong decision taken by both the German and Canadian governments. I think in hindsight, as it was at the time, that is clear, since Russia itself, as NATO has concluded, has sabotaged the very pipeline that these turbines were purportedly going to keep open.

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when it comes to holding a referendum where people are cheated, that is always an extremely sensitive subject, especially for us.

With respect to President Putin's nuclear threat at a time like this when our environment is already not faring so well, the member said that we are unable to respond. We need to respond, not with a nuclear threat, but in other ways.

Routine Proceedings

I would like to know what diplomatic means could bring the allies together to prevent the disastrous use of nuclear weapons.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the Bloc Québécois for her question. In my opinion, diplomacy does not work with Russia. The only approach that works with Vladimir Putin is military action. That is clear. We used a lot of diplomacy before the war in Ukraine, but that did not work. Now, we are in a situation where military intervention is the only way to convince the Russians to end the war in Ukraine.

[English]

At this point, unfortunately, kinetic action as opposed to diplomacy is the only way forward to contain Vladimir Putin and his nuclear threats. Because he has been unclear in his nuclear threats, it is not possible for us to respond in any way, because he has not laid down the red lines for exactly what would constitute the trigger for using a tactical nuclear weapon.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member has been here long enough to remember that Canadian members of Parliament, such as Dave Christopherson, went to Ukraine to help build a voting system. I want to recognize that and have him briefly reflect on it, because I do not think a lot of people remember how many members of Parliament actually went to help build Ukraine's democracy, which has now been proven to be a sham in some regions with Russia's vote.

Hon. Michael Chong: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and friend from Windsor West, in southwestern Ontario, for his question. We have worked on a number of things in this House together over the years.

My colleague is exactly right. It is not just the contributions we have had in building civil society and democratic capacity in Ukraine. It is also contributions we have made in building the capacity of the Ukrainian military over the last decade, which obviously have come to bear fruit in its campaign to oust Russia from Ukraine.

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Winnipeg North.

It has been over 200 days since Russia's President Putin launched his illegal, unjustifiable and despicable invasion of Ukraine. With each day that passes, the number of civilians, including children, killed and wounded, now in the thousands, continues to climb.

On a global scale, the consequences of Russia's military aggression are being felt by all. The war has contributed to rising food costs. The world is concerned about food supplies and energy insecurity. We see the consequences on populations, especially in the global south, which are the most vulnerable and the most affected. At the same time, Russia continues to weaponize its energy resources as tools for coercion.

In Ukraine, as the battle continues, we are witnessing human rights violations, conflict-related sexual violence and the aftermath of brazen atrocities, including the recent discovery of mass graves in Izium. The ongoing destruction of Ukrainian infrastructure, including its energy grid and civilian infrastructure such as schools and hospitals, is of grave concern. However, the brave and resilient

Ukrainian people continue to fight with extraordinary courage, passion and dignity for their country, their communities and their families.

As has been said often in this House, Canada's ties with the people of Ukraine are historical, deep and important. That is why we were the first western country to recognize Ukraine's independence just over 30 years ago, and it is why we have been increasingly engaged in supporting its fragile democracy as it grows into and becomes the democratic country that we are now seeing emerge. We have also developed a strong diplomatic relationship fuelled by a passionate and engaged Ukrainian diaspora of over 1.4 million people in Canada.

In 2014, thousands of Ukrainians stood up for a democratic future during the revolution of dignity. Canada supported the many activists, human rights defenders and civil society organizations that fought tirelessly for a free and democratic future. We continue to work with them today in response to Putin's brutality.

Canada condemns the sham referendums that Russia organized in the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson, which were used as a basis for Putin's illegal annexation. They will not be respected, they are not valid and they are unjust. They are shams. These are phony exercises with predetermined results and have zero legitimacy. Ukraine's borders will not change.

Let me be clear. Donetsk is Ukraine. Luhansk is Ukraine. Zaporizhzhia is Ukraine. Kherson is Ukraine. Crimea is Ukraine. Canada is clear. I think all of us in this House can agree on that, and we will continue to fight for that recognition around the world.

Russia's sham referendums are a sign of Russia's weakness and proof of Ukraine's successful counteroffensive. They do not reflect the will of Ukrainian people. They are selective, they are illegal and they are a grave violation of international law. We reject Putin's attempts to rob Ukraine of its territory, of its history, of its sovereignty, of its democracy and of its independence.

Routine Proceedings

In response, Canada and the international community are ensuring that President Putin and his enablers answer for their actions. We are working around the clock to deliver comprehensive military, financial, humanitarian, stabilization and developmental assistance in support of Ukraine and its people. This year alone, Canada has committed over \$3.4 billion in support to Ukraine, including \$626 million in military assistance committed or delivered, with training to Ukrainian forces; \$1.95 billion in new loan resources to support Ukraine's economic resilience; \$320 million in humanitarian assistance; \$96 million in development assistance; and over \$41.5 million in security and stabilization programming to enhance Ukrainian resilience and resistance, including vital support for demining, countering disinformation and initiatives to advance accountability and justice for human rights violations.

● (1605)

There is not only money in our support for Ukraine. Canada is also stepping up through its comprehensive immigration response, which offers Ukrainians and their family members extended temporary status; an expedited plan for permanent residency through a family sponsorship program; and support for the International Criminal Court, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Moscow mechanism, and Ukraine's case against Russia at the International Court of Justice in order to hold Russia accountable.

Pursuing accountability and justice for victims, as well as supporting investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity, is part of our ongoing work, and we are announcing a \$1-million contribution to the International Criminal Court to support its investigation into the sexual violence and conflict-related crimes against children.

These are non-partisan issues. This is the way we as Canadians want to support Ukraine, want to stand up to a bully named Putin and want to defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine.

In addition to direct support to Ukraine and its people, Canada is focused on holding Putin, his regime and those abetting him accountable and placing economic and political pressure on them to stop the war. We have imposed sanctions since just February on over 1,400 individuals and entities in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, and we were the first among our partners on the seizure and forfeiture of the assets of sanctioned individuals and entities. We announced our most recent round of sanctions just last week in response to Russia's sham referendums and the annexation efforts.

Never has the community of democracies, NATO allies and others who support our endeavours and efforts in Ukraine been stronger. We are indivisible, strong, united and concerted, and I hope the House continues to stay that way as well.

Canada and our partners are making a principled response to Russia's war of choice because we need to uphold the rules-based international system, and Canada is working to maintain and maximize a high level of multilateral unity within the broader international community. We are recognized as leaders in this field. We will continue to do it. We will continue to call like-minded and not

so like-minded countries together so we can endeavour to hold Russia accountable as we continue to support Ukraine and its people.

Ukraine is a brave and strong country, and it is resilient, but it needs help. It will continue to be free, prosperous and independent with the world guarding its back and keeping it in mind at every step.

We will also work with our allies and across the international community to protect the systems and structures that we have all protected and strengthened for decades. These are the cornerstones, not only of democracy but of our security and the way we need to act as a world of like-minded countries.

Together with the international community, and working with Ukraine's President Zelenskyy, we continue to call on President Putin to end this war, to get out of Ukraine, to stop the violence and to respect humanity, borders and the people of Ukraine. We call on him to withdraw his troops and equipment from Ukraine and to turn to good-faith diplomacy.

We recognize that there are limits to diplomacy, and that is why we continue to help the military operations in Ukraine through equipment, support and training. However, we also know that our world is best served by diplomatic solutions, by working the ways of peace and by engaging as Canadians would have us engage in the world.

Today we stand, I believe, united in condemning Russia and supporting Ukraine. Today we stand united in refusing to recognize these fake, false and sham-like referenda, and we will continue to stand with the people of Ukraine this day and every day. It is not only because we support Ukraine; these are Canadian values at work in our world, and we will continue to do that.

● (1610)

Mr. Garnett Genuis (Sherwood Park—Fort Saskatchewan, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I share the aspirations of the parliamentary secretary for unity in support of Ukraine. Of course, in pursuit of that end, the official opposition will continue to challenge the government in areas where it is falling short with respect to providing the necessary supports for Ukraine.

It is not just the official opposition that has raised these concerns; other long-time allies of the government have been similarly critical of it in the last few months for not doing enough. For example, Boris Wrzesnewskyj, who served in this House as a Liberal MP and served in caucus with the parliamentary secretary up until 2019, said of the decision to grant a waiver of sanctions that it was "a Canadian betrayal of Ukraine and of Canadian values" when the decision was made to lift sanctions on the Siemens turbines. It is not just the official opposition; there are many other voices saying the government is falling behind and making big mistakes with respect to not being consistently principled when it comes to holding the line on our sanctions regime.

Routine Proceedings

Would the parliamentary secretary recognize, now that gas is still not flowing through the Gazprom pipelines because the turbines have not been used, that granting the sanctions waiver was a mistake? The government said it was a revokable permit. Is the government prepared to recognize this mistake now and revoke the permit?

• (1615)

Hon. Robert Oliphant: Mr. Speaker, that is the second speech from the member, and I am very pleased to be able to respond to it.

Canada made the very difficult decision to make a waiver on returning the first of a few turbines that needed to go to keep energy flowing to Europe. We are an internationalist, multilateral government, and we listen to our allies. We make difficult decisions to ensure that we are at one, in unity with our allies, and we will continue to do that.

I have huge respect for Mr. Wrzesnewskyj, who was a member of this place. However, at the same time, I would say that Canada made an important, difficult decision, and we will continue to review it every day as we look at the best ways to support Ukraine and also keep the unity of our alliance together.

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, with diplomatic tensions running high and a war being fought between two countries, one of which is a major power, it is especially important to be careful and to strike the right balance. No one here, or anywhere else in the world, I am sure, wants to be plunged into a third world war.

I would like my colleague to comment on what is being done here and around the world to maintain a certain balance and prevent violence from erupting globally.

Hon. Robert Oliphant: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her question. I think it is very important to have a discussion about the meaning and importance of unity among allies and organizations like NATO.

[English]

I will continue to talk about the fact that NATO and our allies who are engaged in this conflict are doing it with a great sensitivity, very much aware that missteps could make the conflict broader and even more difficult than it is. We are finding ways to support Ukraine by providing equipment, by providing training and by ensuring that Ukraine has the tools it needs to engage in this war without it becoming a third world war. That is very much a sensitivity that we have on this side, and it is a fine line to make sure that we support, hold up, empower and even embolden Ukraine in its own defence, while also limiting the scale of this horrendous war.

The Deputy Speaker: Here is where I give my nightly reminder to all members of this wonderful House to try to shorten up the questions and answers so that everybody gets to participate in this debate.

Continuing debate, the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is really important to recognize that what is taking place in Ukraine today goes far beyond the borders of Ukraine. The people of Ukraine are putting up a heroic effort in defending some of the fundamental principles of freedom, democracy and so many other things we in western society and many countries around the world truly value, and which are so important to the future not only of Ukraine but in fact the world.

In Canada, we have approximately 1.4 million people of Ukrainian heritage. People of Ukrainian heritage have played a critical role in who we are as a nation today, but the impact in Canada goes far beyond just the people of Ukrainian heritage. The people of Canada have recognized in a very real and tangible way that what is taking place in Europe is so critically important to all of us, each and every one of us.

My political career in the House has been somewhat limited, but I can recall 2014, when from my perspective we saw Ukraine take a significant pivot. It wanted to talk about trade and was looking to the European Union and countries like Canada and the U.S. to enhance those trade relations. The violent reaction that I saw being perpetrated from Russia ultimately led to a change in Ukraine's presidency back in 2015, when former president Poroshenko was elected. He came to Canada and spoke in the House of Commons, in Centre Block, in person, and talked about the special relationship between Canada and Ukraine.

At that time, I was on the opposition benches. Even back then, we talked about the important relationship between Canada and Ukraine. The parliamentary secretary just made reference to Canada's acknowledging Ukraine as an independent nation. We were the first country in the world to do so. We understand very much the heritage, and we have an appreciation for Ukraine's sovereignty and independence.

I can recall vividly being at the Maidan, or Independence Square, in Kyiv days afterward, where I witnessed a beautiful wedding ceremony and the sense of young people going into downtown Kyiv, recognizing how important it was that a change had taken place.

When Crimea was annexed by Russia, the red flags shot up. We argued then, as we are arguing for eastern Ukraine today, that those are territories that we as a nation identify as part of Ukraine. That has not changed. As referenced, the referendums are a sham. I do not think anyone who has a true appreciation of what has taken place recognizes those referendums as being valid. There is a sense of solidarity for Ukraine that goes far beyond the borders of Ukraine and I believe is well recognized here in Canada. It is a friendship that predates the Maidan. It goes back into the nineties and even before.

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● (1620)

I think of constituents like the late Bill Balan, a dear friend of mine who passed. There are so many that, even though they might live here in Canada, their hearts can often be found in Ukraine. It is a part of the reason why we have organizations such as the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and many others that do such a wonderful job ensuring that elected parliamentarians here in Ottawa have a complete and comprehensive understanding of the situation that is taking place in Ukraine. That is why, over the years, we have seen substantial support for Ukraine's infrastructure.

One of the things that comes to my mind, right offhand, is the Canadian Forces and how we have been able to utilize members of our Canadian Forces in Ukraine.

Ukraine has some incredible members of its Ukrainian military who have been trained, at least in part, by members of the Canadian Forces. I think it was estimated to be just over 30,000 or something of that nature. We are seeing some of the training that we were able to provide years ago actually being used today.

There are things that Canada has been doing. We could talk about the trade agreement, which was started under Stephen Harper and finalized under the current Prime Minister. I remember the minister responsible for trade and the Prime Minister flying over to sign off. I remember it was something that former president Poroshenko, when he spoke to us in the House of Commons, live, talked about wanting to see. Those are some of the things that we did prior.

We had a real hero, President Zelenskyy, appear on our virtual screens and, therefore, on the floor of the House of Commons. Again, he talked about the important role the allied countries and Canada can play to continue to support Ukraine.

When, just over 200 days ago, Russia illegally invaded Ukraine, there was an immediate response. There were many people that thought Ukraine was just going to roll over and Russia would be able to finish that invasion. However, the heroes of Ukraine, they stood up. I remember the one quote that was attributed to President Zelenskyy. It was in regard to being offered a way to leave, that maybe he should be leaving the country. He said something to the nature of, "I need ammunition, not a ride."

It is those sorts of words that have inspired so many Ukrainian heroes. It is truly amazing how the people of Ukraine have responded. It is important, as the Parliament here in Canada, that we tell our brothers and sisters in Ukraine that we have been there for them, and we will continue to be there for them in very real and tangible ways.

We can talk about the sanctions, the military lethal weapon aid and support that we have provided or the humanitarian aid, whether it is coming from the government or from the people of Canada. I am always amazed at how many Ukrainian flags we will see flying, whether it is in my constituency of Winnipeg North or when I am driving into the Interlake. Throughout our country, we will see Ukrainian flags.

I believe, as I said before, it is because there is a solidarity here in Canada to support Ukraine that is worldwide. We will continue to be there and recognize the referendums as a sham.

● (1625)

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of commonalities in the positions taken by the official opposition and the government. We have been working in tandem on different opportunities on the question of the referendums. What I have been saying to constituents, obviously, because of my background, as someone born in communist Poland, is that these have all the legitimacy of a thief who breaks into a bank and applies for a line of credit during the theft they are committing, which is basically what the terrorist state of Russia is doing.

I wonder if the member could perhaps comment on what other steps the government should be immediately taking to provide arms, logistical support and the means for Ukrainians to reach the Russian Federation's true border, the international border that we recognize and is internationally recognized, to ensure this war comes to an early end with a minimal number of casualties.

● (1630)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the most important thing we can do is to continue to be steadfast in supporting Ukraine in whatever way we can, working with our allied countries. It is the allied forces, the U.S.A. in particular, that have been there to support Ukraine in a very tangible way so that the heroes in Ukraine are in a better position to get back their land, the territories that will always be part of Ukraine. Whatever we can do to support that, we should. That is what the government, working with opposition parties, is doing.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his speech.

I would like him to talk about next steps with regard to Ukraine's application to join NATO, which has been an ongoing matter for several years.

What can we now do to try to improve and resolve this situation in the near future? How can we ensure that Russia will not succeed in getting what it wants with its aggression?

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, NATO allied forces are in fact working on that particular point as they have been looking at other memberships to NATO. I see that continuing.

One of the biggest concerns I have right now is that winter is quickly approaching and the impact that will have in Europe. I would like more dialogue to take place on that, on what it is we can do to help. As I say, there has been so much devastation in Ukraine it is virtually impossible to describe the horrors in words. We can talk about human rights or cities being completely demolished. There is so much need and winter is around the corner. Like many, if not all, Canadians, I am very concerned about that.

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Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is critical with what is going on that we continue to call out Russia's war crimes and crimes against humanity. We need to continue to support refugees and visa-free travel for people from Ukraine. Lives are on the line.

Watching the news and with the growing concern of escalating nuclear threats, the need for global nuclear disarmament is more important than ever. I would ask the member why his government, in the face of a catastrophic nuclear threat, still has not signed on to or ratified the international Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the member will excuse me if I defer that particular question to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. At some point in the future, it might be good to have that dialogue one on one with the minister.

When the member talks about human rights, human rights and the violation of them have already, at least in part, started to be documented. All of us are concerned about issues such as torture, rape and the things that are happening to so many people in Ukraine. There will come a day when we will see some justice from Ukraine and allied countries to ensure there are consequences to all of those violations. That is something we will have to continue to push for.

The Deputy Speaker: I will quickly say that we are a lot more disciplined than we were last time. We are almost getting everybody in, but I see a few people still standing who have not had the opportunity to ask a question yet.

Continuing debate, the hon. member for Berthier—Maskinongé.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron (Berthier—Maskinongé, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would first like to inform you that I will be sharing my time with my hon. colleague from Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia.

This is a very serious issue. Referendums are being held in the territories occupied by the army. This is significant. Obviously, Quebec has had a few referendums, but we are not talking about the same thing, not at all. We have had democratic referendums, with, of course, some financial irregularities in the second one, which we could talk about all day long, but that is another topic altogether.

How can the legitimacy of a referendum held at gunpoint be recognized?

Four regions have just announced the results of these sham referendums, as President Zelenskyy calls them. The result in Zaporizhzhia was 93%, so it was popular. It was a little lower in Kherson, at 87%. Any politician in Quebec or Canada who won 87% of the vote in an election would be a demigod. In Luhansk, it was 98%. In Donetsk, it was 99%. This is actually similar to the percentage of votes President Putin supposedly won in the Russian election. These are totally unrealistic, astronomical results that show how fake the whole process was.

I am calling on my colleagues to continue moving in the same direction. Since we started talking about the conflict in Ukraine, there has been unanimity in the House. Could we perhaps do more?

I listened, as we all did, to President Zelenskyy's speech to the House. I would like to share a secret with you: I found that to be a surreal moment. At one point, I took a step back to observe the scene unfolding before me. Everyone said they were firmly behind Ukraine, but everyone also said that we could really do no more.

Today, it is not up to me to decide if Ukraine will join NATO. It is not up to me to decide if we must do more. However, I would ask that we consider what more we could do. I believe that Canada has been doing more than many other countries since the start, but we are facing such a terrible situation.

Imagine that it is nine o'clock in the morning and we hear someone knocking at the door. There are three or four Russian soldiers standing there, machine guns in hand, inviting us to exercise our democratic right to vote in the referendum and decide whether to join "Great Russia". Imagine that, in the weeks leading up to that moment, the neighbourhood school was destroyed by bombs. Imagine watching the hospital burn down and seeing our brothers, fathers or uncles die. Imagine knowing several women who were beaten and raped, and children who were injured, had limbs amputated or died. We need to put this in context. Someone just knocked at our door and demanded that we go vote, escorted by Russian soldiers.

That is what those votes looked like. It is a desperate move by a Russian president who is helpless and who sees military failure ahead. Fortunately, there is hope. In these moments that are so difficult for humanity, that is what we must hold on to. There is hope; Ukrainian troops are gaining ground. The town of Lyman was recently recaptured, as were others. This is a desperate move by a despot who wants to legitimize his reprehensible acts. Let us be prepared for that. It will provide justification for his next move, whatever that move will be.

● (1635)

Nuclear weapons have been used as a threat. Should we be afraid of that? Of course we should be afraid of it, because nuclear war is a war that can never be won and therefore should never be fought. I read that in an article earlier. Unfortunately, I did not note who wrote that, but I admit that I did not come up with it. I thought it was a brilliant sentence and I wanted to share it with everyone here today. We have to do something. We need to increase our support.

Russian authorities—not the Russian people, because we must not make the mistake of generalizing and painting every Russian as a villain—have acted in a spiteful and malicious way, for example by bombing the port of Odessa, blocking Ukraine's grain exports and ultimately attacking global food security.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food heard from a number of Ukrainian elected officials during our study on global food insecurity. They came to fill us in on the situation. I was horrified to learn that Russian bombings targeted grain storage infrastructure. Anyone remotely familiar with military strategy knows that is called scorched earth policy. Weaken people by starving them to death. How are we responding to that?

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The Russian government is threatening to cut off several European countries' energy supply, to slow the flow to a trickle. We all remember the frenzy over the turbine that was supposed to be fixed. Well, it was fixed and sent off, but it was never installed. So much for the big rush. What we have here is a regime that deals in black-mail and intimidation, and we must not give an inch.

We must ensure that all occupied Ukrainian territories are returned to Ukraine. I am including Crimea in that. If there is a lesson to be learned from this war, it is that we allowed things to happen. The annexation of Crimea happened in 2014. I taught high school for 25 years. I taught history and civics. I remember when Crimea was annexed. I talked about it with my students every year. I do not want to scare anyone, but I drew certain parallels, in terms of approach and tactics, with the regimes that gave rise to the Second World War. They start with one territory. There is not too much opposition. It is perfect. They wait a few years, go elsewhere. They find a new excuse. I think we should learn from history.

As we speak, the international community in its entirety is calling for calm. Even the Chinese ambassador called for the borders of every country to be respected. Our Ukrainian friends, I would remind members, participated in developing our land, western Canada in particular. There is also a large Ukrainian community in Quebec. We must not abandon these people. I see a Russian government that is going to try to mobilize Ukrainian civilians in these regions, claiming that they are now Russian territories. It will all be in an effort to conscript them and force them to fight against their brothers and sisters in the rest of Ukraine.

Let us be firm and say “no”.

• (1640)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the member made reference to a very interesting point when he talked about differentiating between the Government of Russia and the people of Russia. My understanding is that there are literally thousands of Russian residents who are wanting to flee Russia. However, given all the propaganda tools that are out there in the hands of the Russian regime, I am still not convinced that the people of Russia have a full understanding of what is actually taking place.

Can the member provide his thoughts on the importance and impact of social media that might actually be at play?

• (1645)

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, I thank the parliamentary secretary for his question. Indeed, Russian citizens are currently trying to flee. It is my understanding that they are even being turned back at some borders. I find that unfortunate because people are never really guilty of their leaders' crimes.

With respect to social media, the propaganda may indeed play a significant role. Unfortunately, Russians do not have access to real and objective information from outside the country. Many media are censored. That is the danger. I have heard horror stories from people in the same family who did not believe one another because

they did not have the same version of the story. It is important to use these media. I do not know if it is possible, but we must do something to give the Russian people access to information. Meanwhile we must keep up the tough stance against this awful regime.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for Berthier—Maskinongé for his very fine speech and his eloquence when speaking about the problems we face as a western country, as we try to help our ally Ukraine and the Ukrainian people face this Russian invasion.

He talked about the issue of information. I would like to hear more from him about accurate information, not the Russian propaganda that abounds on the web and social media in Canada and other countries as well. It is a very serious problem. We need to convince people in our ridings who are confused by what is going on in Ukraine and Russia. They see pictures and do not want to believe what is happening.

In the member's opinion, what is the right answer or the right way to combat the Russian propaganda that is so pervasive on social media?

Mr. Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his question. That is a major issue, a really serious one. I do not really have an answer for him.

I think we need to start by setting an example ourselves. We have to make sure our news sources in Quebec and Canada are well funded. Regional media outlets are dying out, usually for lack of funding. I think the government could do something about that. For example, it could bring in revenue by taxing digital giants. This is a tangential issue, but it has everything to do with quality of information. If we want our population to be well informed 15 years from now, we must take action now.

With respect to Russian citizens, I wonder if we can control Russian servers. Can we counteract censorship in sovereign states? I do not have the expertise to answer that question, unfortunately, but it would definitely be a good thing.

[English]

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in Nanaimo—Ladysmith I am seeing residents coming together to support Ukrainians who are impacted by this horrific Russian war on Ukraine.

I know the member spoke about the coercive Russian tactics being used to hold referendums in Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine. Could the member expand a little on why this referendum cannot have any legitimacy?

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Perron: Mr. Speaker, as we speak, more mass burial sites are being discovered, including mass graves of civilians. Not only were they killed and buried together in a pit, but some of their bodies bear signs of torture, indicating that they were tied up for hours on end.

How can we consider, for even a second, a referendum held by the occupation forces that committed these atrocities?

The Ukrainian people heard their women and children weeping and watched as their men died. That is not acceptable. It is almost a mockery. I feel as though I am in a dream just talking about it. I feel as though it is so surreal that it cannot be happening. Clearly, we must continue to support Ukraine as it defends its territory.

I hope I have adequately answered my colleague's question.

● (1650)

The Deputy Speaker: Order. 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 Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, Housing; the hon. member for Kitchener Centre, Persons with Disabilities; the hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, Taxation.

Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak this afternoon on this very important subject. It is too bad that my colleague has already left the chamber, as I would have liked to congratulate him on his eloquence during the brilliant speech he gave, which was basically off the cuff. I wish I had his wisdom. He often reminds us that he was a teacher in a former life.

I, on the other hand, was in school not so long ago, studying international relations. I was doing a master's degree in international relations when I was elected. To criticize or comment on this situation today makes me feel like a bit of an imposter. I wish I were back in school, with the real international relations experts and analysts who fully understand what is going on and are familiar with all the history behind it.

As elected officials, we have a duty to take a stand on these issues. I am very pleased that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development has brought this report to the House for debate. It is good when a country's government takes a strong position and makes it known internationally. When a committee composed of parliamentarians from all parties unanimously supports the idea of speaking out against a situation, the impact is even stronger and more sustained.

For example, in the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security, of which I am a member, although all parties have quite different views on certain issues, such as gun control, when we come together to defend a common and similar position, it sends a strong message both to Parliament and to the international community.

I am very pleased that the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development is reporting back to us today on this decision and its position against the illegitimate Russian referendums regarding the annexation of Ukrainian territories.

This is a very emotional issue for us all. Like some of my fellow parliamentarians, I welcomed a Ukrainian family to my riding recently. A mother and her two young boys settled in Maria, a small town in the Gaspé, a long way from greater Montreal and other cities. They came here, but their dad stayed in Ukraine to fight the

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Russian forces. They are trying to start a new life here while fleeing the horrific and surreal conditions my colleague described.

We owe it to all these people to take a very strong stand. It is important to emphasize that the government has done just that. Earlier today, during question period, the Minister of Foreign Affairs talked about the situation in Iran. She said that it is a non-partisan issue and that all the parties should support each other and work together to condemn such situations. I think the same applies to the situation in Ukraine. Since day one, we have tried to set partisanship aside and take a stand. That is what we have to keep doing.

I was pleased that the G7 countries strongly condemned this new attempt by Russia to take its aggression even further, in a different way, while pretending to follow a democratic process, when that is not at all the case. As my colleague mentioned, we are very familiar with referendums in Quebec, but this is not the same thing at all. A person or a government cannot hold a referendum on territory that does not belong to it or that it has taken by force. We are talking about two completely different situations.

Like most of my colleagues, I also remember when President Zelenskyy appeared virtually in the House and delivered his speech to us. There was this widespread feeling of solidarity, which we wanted to express as a community, including the broader international community. There was also this great feeling of powerlessness. The government has announced economic sanctions, which is great, but we must always ask ourselves what more we can do.

It is unfortunate that Russia, which has a seat on the UN Security Council, used its veto power to oppose the position that should be taken to denounce this situation.

● (1655)

I want to come back to the fundamental principles that guide the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Security Council. This is something I studied in the past and I think it is important to remember.

The fundamental principle of the United Nations, which is article 1 of the United Nations charter, is the following:

To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;

Countries with a seat on this security council should at the very least be able to respect these principles. We see that Russia has not done so since 2014, when it annexed Crimea. I think it is utterly dishonest to want to take these measures claiming it is being done democratically.

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One by one, the G7 countries took a stand. Most of the other countries on the UN Security Council were in relative agreement with this motion that was to be adopted. Let us not forget, however, that some countries abstained. Indeed, China, Brazil, India, Gabon and others either abstained from the vote or are reluctant to condemn Russia's aggression in Ukraine, unlike almost all other members of the international community.

We wonder what more Canada and its allies could do. Perhaps we should start a conversation with these countries, which could be defence partners and could also condemn the situation. That is something we could do in addition to imposing economic sanctions to allay this sense of powerlessness. We could hold discussions. Unfortunately, we know that there is a limit to diplomacy and that, sadly, some prefer to use force. I do not believe that force must necessarily be met with force. I believe it is still possible to have discussions to achieve our objective even though it may seem difficult in this case.

I would have liked to address a few other issues with respect to the consequences of illegitimate referendums. I see that on the notes prepared for us the word “referendum” is written in quotation marks. Obviously, the legitimacy of these referendums is being called into question.

My colleague who spoke before me talked about high participation rates as well as the very high number of positive results in these referendums. It is quite impressive, but we know that the military came knocking on people's doors to escort them to vote. One can question the legitimacy of the vote and how it was conducted. One can question the way in which people were encouraged or practically forced to go and vote in these referendums.

It is quite ironic to see that Quebec and Canada are trying to combat very low voter turnout rates. They are getting lower and lower with each election. We are trying to make people understand that voting is a right, but also a privilege. Democracy is completely different in other countries. People are forced to express themselves on something they do not agree with.

In conclusion, I was talking to my colleague from La Prairie earlier, and he reminded me about something Napoleon said that I would like to share with the House. He said, “You can do anything with a bayonet except sit on it”. That is more or less what we are seeing. Mr. Putin would sure like to build himself a throne of bayonets, but at the end of the day, he will not be able to sit on it because might does not make right. I think he should review those concepts and write a happy ending for everyone, but we are a long way from that at this point.

• (1700)

Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, who gave an excellent speech, as always.

I would like to ask her how she plans to continue advocating for more assistance for Ukrainian immigrants who want to settle all over Quebec.

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his excellent question. Just last week, I launched an appeal to doctors in eastern Quebec, a part of the region that I represent, to en-

courage them to take part in the Immigration Canada process that would allow them to become accredited doctors to assess the health status of refugees or immigrants arriving here.

I mention that because currently the Ukrainian family that settled in Maria has to go back to the big centres to get a simple medical exam. The problem is that there is no Immigration Canada accredited doctor in the region. The closest one is in Quebec City or Montreal. It costs money and a lot of time on the road for this family, which is struggling to integrate in the Gaspé area.

I think that the government or Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada could make the doctor accreditation process easier. The government could appeal to all the doctors in Quebec or Canada who may want to help with the integration of newcomers or refugees, in this case Ukrainian refugees who already have enough headaches. Making the medical exam process easier could give them a bit of breathing room.

Mr. Tom Kmiec (Calgary Shepard, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member talked about the fact that western countries and Ukraine tried using diplomacy before the war started to try to stop Russia from attacking Ukraine. The Ukrainian government was telling us the whole time that the attack would come, that war would be declared by Vladimir Putin and the oligarchs.

The Russian government is not interested in diplomacy with the west. We have seen its illegitimate referendums. Nevertheless, just after his speech in the capital, President Putin said that he would now be ready to negotiate with the government in Kyiv.

I do not really have a question. I just wanted to point out that throughout the last year, and even since 2014, the Russian government has been almost entirely uninterested in diplomacy in any efforts to find a peaceful solution to the problem between Ukraine and Russia. I think it is important to recognize that we are not dealing with a reasonable person on the other side, and that only Ukrainian military forces can ensure Ukrainian sovereignty.

Ms. Kristina Michaud: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments. I completely agree with him. We are facing a truly difficult situation where we cannot continue having these discussions because the Russian leader will not. He will not have anything to do with them. What we are now seeing is that he is showing what may be his last card, the nuclear option.

We know that we do not want to go there. If we say that diplomacy is not working, that discussions are not working, what can the international community do to support Ukraine, which is the only country that can deploy military force at this time so this does not escalate into an international conflict?

I have no answer to that question. What can we do to prevent that from happening? My colleague was right in saying that Russia showed its intentions right from the start, but sadly, no amount of discussion was able to dissuade it. Faced with a nuclear threat, what can we do as a country? I unfortunately do not have an answer to that question.

• (1705)

[English]

Ms. Heather McPherson (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to stand here today and share with my colleagues some of my thoughts on this report that has come from the foreign affairs committee. I am the New Democratic member on the foreign affairs committee and I am, of course, the critic for foreign affairs and international development.

I am also the vice-chair of the Canada-Ukraine parliamentary friendship association, and it was very important to me when I was elected that I take on that role within that friendship group. I have to say that many people in the House will hear the name “Heather McPherson” and think that it is not particularly Ukrainian, but I am an Edmontonian and as members know, in Edmonton, we are all a little bit Ukrainian. We have an incredibly active and incredibly important diaspora community.

I want to start by saying how proud and thankful I am for the so many members of the Ukrainian community in Edmonton who have opened their arms for Ukrainians and who have worked so hard, tirelessly in fact, to ensure that Ukrainians in Ukraine and those fleeing violence coming to Canada have the support and know that, as Edmontonians, as Albertans and as Canadians, we stand with them. I think we can all be incredibly moved by what we have seen Ukraine endure and what we have seen Ukraine accomplish since that horrible day, February 24, 2022, when Ukraine was invaded by the Russian Federation and by Vladimir Putin.

One other thing I want to say before I get into the meat of my comments is just how proud I was last week to finally realize that I had been banned from Russia. The Russian Federation had finally sanctioned me. As someone who stood many times in the House and said how horrified I was by the actions of the Russian Federation, to be able to stand outside the Russian embassy in Ottawa with colleagues, friends and supporters of Ukraine and receive from them the thanks for my work was one of the best moments of my parliamentary career. There is nothing I am thankful to Vladimir Putin for, but perhaps that is one thing that I am thankful for.

We are here today to denounce the sham referendums and the sham occupation of Ukrainian territory. I have been to Ukraine a number of times. I was part of two delegations, one in 2012 and one in 2019, observing elections within Ukraine. I have been to the region and I have some experience there. I have seen just how hard Ukrainians have worked to build and improve their democracy, and worked with their communities to make sure that people have the right to vote.

It is interesting, because when there are elections in Ukraine, they happen on a Sunday and they are very festive. They are something that I think Canadians could learn from, because people get dressed in their very best clothes and there is a community feeling in going to vote. I remember going to polling booths where

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Ukrainian community members had so much pride in the fact that they were in charge of the voting station and were managing the voting station that they had decorated it with the Ukrainian flag, flowers and whatnot. I know what a real election looks like in Ukraine, and I can tell members that it does not look like Russian soldiers escorting people to the polling booth. That is not what a real election looks like in Ukraine. That is not what democracy looks like anywhere in this world.

When we hear things out of Moscow such that it owns 15% of Ukraine within days, or when we hear things like 87% of Kherson voted yes or 93% voted yes, nobody in the House believes that. Nobody in the world believes that. Of course this is a sham. Of course we must condemn it and call it what it is. This is one of the last-ditch attempts by a very desperate man who is losing a war in Ukraine that he started. It is important that, as parliamentarians, we stand up and condemn what is happening there and that we actually make it very clear that at no point does Canada recognize what Russia is trying to do in annexing these parts of Ukraine. At no point do we accept that Ukraine is anything but the borders that have been identified and are very clear. That is Ukraine. That is not Russia. All parliamentarians should stand with that.

• (1710)

That is what we are talking about today, but I want to talk a little bit more as well about some of the other things that we have heard about recently. I want to talk about the horrific stories that are coming out of these territories. One of the things that I find almost comical is the fact that, out of all the territory that Putin claims to now be Russian, the Ukrainian military has been able to take it over again. It has been able to go and take that territory back, although the Russians do not even seem to know which territory they are talking about. Some articles have come out saying that the Russians do not even know which territory they are claiming to annex.

I want to talk about the things that were found in those communities. I want to talk about the horrific attacks on the Ukrainian people that happened in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine earlier in this war.

I am certainly not going to use a prop today but I want colleagues to know that in my desk I keep a small piece of metal. It is a piece of shrapnel that was given to me by a member of Parliament from Ukraine. It was given to me by a female member of Parliament from Ukraine, who came to Canada and showed me what had flown across her community, the community that her eight-year-old daughter lives in. This piece of metal shrapnel that went across her community and ripped through the bodies of Ukrainian people, I keep in my desk because I need to always be reminded of why we have to continue to stand in solidarity with Ukraine, why we cannot stop supporting Ukraine and why we have to continue to do what we can, whether it is through sanctions, through humanitarian aid or through helping Ukraine continue to win this war. I keep that piece of shrapnel in my desk for that.

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Over the last several weeks we have heard about what has been done to prisoners of the Russian Federation in Ukraine in the cities and towns that have recently been liberated. We have heard about things like mass graves and torture chambers. The Associated Press reports:

The first time the Russian soldiers caught him, they tossed him bound and blindfolded into a trench covered with wooden boards for days on end.

Then they beat him, over and over: Legs, arms, a hammer to the knees, all accompanied by furious diatribes against Ukraine. Before they let him go, they took away his passport and Ukrainian military ID—all he had to prove his existence—and made sure he knew exactly how worthless his life was.

“No one needs you,” the commander taunted. “We can shoot you any time, bury you a half-meter underground and that’s it.”

That brutal encounter was just the start of the torture that this man endured, that so many Ukrainians have endured. There are war crimes that have been perpetrated against children, sexual assaults against children, crimes of humanity and theft of children.

The recent report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine concluded that war crimes had been committed in Ukraine. It reports that:

The Russian Federation’s use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas was a source of immense harm and suffering for civilians. Witnesses provided consistent accounts of ill-treatment and torture carried out during unlawful confinement. The Commission had found that some Russian Federation soldiers committed sexual and gender-based violence crimes, and had further documented cases in which children had been raped, tortured, unlawfully confined, killed and injured in indiscriminate attacks with explosive weapons. The Commission would continue its investigations, making recommendations regarding criminal accountability and other dimensions of accountability.

● (1715)

This is horrifying. It is horrifying for all of us to listen to. It is horrifying to have to say. It is with that in mind that we must continue our support for Ukraine.

I was so proud I was able to move the motion in this House, with the support of every member of the House of Commons, to declare a genocide was being committed against the people of Ukraine. I was so proud on April 27 to be able to bring that motion. I was proud that, on April 4, we were able to have a motion on what happened with those initial and horrific reports coming out of Bucha with the mass graves and the crimes against humanity that were happening there. Again, there was unanimous support in the House.

Even before February 24 when the war began, or I guess we can say “renewed”, I brought forward a motion at the foreign affairs committee to study what was happening in Ukraine because Ukrainians were telling us this was coming. We had people here saying that it was not, that it would be okay and that Putin was just doing exercises in Belarus. We knew better. We knew better at that time, so I brought forward the motion at the foreign affairs committee to examine that.

I do feel, when I stand in this place, that we have the support of all parties to support Ukraine, but there is a moment in time where we need to look at how effective we have been and we need to be able to ask what more Canada needs to do.

The Speaker will not be surprised that I have some concerns about our humanitarian aid. The Government of Canada has committed a dollar figure to help the people of Ukraine, or it has an-

nounced it. The problem is that it has not gone out the door. It has not gone to help Ukrainians. It has not been allocated. It has not been spent. Frankly, it is October, and winter is coming. We need that humanitarian support to get to Ukrainians now. No, scratch that. We needed that support going to Ukrainians months ago. That should have been in place months ago.

One of the things I wonder if the Government of Canada has done is whether it has summoned Russian diplomats like the Europeans are doing. What is the state of this diplomacy in Canada right now? Has the minister spoken to the diplomats? Has the minister asked for this meeting? Has this been moved?

I have deep concerns about our failing diplomatic core in this country. Increasingly, it appears our foreign policy is dictated by whim and trade, and that we do not have a meaningful role to play in the world anymore. I need to know the minister is moving on that.

I want to understand why we still have not ended the waiver for the turbines going back to Russia. I want to understand why we have not stopped the waiver of our sanctions regime. We have now seen sabotage on the Nord Stream 1 and 2. Why are we still, in this House, pretending it is okay to send turbines back to Russia and that it is going to act in good faith and is not weaponizing energy and food? Why is that still happening? This seems like a very low bar to me.

I need to understand how our sanctions regime is working. I have asked many times in this House. I have asked questions during question period. I have asked questions during debate and I have asked questions on the Order Paper. In fact, I was so bothered by the response I received from the questions on the Order Paper I brought in a point of privilege to the Speaker to ask why members of this House, members of this Parliament, cannot get the answers we need on the sanctions regime.

Realistically, right now we have actually seized \$120 million of Russian assets. That is barely the couch on one of those yachts. Where are the rest of the seizures? Where are the rest of the sanctions? Where are we enforcing that? Why can we not get the information about it?

● (1720)

We are seeing the same thing right now with Iran. It is vitally important that the horrific murderers who are committing the crimes in Iran against women are sanctioned and that those sanctions are enforced, but we do not know how well the sanctions are being enforced anywhere in the world, in Ukraine or anywhere. We need to have that information. We need to make sure that we are able to ensure our sanctions are accurate.

I am going to finish by saying that, right now, Ukrainian forces are liberating their country. They are doing things that I do not think very many people around the world imagined they could. Their heroic actions to take back their country, to defend their country, have been nothing short of stupendous, amazing, incredible. We all must be proud of that. We all must be proud of what they have been achieving. More than that, more than standing with them, more than showing our support, we have to be there for Ukraine. We have to be there until the end. We cannot change the channel. We cannot look away. Part of that is making sure that Russia knows that we will never accept the annexation of Ukraine's territory.

Ukraine will win. Ukraine is winning. Canada must stand with Ukraine and with the heroic Ukrainians who are defending their country and defending all of us, defending human rights, international law and democracies around the world.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just want to pick up on the member's comments in regard to human rights, which is important, as we have seen over the last 200-plus days now. We have heard, and there have been documents, so it has been well-established that there were many human rights violations, whether it involved, torture, rape or any of a fairly long list. It is very important that the Russian authorities are held accountable for those violations. Could we get the member's thoughts on that?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, clearly, Canada could play a really important role here. We need to involve the ICC. That needs to be part of this. We need to ensure that we are providing support for forensic reports, so that we are helping Ukraine document the crimes that are happening against humanity.

Of course we need to stop those crimes from happening, but we also need to ensure that justice is done as we go forward, that the International Criminal Court is involved and that we do have the work on forensics. One of the things that we heard at the subcommittee on international human rights was how important it was that we identify not just the remains of Ukrainians but the remains of Russian soldiers who have been left on the ground and who have been left behind. Those soldiers also have mothers. Canada has an important role to play.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I just want to bring to attention comments that the member made on January 31, when Conservatives were putting forth the idea that we should be giving weapons to the Ukrainians, something that had already been put in place back in 2014. The Harper government was going to arm the Ukrainians and that was stopped by the Liberal government.

On January 31 of this year, this member spoke against that and said that we were bringing up all this war talk. I am just wondering what the member's comments are about that in light of what we know today.

• (1725)

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, what we saw in January changed very drastically in February.

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February 24, when the Russian Federation invaded Ukraine, I think we could all agree, changed what was happening on the ground. I would hope that every member in this place recognizes that we must fight for peace as long as there is even a hope that peace is available. We must fight for peace as long as possible to ensure that there is less bloodshed and less violence against children and against civilians.

The Russian Federation made a decision with that invasion and that changed the reality for all us.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I think we all agree on the content of the report and its main recommendation.

That said, I would like us to take this thought process even further. Once we say that we reject these new borders, what is the next step? The Russians will not back down. They are not going to say, "Oh, you're right. Sorry", and go home.

What is the next step? Does my colleague have any suggestions?

[*English*]

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, at the beginning, I think we all thought that in some way we needed to negotiate with Russia. It is very clear that this is not what we need to do right now and that, in fact, the fundamental principle of international law that we need to look at is distinct geographical sovereignty for countries. We have to support Ukraine as Ukrainians do their own work to defend their own borders.

However, there are things we can do. We can help Ukraine with its rebuilding efforts. That is going to be a massive thing that needs to be done. It needs to be done in addition to our other commitments and to international aid, not instead of. We need to be looking at things like demining in Ukraine and how Canada's experts can work on demining.

The member's colleague brought up the idea of UN reform. We need to look at the fact that Russia has a seat on the Security Council and has a veto. How do we fix that? How do we reform the United Nations and other multilateral institutions to ensure that countries have to adhere to the rule of law, to international law and to international human rights law?

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to echo the member's calls around the need to strengthen our sanction regime. I thank her for her incredible work on this. Whether it is turbines or oligarch yachts, the government has not been strong, consistent and transparent.

I also want to mention the incredible work of the local Ukrainian Cultural Centre in my region and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress in Victoria. Many Ukrainians have fled their country and landed in our city. Many organizations have been vital to supporting these individuals and families as they settle here, but these organizations are actually calling for more support from the government.

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The Ukrainians arriving after fleeing Putin's violent war have the same needs as refugees, but they are not given the same supports. I wonder if the member can speak to this.

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague has done so much work for the Ukrainian community in her riding as well, and I am very proud to be in the same caucus as her.

Yes, there is a problem. We have a government announcing that an unlimited number of Ukrainians will be welcomed to Canada, and of course they should be; of course that should be the case. However, we need to make sure that we are providing support once they get here. By not saying they are refugees, they are not able to access the same level of support that other refugees would be able to access. This is compounded a bit because, as I am sure members know, many women came as single parents because the men in their families stayed to fight in Ukraine. Many of them are single parents with children who may have been traumatized by what they have seen.

I was in Poland just this March meeting with people who had fled the violence in Ukraine. I saw how terrified and scared families were. Obviously they are going to require additional supports, so the government can do more. I applaud members of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and the work they have done to support refugees across this country, but they also need support from their government. Much more needs to be done at that level.

• (1730)

Mr. Stephen Ellis (Cumberland—Colchester, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise here in the House today. I just wonder how the speNDP-Liberal coalition feels about the returning of the turbines to Gazprom, especially now that gas is not flowing and it appears that the Russian regime is actually blowing up its own pipelines in light of what is happening. How does that make Canada look on the world stage?

Ms. Heather McPherson: Mr. Speaker, I am a bit perplexed, because I did bring that up in my speech. It was actually my motion at the foreign affairs committee to take on a study of that and have emergency meetings during the summer.

I am appalled that the government has not cancelled the waiver on the turbines. I wrote a letter immediately. I have met many times with the Ukrainian ambassador, many times with the German ambassador and many times with different stakeholders about this particular issue. From my perspective, I cannot comprehend why at this point, when it is so very clear that the Russian Federation is weaponizing energy, the waiver has not been cancelled and why we have not nullified it. There is no way to justify it. I have been outraged about this for some time. I thought I brought that up in my speech, but maybe the member missed it.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to join this debate. I will be sharing my time with the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount.

In 2014, Russia twice invaded Ukraine, first in Crimea and then in eastern Ukraine. After occupying these Ukrainian lands, Russia held sham referendums to try to legitimize the annexation of those territories.

In 2014 and 2015, the world condemned these referendums and refused to recognize the annexation of Crimea, the Donbass and eastern Ukraine. However, in 2014, the world did not do enough. It did not do everything possible to support Ukraine, deter the invasion and deter the annexation. We did not provide Ukraine with military support. We did not impose significant sanctions on Russia and Russia did not face a significant enough cost.

Many people have commented in recent months that if the world had stepped up to do more then and we had supported Ukraine and imposed costs on Russia, then Russia would not have invaded Ukraine on February 24 of this year and we would not have seen what we are seeing today. I agree with them.

Fast-forward to the last week or two, and Russia has run sham referendums in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. It has predetermined the results of these referendums, just as it did in Crimea. Not only that, but Russia resorted to coercive tactics, such as sending armed soldiers and police door to door to collect votes from Ukrainian citizens to secure those very predetermined results.

The reason they are doing this is very transparent. They are desperately trying to legitimize the occupation and annexations of the territories they have seized from Ukraine. What they are also trying to do is weaken international support for Ukraine and limit Ukraine's surging counteroffensives. We have seen what Ukraine has been capable of on the ground militarily over the past number of weeks, and this is exactly what Vladimir Putin is trying to stop. He is trying to legitimize the occupation or annexation of these territories through sham referendums so he can argue that these territories are now Russian territories and that any attempt by the Ukrainians to retake them is an attack on Russia.

These were arguments that worked in 2014 with Crimea. We cannot allow them to work again.

What should we do about it? Well, a few days ago, the House unanimously passed a motion I put forward that talked about what we should do about it. I am proud that I received unanimous support from all members of the House, but also grateful to all members of the House for their support and their unity. In the motion we all passed together, we called for a number of things. We condemned, in the strongest possible terms, these sham referendums. We made it clear that we do not and will never recognize the legitimacy of these referendums. We reaffirmed that Ukraine's territory is that which was recognized at the time of the Budapest memorandum in 1994. It includes Crimea, the Donbass and eastern Ukraine, which Russia illegally invaded in 2014.

In that motion we passed unanimously, we also urged the Government of Canada to "continue to provide additional support to Ukraine until all of Ukraine's territory is once again under the sovereign control of the government of Ukraine". We said the government should do that by "imposing more severe economic sanctions against Russia and providing Ukraine with more military, financial and humanitarian aid."

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The first thing I want to say here is that support for Ukraine is obviously not a partisan issue. It is something that all members of the House support. I think this motion underlines that. This is one of a number of examples.

I think it is also important to make something very clear, and this is not about those in the House, obviously, because we all supported this motion. There are some who might say that these sham referendums change things, that we should somehow reduce our support for Ukraine or heed Putin's warning. To those who say that, I say this: Do not fall into Vladimir Putin's trap. This is exactly what he would want people to do. This is exactly what he did in 2014 and we saw how that turned out. Remember what happened in 2014. We did not support Ukraine enough, and the world did not impose adequate costs on Russia. Vladimir Putin was then emboldened and we see what he has done since February 24.

● (1735)

Let us learn the lessons of 2008 in Georgia and 2014 in Ukraine, and not only maintain our support for Ukraine, but increase it. Let us support the Ukrainian people more. Let us impose even greater costs on Russia. That is what the motion said, and that is what I am confident will work, because it is so important that we signal to Vladimir Putin not only that we symbolically, in words, do not recognize these referendums, but that he will face a cost for continuing to refuse to withdraw from Ukraine.

Canada has taken many steps to support the Ukrainian people in this fight. Canada has provided over \$800 million in military aid and weapons. This includes rockets, howitzers, 20,000 rounds for those howitzers, anti-tank weapons, machine guns, hand grenades and much more.

Another thing that is important to remember about Canada's contribution to what is happening on the ground right now in Ukraine is that Canada, through Operation Unifier, which was launched in 2015, trained over 33,000 Ukrainian soldiers. They were trained by Canadian Armed Forces personnel over the course of years. Those soldiers are now on the front lines. They are the ones taking the fight to the Russians. I think it is really important we remember that. When we see Ukrainian soldiers advancing and the counteroffensives working, and when people comment on the sophistication, the communications ability and some of the skills Ukrainian soldiers have, let us remember that Canada and other countries contributed to that through that training and that support over the course of years. We provided a \$1.25-billion loan to help the Ukrainian government meet urgent financial needs and an additional \$620 million in loans to help Ukraine financially. We have provided close to \$300 million in humanitarian aid and much more, so Canada has taken very significant steps. Canada is one of the leaders in supporting Ukraine, and I think it is important that we acknowledge that.

That said, we have to do more. We have to continue to do more, just as that motion we all passed spoke to. This is not just about the Ukrainian people; this is about all of us. This is a war that affects everyone in Canada, and frankly it is touching people around the world. It is, of course, an existential crisis for Ukrainians, but it is also a humanitarian disaster, and we have an obligation to act. There are 12 million Ukrainian refugees alone, but hundreds of mil-

lions of people around the world are now facing starvation and food shortages, because Russia has cut off food exports from Ukraine. Across the world, at least 400 million people get fed by Ukrainian food every year. That is 400 million people who have not had access until very recently, and even that was a very small amount, so this is causing great harm to hundreds of millions of people around the world. It is a threat to our security and to global security, but it is also one of the key reasons the cost of living is so high.

We spend so much time here in this House talking about affordability, the cost of living, the rising cost of food and the rising cost of fuel and energy. Why are food and energy going up in price so much? The primary reason is Russia's invasion of Ukraine. When we think about all of these consequences, Ukrainians are not just fighting for themselves. That is reason enough to support them, because it is the right thing to do, but they are also fighting for us, our security, our quality of life and our democracy, so we need to continue to fight for them, and we have been fighting for them, as I outlined.

We can and should be very proud of what Canada has done and the leadership we have shown on the international stage, but to me, we need to continue doing more and more until Ukraine has a decisive victory. When I say "decisive victory", I mean that Crimea, Donbass and all the territories Russia has invaded, occupied and tried to legitimize the occupation of throughout these sham referendums are once again under the control of the Government of Ukraine, because anything short of all of Ukraine's territory being part of Ukraine once again is a victory for Russia.

They will destroy and commit genocide. They will have destroyed so much of Ukraine, caused so much harm, threatened the international rules-based order and imposed so many costs to just go back to the 2014 boundaries, so we must ensure Ukraine has a decisive victory and we must do everything possible to support Ukraine until it wins. We must do this, not only because this would be a victory for Ukraine and not only because it is the right thing to do, but because we are all in this fight, so we have to do this until Ukraine wins and we all win.

● (1740)

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for consistently bringing forward the issues related to what is going on in Ukraine.

I want to say in the House that I agree with him that we need to do more, and I was wondering if he could comment on Canada's role in the world right now, because we have this opportunity with our farmers. He is talking about the food shortages. Perhaps we could support our farmers with affordable energy and the nitrogen fertilizer they need to increase their yields. Perhaps we could increase the liquefied natural gas, oil and energy we could provide over there.

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Would he be supportive of Canada's taking leadership roles in those regards, to really help not only Ukrainians, but our other allies in Europe?

Mr. Yvan Baker: Madam Speaker, we should do everything we can to help our allies obtain the energy sources they need and, in fact, I believe we are doing that. During Chancellor Scholz's visit to Canada a number of weeks ago, what became apparent is that Germany's needs, for example, are immediate. It is not the only country that needs energy, but it certainly is the largest consumer of Russian energy at the moment in Europe. It was clear it needed short-term help to get the energy it lost because of Russia shutting off the gas. We are not going to rely on Russia.

Canada is doing that. We are doing that by pumping more gas, which is going into the United States because we do not have export capacity directly to Europe. It is helping the global market obtain more gas, which can then be used. We are also helping Germany with hydrogen and many long-term solutions as well.

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, Canada clearly has as a starting point for helping Ukraine beyond even this situation, and it is cybersecurity. I would like to hear from the member what more we could do.

I have attended a number of different conferences. Ukraine has to deal with a lot of Russian threats, but those are threats that go beyond just Ukraine. I would like to hear more about what Canada's role could be in cybersecurity, not only for right now, but also for the future. One of the attractive elements of rebuilding Ukraine is a strategic investment in cybersecurity for all of us.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Madam Speaker, I think about cybersecurity, and there are many elements that I would love to have a longer discussion with the member about, to be honest.

Briefly, what we need to be doing is shoring up as much as possible our own security so we can protect ourselves from those cyber-threats. Some of that is in government, but some of that is in the private sector as well and working with the private sector to make sure it is protected.

I also think it is important that we work closely with our allies to do that because one thing that has become clear is that we need to unite in standing in the face of imperialism and threats like this. Cybersecurity is just one of those threats, but standing together with our allies and continuing to buffer our protection both in the private sector and the public sector is the way to go.

• (1745)

[Translation]

Mr. Luc Desilets (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his logical, sensible and sensitive speech. My problem is how Canada handles foreign policy. We have not exactly excelled in that department in recent years, unfortunately. The issue here is the illegal annexation of territory. Everyone, government and opposition alike, is against that.

I would like to ask my colleague if he sees a diplomatic solution here. What is done is done. Is there no going back? Can we explore other diplomatic pressure tactics?

Mr. Yvan Baker: Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his important question. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Bloc Québécois members for their support. We disagree on many issues and topics in the House, but on this one, we are of the same mind. I thank them for that.

Getting back to the question, I think we need to work through other diplomatic channels to ensure that Ukraine's territories come back under the Ukrainian government's control. There is not just one solution to the problem, but rather a whole range of things. That is what the world is trying to do. Canada, the United States and European countries are doing that. One positive thing that has come out of all this is working with other countries in a unified way. It is important to—

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. I was trying to give him enough time to wrap up, but we have to move on to resuming debate.

The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount.

[English]

Hon. Marc Garneau (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to follow my colleague from Etobicoke Centre, who is deeply invested in this incredibly important issue and has spoken very eloquently on this in the past.

Let me start by saying that Canada condemns, in the strongest terms, President Putin's illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war against Ukraine, its people and its democratically elected government. With each day that passes, we witness the further devastation caused by his cruel disregard for human life and rejection of international law.

Let me remind everyone that President Putin's war is a clear contravention of article 2, section 4 of the UN Charter. It is also an attack on democracy, freedom and human rights. Any pretense to the contrary was completely discarded by the sham referenda and illegal attempt at annexation that Moscow just organized. Putin is bent on military conquest, pure and simple, a delusional desire for imperial expansion, regardless of the wishes of the Ukrainian people or the human costs. Canada rejects these fictional referenda results and rejects Russia's attempt to annex Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia, just as we continue to reject Russia's attempt to annex Crimea.

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The unfolding humanitarian crisis has brought growing numbers of civilian casualties, damage to civilian infrastructure and evidence of war crimes and other atrocities. With thousands of casualties and millions displaced, this tragedy will only worsen so long as Putin persists in pursuing a path of violence and aggression. Ever since before President Putin's invasion, Canada and the international community have been united. We offered Putin's regime every opportunity to engage in good-faith dialogue over our mutual security concerns. At the same time, we made clear that Canada and our partners would impose consequences and costs in response to any further aggression, and this is what we have done.

Let me be clear. Canada's response has been swift and firm. There must be accountability, and Canada is doing its part. In coordination with our like-minded partners, Canada has imposed a broad range of sanctions and other economic measures that are increasing the pressure on the Putin regime. Our sanction regimes can support numerous objectives, such as facilitating a path to peace or putting an end to impunity for foreign officials and states responsible for atrocities, human rights violations or acts of significant corruption. We are bringing their full weight to bear in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Canada's priority is to hold President Putin and his accomplices, including officials from Belarus, accountable for their actions. We are accomplishing this in close coordination with trusted partners, including the U.S., the U.K., the EU, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Collective action has been key to putting effective and impactful economic measures in place.

Since January 2022, Canada has announced severe and hard-hitting sanctions against over 1,400 individuals and entities in Belarus and Russia under the Special Economic Measures Act. In total, since 2014, we have sanctioned more than 1,800 individuals and entities. We have implemented numerous restrictions in the trade, finance, defence, transport and energy sectors. We have also banned the provision of vital services to key sectors of the Russian economy.

In response to President Putin's unilateral recognition of independence of the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics, two integral regions that belong to Ukraine, the Prime Minister announced our first round of sanctions against all members of the Russian State Duma who voted in support of this action. We also imposed prohibitions on certain transactions and activities in these regions. Following the September 2022 annexation votes, we have extended these measures to the remainder of the Russian-occupied regions and imposed further sanctions, including against the so-called leaders of the puppet regimes Russia has put in place.

● (1750)

Immediately following President Putin's invasion of Ukraine, Canada increased the pressure by sanctioning key members of Putin's inner circle and close associates who also benefited from his regime. Canada also stopped the issuance of new export permit applications and cancelled valid permits for controlled military, strategic and dual-use items to Russia.

As Russia continued its military attack against Ukraine, Canada expanded our sanctions, including sanctioning President Putin himself, his family members and his business, military and political allies. This includes the defence minister, foreign minister and all

members of the Russian Security Council. It also includes Russian oligarchs, financial elites and their family members as well as major Russian energy companies such as Gazprom and Rosneft.

As a result of Belarus's clear complicity in Russia's unacceptable actions, Canada has expanded our sanctions against the Lukashenko regime. To date, Canada has listed 159 individuals and 39 entities under the Belarus regulations.

To limited President Putin's ability to fund his war and Russia's access to the global financial system, we sanctioned core Russian banks and financial institutions, and Canada announced a dealings ban on the Russian central bank, the Russian National Wealth Fund and the Russian Ministry of Finance.

Canada also sanctioned the major Russian banks and worked with our like-minded partners to remove them from the SWIFT payment system. Together with the U.S., U.K., EU and others, we are further isolating Russia economically. This will significantly restrict its ability to send money in and out of the country and effectively pause Russia's major imports and exports. We have also worked together to restrict the export of advanced goods and technology to Russia, which will degrade its long-term capabilities.

We continue to expand this list. Canada has implemented a ban on various Russian petroleum products, including crude oil. We have also prohibited all Russian-owned or registered vessels from entering Canadian waters and docking in our ports. In coordination with several European countries, Canada closed its airspace to Russian and Belarusian aircraft operators.

Last but not least, we removed Russia and Belarus from the most-favoured-nation tariff treatment, effectively imposing a 35% duty on virtually all imports from these two countries.

Canada is united with our partners and allies and we will continue to work in coordination to sanction targets that have the greatest impact on the Russian government. We consult with Ukraine, the G7 and other partners to jointly identify further targets. We are committed to building on existing economic measures for as long as President Putin persists with his unjustifiable war and until a peaceful solution is reached.

We will continue to use every opportunity to press Russia to leave Ukrainian soil. Our actions will undermine the Russian regime's means to finance this senseless war, weaken its military capacity to fight it and further isolate it from international communities.

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Canada will continue to support Ukraine as it defends itself against President Putin's aggression. Sanctions are only one of the tools we are using, but they are an important one and we will continue to use them to maximum effect. The brave people of Ukraine have the right to live in peace and the right to conserve their history, identity, freedoms and democracy.

• (1755)

[Translation]

Mr. Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his speech. We can see the expertise he gained while serving as foreign affairs minister.

I would like his thoughts on what the Canadian government has done, or not done, with respect to welcoming refugees.

For example, one of the measures on the table is the idea of considering these people not as refugees, but as something along the lines of foreign workers.

A medical exam is required, but some of these people currently do not have an income. Of course they get help from the government, but they arrive here and have to get a medical exam. These exams are not available in regions like Abitibi—Témiscamingue, so they have to drive six to eight hours away.

Is that fair? Could the government have thought about that and about how to welcome people from other countries properly, especially in a tense climate such as a war?

Hon. Marc Garneau: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the question.

I know that Canada is in the process of accepting a large number of refugees from Ukraine and rightly so. I also know that there is a process that must be followed and that sometimes there are challenges associated with that process.

We have a limited number of resources to do the work that is needed to welcome refugees. We can do better, and we are trying, but problems arise sometimes, as my colleague just mentioned.

[English]

Mr. Brian Masse (Windsor West, NDP): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, who was formerly the foreign affairs minister and the transport minister, for his thoughtful intervention.

If he feels the sanctions are working the way they should be, I would like to ask him if there are lessons to be learned about sanctions for other despots and other regimes after going through this. The world has moved to put sanctions on Russia, but there have been other circumstances in the past where they could have been more robust, especially in the financial sector. I am really concerned about a number of different loopholes, about tax havens and about a series of options that enable billionaires and oligarchs, not only in Russia but in general.

I am wondering what his thoughts are on lessons learned and on perhaps putting more muscle against those types of systems, which are working against people across the globe.

Hon. Marc Garneau: Madam Speaker, it is a work in progress. Imposing sanctions is something that Canada has done very heavily in the case of Russia and Belarus. Yes, in some cases there are at-

tempts to circumvent those sanctions, but as time goes on, I believe that those who are imposing sanctions learn about how to close loopholes.

With respect to the first part of this question, sanctions are an effective tool. We should be considering them for other countries as well, as we have done. For example, we have sanctions in Iran and have sanctions in certain other countries. I believe they are a powerful tool. They take a while to act, and it is always better, of course, if there is a concerted effort by many countries to focus on a particular bad player. However, in my opinion, sanctions do have a very effective result in the long run.

• (1800)

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his service as a former member of the Canadian Armed Forces and the Canadian Space Agency, and of course for the work he did as the former minister of foreign affairs in standing up for Ukraine and cleaning up the mess that was left by his predecessor, Stéphane Dion.

I want to ask the hon. member about NATO membership. I think the secret to all of this is one of the greatest aspirations Ukraine has right now, which is to become a member of NATO. Does he have any brief comments on the path toward completing its membership within the NATO family?

Hon. Marc Garneau: Madam Speaker, of course, I am not the foreign affairs minister at this point. However, the current foreign affairs minister has shown herself to be open to the possibility of Ukraine becoming a NATO member. There is a process, as my colleague will know. It was accelerated recently in the cases of Finland and Sweden, but there is a process through which membership becomes possible. Certainly, the foreign affairs minister of Canada has indicated an openness to considering that.

Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for South Surrey—White Rock, the whip for the official opposition.

I am honoured to be able to participate in the debate today and denounce the very crass move by the Russian Federation and President Vladimir Putin to annex both Donetsk and Luhansk, which have been at war with Russia for the last several years, and also now moving to annex Kherson and Zaporizhzhia.

I want to say at the onset that Canada, Canadians and all of us here as parliamentarians will never accept Russia's claim to one square inch of Ukrainian territory, and that does not just mean Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. It also includes Crimea.

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Crimea will always be Ukraine, and as Ukrainian forces are currently demonstrating in the war against the Russian Federation, in this illegal, tyrannical invasion by Putin and his proxies, they will continue to stand against the Russians and continue to make gains in winning this war. We know that the Ukrainian forces have been able to do this because of the tenacity, the patriotism and the valour of the people of Ukraine who are serving in the armed forces, in their militias, and are fighting to protect their country as well as their citizens. I know that each and every one of us here are so impressed with what they have been able to accomplish.

Ukraine will never accept the sham referendums, which were done at gunpoint. This goes beyond coercion. This is about military intervention going door to door forcing, at gunpoint, the people of the oblasts of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia to vote for the annexation. This is something that can never stand the test of time and must be denounced by every democratic nation around the world.

I am glad that we are here adding our voices to this debate to make sure that the international community knows clearly where Canada stands, more importantly, that the people of Ukraine understand that we are standing with them, and that the Russian Federation and those who are sitting in the embassy right now in Ottawa watching this debate know that we will never accept any of this tyrannical, dictatorial way that Russia has invaded Ukraine and tried to steal Ukrainian territory.

Here we are in 2022 and we are playing out old war games. A lot of people like to compare this to World War II or beyond, but it is unbelievable that it is happening in our lifetime.

The Russian forces have been put on their back heel. They have lost, it is estimated, over 100,000 soldiers already. They have lost materiel, tanks, artillery and supply chains because of the tenacity and the skill of the Ukrainian armed services. A lot of what we did when we were in government under Stephen Harper and what has been carried on with the current government was, over the last eight years, started with Operation Unifier. In training Ukrainian soldiers up to NATO standards, along with our partners in the United States, the United Kingdom, Poland, Australia and others, we have made these professional soldiers into a formidable force going up against what was thought to be one of the great superpowers in the world. They have proven the world wrong in what Putin and his war machine was going to do to Ukraine.

There is no question that we have witnessed war crimes. There is no question that there is a genocide being perpetrated upon the people of Ukraine, and that is why we have to continue to stand with Ukraine. We can never let down our guard on how the Russian Federation is behaving in the global sphere, especially within their spheres of influence in former Soviet states. That is why our role in NATO, our role in supporting Ukraine, can never weaken.

The Ukrainian forces have also been able to get a lot of materiel from Canada and other nations. It is because they now have a lot of modern equipment, as well as the planes and tanks they had in service and the equipment they already had in place, that they have been able to take the fight to Russia.

• (1805)

However, every time we hear President Zelenskyy, he asks us to send more, and we can send more. I know we have already sent over half a billion dollars' worth of materiel, including of lethal weapons and non-lethal weapons and of RADARSAT images that we have, which we used to provide under Stephen Harper and the Conservative government and which the Liberals cancelled but then reinstated after the war broke out on February 24.

As a lot of nations are starting to see their own supplies dwindle, Canada has to step up and do more. As we hear from President Zelenskyy and from the minister of defence in Ukraine, they are asking the west to send more supplies, including more artillery shells as they are running out and more bullets as they are running out. They need more sniper rifles. Guess what we build in Canada, right in Winnipeg? We build sniper rifles at PGW Defence. They are already starting to build more sniper rifles for Ukraine. Some of those are sitting there, unable to move, because the government will not buy them and send them. Why is the government not buying them? They are there. It is a small chunk of change when looking at the big scheme of things. The Ukrainian forces are standing on the front line, stopping these Russian marauders, these barbarians, from coming further into Europe and destabilizing the whole world rule of law that we have come to accept as the norm. We need to send them more.

They are asking for more armoured personnel carriers. Guess what we have in Canada? I just asked a question on the Order Paper about this: How many LAVs do we have available that we might be able to have in service that we can send to Ukraine? We are about to retire our entire fleet of armoured vehicles. The new Super Bisons that are to replace them are already built and sitting on a parking lot in London, Ontario, at GDLS. They just need to be certified by National Defence.

I know that the 39 LAVs that were sent or are in the process of being sent to Ukraine are actually coming out of that inventory, and I thank the government for sending them. Let us make sure they are equipped the same way that we equip our LAVs here in Canada for fighting in places like Afghanistan, as we did in the past. Let us make sure they have the 25-millimetre machine guns on them and the heavy armoured plating to withstand IEDs as well as artillery shelling. Let us keep and protect as many Ukrainian soldiers as possible, as they are in this fight against these barbarians out of Russia.

The government is saying it cannot do more. I asked a question on the Order Paper, which the parliamentary secretary responded to in the last couple of weeks. It was Question No. 705. They said that currently, in Canada, the older LAVs that we used in Afghanistan are still in service. There are 149 LAV II Coyotes and 140 M113s, which are the tracked LAVs and also the armoured personnel carriers that both the United States and Australia have now donated to Ukraine, so the Ukrainians already know how to operate these tracked LAVs. We can move these M113s over at any point in time. They can jump in and go. There are also 196 LAV II Bisons.

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The Coyotes, the Bisons and the M113s are all sitting here. It is a great inventory and all about to be replaced with brand new Super Bisons, the LAV 6s, coming out of GDLS in London, Ontario. Why are we not taking these now and getting them over to Ukraine as they have Russia on the back heel, retreating away from territory? Why are we not making sure they can win this war? The only way this ends well is if Ukraine wins this war. We have to push Russia out of every inch of the country, and we know that we need to also add to that.

I have been calling on the government since this war broke out in February to send more of our medical hospitals. We have Role 3 hospitals in the Canadian Armed Forces. For the COVID-19 pandemic, the government purchased another dozen mobile hospitals, which are still sitting in containers. We should be shipping them over there to make sure we have triage capability for the soldiers who are getting injured on the front lines. The most critical time is to get them into the hands of a doctor and a medic in a good facility, who can save lives after soldiers have been traumatized through very bad battle wounds.

Let us continue to support Ukraine. Let us make sure Ukrainians get the materiel they have asked for and the defensive weapons they need, and that we continue to stand together to make sure Ukraine is victorious.

• (1810)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is important to recognize that Canada is very much working with the allied countries. It is providing lethal weapons and the LAVs the member was talking about, and it is not being done in absolute isolation.

We have to take into consideration what is happening with our allies and their contributions to Ukraine along with Canada's own needs. There are individuals who may be at a higher pay grade than the member opposite and myself who have to be held accountable for what Canada can actually contribute day in and day out, going forward.

When doing a comparison with the allied forces, how important it is that Canada work with the allied forces to ensure that we continue to support Ukraine where it needs that support to the best of Canada's ability?

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, the member for Winnipeg North and I know all too well that there are definitely things that we can do in Canada and things that we cannot. I am speaking to the things that we can do to supplement what our allies have already done for Ukraine. They are under pressure as well and depleting their own stocks, especially in the United States and the U.K. Nobody has done more for Ukraine than the United States, the United Kingdom and Poland have.

We can continue to say that we are working in a coalition in support of Ukraine, but let us not forget that we are one of Ukraine's biggest friends. In Winnipeg, as we said, we have the sniper rifles we should be building and then sending to Ukraine, paid for by the Government of Canada.

We also have Peerless Garments in Winnipeg. What does it build? It builds uniforms and winter kit. Winter is coming, and Ukraine is asking for more winter gear. We should be sending that as well.

[Translation]

Mrs. Julie Vignola (Beauport—Limoilou, BQ): Madam Speaker, the annexation of Crimea and the last four elections, all of which were illegal, are causing other countries, other areas surrounding Russia and other places that also once “belonged” to the U.S.S.R. to fear the worst.

What is being done and what should be done to be more proactive and prevent these areas from also falling to Russian annexation?

• (1815)

[English]

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, I agree with the member that more needs to be done, especially on the diplomatic front. I am always worried about some of those eastern European countries, former members of the Soviet Union, that are not members of NATO. They do not have the luxury of an attack on one being an attack on all. Article 5 does not apply to places such as Moldova and Georgia. I have already seen nefarious actions from Russian players, whether from the state itself or individuals who continue to undermine their democracies and economies.

We need to continue to stand with those countries and find ways to strengthen them, knowing that right now the west is spread pretty thin in trying to deal with the Russian threat as well as what is going on in the South China Sea. We will have to continue to work collaboratively to find ways to support all member countries. Right now, the best thing we can do is defeat Russia in Ukraine. Then it would not be that big of a threat to all the rest of the nations in the region.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Madam Speaker, this is my first opportunity to enter into this debate having listened to it all afternoon. I want to thank the hon. member for Selkirk—Interlake—Eastman and many members of this place, such as the member for Wellington—Halton Hills and the member for Etobicoke North. We heard many strong denunciations. The member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Westmount spoke too. We, here, are quite united in condemning what Putin has done.

There seems to be some uncertainty and cautions are being expressed about who committed the sabotage under the Baltic Sea in three separate places of the Nord Stream pipeline, which led to methane releases.

Does the hon. member have any conclusive areas to point us to in explaining that sabotage?

Mr. James Bezan: Madam Speaker, there is no evidence yet to determine who did it. There are only a few countries that have the capabilities to fire upon a pipeline that deep in the sea. As the member said, it was in three places.

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It would not surprise me if it was a false flag operation done by Russia itself. It has already rejected the turbines that Canada erroneously provided back to Gazprom and would have been able to pump more natural gas from Russia into Germany and the rest of Europe. I would not be surprised if Vladimir Putin, who is famous for doing false flag operations, actually orchestrated this one as well.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Madam Speaker, I will begin my remarks with a message for Vladimir Putin. It is the same message that the Right Hon. Stephen Harper delivered when he met with Mr. Putin at the G20 in November 2004, following the annexation of Crimea. The message is this: “You need to get out of Ukraine.”

At the time, Vladimir Putin denied the presence of Russia in Crimea. Now, almost eight years later, there certainly can be no denial. Canada did not buy his lies then, and in the wake of sham referendums last week, we do not buy them now.

I want to thank the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development for their fourth report. It is a brief report but carries great significance. It reads as follows:

That the committee condemns any attempts to hold referendums in Russian-occupied parts of Ukraine; any such referendums have no legitimacy, the committee maintains its belief that Ukrainian national boundaries recognized at the time of the Budapest Memorandum remain Ukraine’s national boundaries today, and the committee report this motion to the House.

I fully endorse the report from the committee and call upon every member of the House to do the same. We must send a strong and clear message from the Canadian House of Commons that Russian aggression in Ukraine is not acceptable. We must be unified in condemning the sham referendums held by Russia in the illegally occupied regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia.

For our part, Conservatives will not now nor ever recognize these regions as Russian territory. Rather, these referendums have only served to redouble our commitment to Ukraine sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. It should be noted that these referendums took place amid a collapsing western front as Ukrainians continue the brave defence of their homeland once again.

However, the Russians are doubling down and are sticking to their dangerous military doctrine, namely the doctrine to escalate to de-escalate. The Russians have already raised the stakes by threatening the use of nuclear weapons should they be attacked in these occupied regions. These threats are not acceptable. The world has known the horrors of nuclear warfare and must not be subjected to it ever again. NATO has indicated that conventional forces will be used in response to such an attack in Ukraine.

The Putin regime is even targeting its own civilians by sharpening repression at home, including conscription of minority communities. This sounds a lot like actions I learned about in Soviet studies courses during my undergraduate time. This territorial grab harkens back to, pick one, the Soviet days or the Russian imperial days.

I have already been banned from Russia, something I wear as a badge of honour, so I will speak freely. The destruction that Vladimir Putin has inflicted upon Ukraine is nothing short of geno-

cide. The horrific scenes of what Russia has left behind as Ukraine forces advance are nothing short of chilling.

I recall bringing my father-in-law, a man of Ukrainian descent, to the Human Rights Museum in Winnipeg. I vividly remember the look on his face when he saw the statue of the starving child, representing the millions who starved because of Joseph Stalin, the dictator who engineered a food shortage in Soviet Ukraine in the 1930s. His goal, like Vladimir Putin’s, was to destroy Ukrainian ambitions for independence and ensure Ukrainian subservience. As a result, millions of Ukrainians experienced desperate hunger and died. Today we are witnessing the same aggression we saw from Stalin during the Holodomor, and it must be blunted.

Russia intends on using the so-called referendum results as justification for further aggression. They would have the world believe that they are defending what is theirs. However, Russia is the aggressor; Ukraine is the defender.

Canada will always stand against dictatorial aggressors and stand with those defending themselves. Canada must do more to support Ukraine. In the short term, we must ensure that Ukraine is well armed and has the weapons it needs to defend itself. President Zelenskyy has asked for more arms, and Canada should be a reliable partner.

● (1820)

We need to help Europe isolate Russia by supplying them with Canadian energy. We also need to remove our own domestic barriers to help Europe become energy independent from Russia. We should replace Russian oil and gas with a Canadian product that is produced with the highest environmental standards and respect for human rights.

The Prime Minister violated his own sanctions against Putin by sending back a turbine so that the Russians could continue to pump gas into Germany, so while the Liberals are against pipelines in Canada, they are in favour of maintaining the turbines for Russian pipelines that fund Putin’s war. Meanwhile, we have 1,300 trillion cubic feet of natural gas that could be used to free Europe from its dependency on Putin. Plus, we have the ability to produce it cleaner than anywhere else in the world. We should use our resources to help our security partners in Europe.

We should also ensure that our own national security is fortified. Russia’s extraterritorial target right now is Ukraine. What will Canada do when Russian turns its sights even further onto our Arctic and puts its 40 polar icebreakers against our one? Russia is aware that Canada has let its northern warning systems lapse, and NORAD modernization has to be elevated to urgent status, with the funds necessary to combat and detect modern warfare tactics and equipment.

Routine Proceedings

Canada has chronically underfunded NATO, something that should be corrected immediately. We are well below the 2% commitment made years ago, and repeated currently. This is another case of too much talk and not enough action. European countries such as Germany, Sweden and Finland have moved swiftly to deal with present threats, and Canada needs to do likewise. We need to do likewise now.

Only now that Ukraine, especially its eastern oblasts, and parts of Europe are under threat is Canada starting to take its funding commitments seriously. These funding commitments mean better military equipment for our armed forces and mean helping with our flailing recruitment and retention. These funding commitments mean that Canada can continue to be counted on for the security of our own citizens as well as internationally. Right now, our allies are questioning our commitments and abilities. The Liberal government must get to work on these priorities right away. The path to greater support is clear. The only thing lacking is willingness.

Although the government's foreign affairs minister has stated that Canada is just a middle power that is good at "convening", Canadians know that we are also proud and fierce fighters, trainers and peacekeepers. We have shown our mettle internationally since Confederation, particularly during the last century when we were called up to go above and beyond. Today, many Ukrainians fighting for their country and their families credit the Canadian Armed Forces for the calibre of critical military training they learned under Operation Unifier.

History will tell a very different story about Vladimir Putin than the one he tells himself. His legacy is one of lies, destruction, genocide and suffering. The world is uniting against him in a way not seen in a generation, demanding that he must withdraw from Ukraine and pay for his crimes. In the meantime, the House will condemn the sham referendums in Ukraine and give voice to those suffering under Putin's aggression.

Slava Ukraini.

• (1825)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have been listening very closely to the debate today on this critically important issue of the concurrence motion coming from the standing committee. To be very clear, the Government of Canada has been, in every way, very supportive in working with our allied countries and doing whatever we can to support Ukraine during these very difficult and trying times.

I do not want to underestimate the importance of what we are witnessing overseas. It is very horrific. Ukraine is really paying a price. However, it is demonstrating to the world that through its heroes, it has been able to fight back against Russia. In good part, providing Canadian resources, financial and others, through programs such as Operation Unifier has made a difference. Other allied countries have done likewise, particularly the United States.

Would the hon. member not agree that the coalition, the solidarity for Ukraine around the world and the support for our Ukrainian heroes fighting in the war have ultimately turned it around so that

there is hope we will, in fact, be able to overcome it and that it is only a question of time?

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Speaker, I absolutely agree that it is the coalition of the willing coming together and standing united against Russia's aggression that is helping Ukraine do what it is doing, but we can never underscore enough the bravery, the commitment and the heart of the Ukrainian people who are fighting, as I said, for their homeland and their families. We should be doing whatever we possibly can.

My colleague mentioned more medical equipment and facilities. There is more that we can do. When I met with Ukrainian members of Parliament, they know what we can do and they are asking us to do even more.

[Translation]

Ms. Andréanne Larouche (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for her speech. This debate is important because of the risk this situation involves. I will make three comments. My colleague can respond to any of them.

The current threat is not a reason to abandon the fight against climate change. Those are not my words but the words of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

Then my colleague talked about her experience in her Soviet studies courses. When I was younger, I studied the Chernobyl accident and its effects. The risks of the nuclear threat are not to be trifled with.

Finally, I will conclude by reminding her of the importance of the coalition, as well as the importance of tackling disinformation, the kind of rhetoric that circulates, particularly in Russia, against the west. This kind of rhetoric is dangerous. As a former journalism student, I am particularly concerned about what is coming out in the media and the messaging coming from President Putin.

• (1830)

[English]

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Speaker, we have lots of urgent issues facing our world and what we are talking about tonight is the threat of Russia against Ukraine, the genocide that is happening there, the cruelty and aggression that Russia has adopted. For Ukrainian people, it is about what they need right now. They need to win this war. They cannot lose this war for themselves or for all western democracies. They must win it, and we must do everything we can to make sure that happens.

Ms. Lisa Marie Barron (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP): Madam Speaker, as many Ukrainians are fleeing this Russian war and entering Canada, so many in my riding of Nanaimo—Ladysmith are welcoming Ukrainians with open arms. Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society is one such organization that is offering so many supports for those entering Canada.

I am wondering if the member could share her thoughts on the importance of wraparound services and supports for Ukrainians entering Canada, so that they not only have barrier-free access to Canada for safety but also have the supports they need once they are here.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Speaker, I agree that we should be doing everything we can to support Ukrainians who have come to Canada. There are many of them, but there could be more. Most of them do not want to stay in Canada, as much as they feel welcome here. They want to go home and have a peaceful country to rebuild and live in again.

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to join in this debate today to condemn the referendums that have been held in the occupied territories of Ukraine.

One of the things I want to get on the record is about natural gas or, as we call it, the “freedom energy” that Canada can provide to the world. We have seen over the years how the Liberal government has stood in the way of the production of Canadian natural resources and the export of natural gas around the world, the export of our freedom energy, as it were. Now we see the impacts of that when it comes to Europe, with its dependence on Russian gas and its somewhat hampered ability to provide aid to Ukraine because the Russians hold them ransom with natural gas.

Also, there is the fact that the sale of natural gas funds the war. The sale of natural gas funds the Russian war machine. As Russian energy is sold around the world, that money comes back to Russia and that is what is allowing the Russians to maintain their war against Ukraine. That is what I wanted to get on the record here today: the fact that Russia is the aggressor in this instance and that Russia needs revenues in order to be able to maintain this war.

I come from a part of the country that is well endowed with natural gas. I remember that before I was elected, in 2013 or 2014, Canada was talking about LNG. There was big support for LNG on both ends of the country. We could have been a first mover in that, and we could have led the world in that technology. We would have been able to provide both Europe and Asia with LNG. Unfortunately, due to government inaction, we have been unable to approve these projects and we have been unable to provide the world with the freedom energy that comes from the promised land, as I like to call it, in northern Alberta.

Here we are today. We heard from the member for Etobicoke Centre about how Ukrainians feed 400 million people in the world, and that food is not getting to the rest of the world at this time. Canada has the opportunity to step up and provide more food to the world, but at the very time when the world is looking for more food, the Liberal government is talking about reducing the use of fertilizer in this country. Do members know what happens when we reduce the use of fertilizer? We lose food production.

The use of fertilizer multiplies our food production by a factor of about three, so if we took away all the fertilizer we use, we would only get a third of the food production in this country. A warning to the world, in terms of the use of fertilizer, is the country of Sri Lanka. It has abolished the use of fertilizer and has basically destroyed

its economy and starved its own people, so I would recommend that Canada does not go down that way.

We can feed the world, and we can provide it with the freedom energy it needs.

• (1835)

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings at this time and put forthwith the question on the motion now before the House.

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.

The hon. member for South Surrey—White Rock.

[*English*]

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Speaker, I request a recorded division.

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): Pursuant to an order made on Thursday, June 23, the division stands deferred until Tuesday, October 4, at the expiry of the time provided for Oral Questions.

[*Translation*]

The House will now resume with the remaining business under Routine Proceedings.

* * *

[*English*]

PETITIONS

MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to present two petitions.

The first petition is e-3932, which calls on the government to address period poverty and to address the barriers vulnerable people in Canada have in accessing menstrual necessities and products. This petition calls for funding to be provided to provinces to administer free access to menstrual necessities and to ensure the provinces provide equal and accessible services for menstrual necessities.

I am proud to table this petition in the House.

GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME

Ms. Leah Gazan (Winnipeg Centre, NDP): Madam Speaker, the second petition is on a guaranteed livable income.

This petition, e-3987, calls for the federal government to begin negotiations with the Government of P.E.I. to develop and implement a guaranteed livable income in P.E.I. and ensure that all federal transfers that support current provincially funded services and programs remain in place during these negotiations.

I am proud to table it in the House.

Adjournment Proceedings

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have not had a chance to table this petition since last spring when constituents in my riding of Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon were pushing the government in good faith to amend its air transport agreement with the Government of India to allow for direct flights from British Columbia to Amritsar in the Punjab. The petitioners are requesting this direct flight because it makes economic and cultural sense, and people want to have more flight options.

I would encourage government members to look very closely at this petition. The request might just fit into its new India strategy moving forward.

FIREARMS

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, I have a number of petitions to present today.

The first petition I am rising to present is a petition that proposes to support the health and safety of Canadian firearms owners.

The petitioners recognize the importance of owning firearms and are concerned about the impacts of hearing loss caused by the noise level of firearms and the need for noise reduction. These petitioners acknowledge that sound moderators are the only universally accepted, recognized health and safety device, but they are criminally prohibited in Canada. Moreover, the majority of G7 countries have recognized the health and safety benefits of sound moderators, allowing them for hunting, sports shooting and reducing noise pollution.

The petitioners are calling on the government to allow firearms owners the option to purchase and use sound moderators for all legal and sports shooting activities.

• (1840)

CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, the second petition I have to present comes from Canadians across the country who are concerned about the Liberal Party's platform in 2021 that promised to deny charitable status to organizations that disagree with the Liberal Party on its views around abortion. The petitioners are concerned that this would jeopardize the charitable status of hospitals, houses of worship, schools, homeless shelters and other charitable organizations that do not agree with the Liberal Party on this matter.

Many Canadians depend on the benefits that these charities provide, and the government has previously used a values test to discriminate against applicants of the Canada summer jobs program. As such, these people are calling on the Government of Canada to protect and preserve the application of charitable status rules free from discrimination and without imposing another values test on charitable status. They also ask for an affirmation of the Canadian rights to freedom of expression.

NORTHERN RESIDENTS TAX DEDUCTION

Mr. Arnold Viersen (Peace River—Westlock, CPC): Madam Speaker, the third petition comes from folks who live in the towns

of Fox Creek and Swan Hills, which are rural and remote communities in northern Alberta.

The petitioners are calling for an extension of the intermediate prescribed zone for the northern living allowance. Currently, it is an arbitrary line that runs across northern Alberta, and neither Fox Creek nor Swan Hills fall into this area. The petitioners are calling on the government to recognize that they live in remote communities and for the residents of these two communities to be allowed to claim the residency for the intermediate area.

ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

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

[English]

HOUSING

Mr. Brad Vis (Mission—Matsqui—Fraser Canyon, CPC): Madam Speaker, at the beginning of May I had the opportunity to ask the Minister of Housing what the government was planning to do about the housing crisis, which has only worsened since the spring.

It is now October, and we still have yet to hear of any concrete plans about what the government is doing or when it will present real results to British Columbians and all Canadians who are struggling with critical housing needs.

According to the Fraser Valley Current, the city of Abbotsford alone is seeing a drastic decline in the number of new homes being constructed. In the last 12 months, just 670 new homes have begun construction, compared to 1,162 in the previous year. Multi-family projects, I might add, are experiencing the biggest decline.

A simple fact is that available housing supply is not meeting the needs of our communities. In fact, CMHC reports that in the month of August 2022, housing starts for the entire province of British Columbia were a meagre 3,817. On top of that, the average price for a home is still over \$900,000, at \$918,378. Young families simply cannot afford to live in my province right now.

In addition, across Canada, year over year, one-bedroom apartment rents were up by double-digit amounts in August in over half the markets tracked by rentals.ca. In Vancouver, it is not uncommon to see a one-bedroom or studio apartment going for more than \$2,000 a month. It is just unattainable for so many people.

As we stand here in the House of Commons today, it was just over a year ago that we had a federal election, when all the respective parties put forward their plans on housing. Let us look back at some of the things the Liberal government said it would do.

The Liberals' first promise was to reduce monthly mortgage payments when people needed it the most. I cannot think of a time in the history of Canada, except for maybe the late 70s and early 80s, when mortgage payments for many people on a variable rate mortgage have increased as much as they have in the last few months.

This summer I was with a family friend who has a variable rate mortgage. She is a single mother and she said she could not take much more if her mortgage payment went up another \$500 or \$600, which it has. She said that the Bank of Canada said we were not going to see interest rate hikes like we have seen, and wanted to know why the Bank of Canada and the Government of Canada told her that the low interest rates were going to stay where they were. She had bought a variable rate mortgage with that information in mind, and she had been failed.

One of the second promises the Liberals made was that they were going to help renters become owners. Inflation is crippling people. I filled up my car with gas last night before driving to the airport, and I paid \$2.23 a litre. In many parts of metro Vancouver, it is 10¢ to 15¢ higher than that right now. The cost of groceries, home heating, Fortis and Telus bills, everything continues to go up. The government's promise to help renters become owners has failed, because they cannot save any money. It is so hard.

A third promise the Liberals made last year was to end chronic homelessness or reduce it by 50% by 2027. They have failed on that, too.

Finally, there was the housing accelerator fund. What are the Liberals doing to help communities actually reduce red tape?

• (1845)

[Translation]

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion (Housing), Lib.): Madam Speaker, the government recognizes the pressures faced by Canadians with the current housing market. We recognize that home ownership is out of reach for far too many Canadians. That is why we made housing a cornerstone of our last budget. The government presented the most ambitious plan that Canada has ever had to increase the supply of housing and make it more accessible for everyone in the country.

My colleague dismisses this government's past and present housing efforts, but his constituents may not. Twenty families from the Cook's Ferry Indian Band and the Leq'á:mel and Słatsin First Nations have housing as a result of the rapid housing initiative, and some 1,000 other units and beds have become available in this riding alone with federal funding. These success stories are happening in ridings across the country.

This government is proud of the efforts it has made to date and we are committed to doing even more. Our plan includes many provisions that will help people who are trying to get into the housing market for the first time. These provisions include the extension and expansion of the first-time home buyer incentive.

First-time homebuyers can also take advantage of a new tax-free savings account. This homebuyer incentive will help them save up to \$40,000 for the purchase of their first home. We have also dou-

bled the first-time homebuyers' tax credit to \$10,000, providing up to \$1,500 in direct support to homebuyers.

One of the drivers of rising house prices is simply that supply is not keeping pace with demand. That is why we have increased funding in our budget to double residential construction over the next decade. To that end, we will invest \$4 billion to create a new fund to accelerate housing construction with the goal of building 100,000 net new units within five years. This fund and other related measures will help provinces, territories and municipalities build more housing faster.

We will also accelerate the construction of housing by providing \$2.9 billion in funding through the national housing co-investment fund. This will enable us to support the creation of up to 4,300 units and facilitate the repair of up to 17,800 units for the people who need them most in this country.

Our government made housing a priority. As soon as we took office, we realized the extent of the impending crisis. During this time, we have brought in a wide range of strategic measures, including the first-ever national housing strategy.

These strategies include the first-time homebuyer incentive as well as other successful programs, such as the rapid housing initiative. Our budget provides \$1.5 billion over two years to extend this very successful program, which constantly exceeded its affordable housing construction targets.

Far too many people in this country struggle to find safe and affordable housing. Although the government has already taken excellent measures that we can describe as historic to help these people, we know that we still have a lot of work to do. I would invite my colleague and all opposition members to support the measures we will be presenting over the coming weeks and months.

• (1850)

[English]

Mr. Brad Vis: Madam Speaker, the Government of Canada needs to separate its rhetoric from reality when it comes to housing. We do not want to hear about announcements or committed funds.

I am going to give the parliamentary secretary an opportunity to answer a straightforward question tonight. She talked about the housing accelerator fund that plans on creating 100,000 net new homes by fiscal year 2024-25 by changing the systems that are preventing more housing from being built. How many homes have been built under that program?

*Adjournment Proceedings**[Translation]*

Ms. Soraya Martinez Ferrada: Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. I would like to remind him that he himself voted against this measure, which was in our most recent budget. I hope he will now be able to support initiatives like the one-time \$500 top-up that I hope we will pass soon.

All the measures that were recently announced in the budget will be implemented soon. Thanks to the new national housing strategy that my colleague is very familiar with, we have invested almost \$29 billion to help people and create more than 380,000 housing units across the country.

[English]

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Mike Morrice (Kitchener Centre, GP): Madam Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to come back to the need to urgently move forward with the Canada disability benefit. For every day this is not funded, 1.5 million Canadians with disabilities will continue to live in legislated poverty. In my home province of Ontario, for example, the Ontario disability support program is a meagre \$1,169. The shelter allowance is less than \$500. It is not enough for a single apartment in Kitchener.

Many, of course, are disappointed that this is the same bill tabled back in June 2021, so more than anything else, this is about trust. The governing party needs to demonstrate it is serious about following through on the Canada disability benefit. This includes moving the legislation forward, Bill C-22, with openness to amendments that would improve it, as well as funding the benefit.

Tonight, I have five questions for the parliamentary secretary from the disability community.

The first is whether the governing party is going to demonstrate that Bill C-22 is a legislative priority. We had the first day of debate on this two weeks ago, and it is not projected to be back until we break at the end of this week. We know that every day delayed is another day that Canadians with disabilities live in legislated poverty. Every day matters, so I am hoping the parliamentary secretary will answer when he can commit to having Bill C-22 back for debate in this House.

Second, the minister said that negotiations with the provinces are an issue, so I wonder if the parliamentary secretary can share where the negotiations stand, what meetings have been had and what the sticking points are.

Third, the minister also shared that another slowdown, in her view, is the need to sort out eligibility, yet we know there are existing federal, provincial and territorial programs that the Canada disability benefit would supplement. The question is why this is taking so long. It has been over two years since it was promised in the 2020 Speech from the Throne, and we know that existing program eligibility lists can and should be used as a starting point. Also, the minister continually refers to “working age” Canadians with disabilities when we know that 10% of Canadians over the age of 65 with a disability are living in poverty. Is the intention not to include them as well?

Fourth, let us not gloss over the important need to fund the benefit. If done properly, this would be a significant investment, but as someone who has advocated often about the climate crisis in this place, I know the federal government has recently committed \$8.6 billion to oil and gas companies for a new tax credit for carbon capture and storage. The fact is that budgets are about priorities, so the governing party has the opportunity to demonstrate that Canadians with disabilities are a priority. When will it commit to a timeline for funding the Canada disability benefit? Is it the fall economic statement, budget 2023 or something else?

Last, the minister has estimated that this could take 12 to 18 months. Those living with a disability will continue to live in poverty throughout this time. I am hearing from Canadians with disabilities who are applying for medical assistance in dying because they feel they have no other option since they cannot afford to live. The federal government is letting them down when we know from the pandemic that it is possible to move urgently when the moment calls for it. What is the federal government prepared to do to provide emergency funds in the short term?

● (1855)

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague and friend, the MP for Kitchener Centre, for his words this evening, his sense of urgency and his tireless advocacy on behalf of Canadians with disabilities.

As my colleague the hon. Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion has already said, we are not playing games. We are not playing games when our fellow citizens are facing poverty. We do not play games; we take action. That is exactly what we have been doing since forming government in 2015.

Our work began with the Accessible Canada Act, which led to the creation of Accessibility Standards Canada. Recently, the act also led to the appointment of Canada's first chief accessibility officer, as well as Canada's first accessibility commissioner to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. What is more, we launched the first-ever National AccessAbility Week in 2019.

When the pandemic hit, we provided a one-time payment of up to \$600 to persons with disabilities, a payment that was expanded to include the 1.75 million Canadians who receive federal disability benefits. We are also providing income supports to students. We are making other investments to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Allow me to mention that budget 2022 strengthened support for an employment strategy for persons with disabilities. It accomplishes this by providing more than \$270 million for its implementation through the opportunities fund for persons with disabilities.

Of course, I would be remiss if I did not mention that we launched Canada's first poverty reduction strategy, which recognizes that, for many reasons, certain groups of Canadians are more vulnerable to poverty. Right now, we are working hard to create Canada's very first disability inclusion action plan. The cornerstone of that plan is the groundbreaking Canada disability benefit. Bill C-22 defines an approach that would establish the Canada disability benefit in legislation.

I understand very much that my hon. colleague would like Bill C-22 to move through the House quickly. I too want nothing more than to see Canadians with disabilities receive the new Canada disability benefit as quickly as possible. That is why, in the spirit of “nothing without us”, we have been working tirelessly alongside the disability community, as well as with the provinces and territories, to ensure that every person who receives the Canada disability benefit will be better off because of it.

It is true there is more work to do. I agree with my colleague that time is of the essence. As the hon. minister has said in the House, I encourage all of my colleagues to work together to pass Bill C-22. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to significantly reduce poverty for hundreds of thousands of working-age Canadians with disabilities. Let us not miss that opportunity.

We know persons with disabilities have waited a long time for this. That is why we are working as quickly and as efficiently as possible to deliver the historic Canada disability benefit. We are proud of this work.

Mr. Mike Morrice: Madam Speaker, respectfully, this is not only my advocacy. In fact, it was the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam who put forward a unanimous consent motion in the House calling on the governing party to move more quickly on the Canada disability benefit. Therefore, I will reiterate the five questions I shared, in the hope of getting an answer to at least one of them. I have not heard an answer to any of the five yet.

First, when can the parliamentary secretary commit to Bill C-22 being back on the floor of the House?

Second, where do the negotiations stand with provincial and territorial partners?

Third, why not use existing lists from existing disability support programs?

Fourth, when will the government commit to ensuring the benefit is funded?

Fifth, what will the government do in the short term to provide emergency supports for those who need it most?

• (1900)

Mr. Irek Kusmierczyk: Madam Speaker, we know we need to address the long-standing financial insecurity that is the lived reality of far too many working age Canadians with disabilities. With Bill C-22, we are clearly demonstrating our commitment to lifting persons with disabilities out of poverty. As we wait for the bill to be passed, we are working diligently with all our partners to lay the groundwork for the next steps.

Adjournment Proceedings

We will continue building on the success of the past years, such as the Accessible Canada Act and the poverty reduction strategy. We are already working with our partners to iron out all the details so that Bill C-22 can move quickly through the House.

TAXATION

Mr. Alex Ruff (Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, CPC): Madam Speaker, I asked on May 20 whether the finance minister would keep her promise to support the long-term interests of wineries and cideries, especially smaller businesses like the cideries in my riding of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, or just continue to tax them into bankruptcy. I want to thank the finance minister for listening to those of us in opposition, especially those in the Conservative Party, the Bloc Québécois and even, I believe, the NDP, who were calling for an exemption so that Canadian wineries and cideries using Canadian honey or apples could be exempt from the excise duty.

That being said, I would like to remind the Liberal government of the following facts.

Canada has thousands of high-quality wineries, breweries, cideries and distilleries. Over 95% of these producers are small businesses, many of which have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the inflation crisis, payroll tax increases, labour shortages and the ongoing supply chain issues. Small businesses have taken on an average of almost \$170,000 in new pandemic-related debt over the last couple of years.

The cost of living continues to increase faster than prevailing wages. Agriculture producers are already facing serious supply chain disruptions, and the hospitality sector was one of the hardest hit during the pandemic. These continued Liberal increases in the excise tax on alcohol will hurt the entire industry, from growers to producers to restaurants to consumers. Furthermore, as a consequence of 40-year record inflation, the tax increase will be higher than ever due to it being tied to the consumer price index.

Canada's excise duty regime is already uncompetitive compared with those of peer countries, and the escalator makes it worse. Now is not the time to make doing business more expensive via another tax increase.

Tonight, will the finance minister commit to supporting Bill C-266, which would repeal or amend the annual adjustments to the duties on beer, malt, liquor, spirits and wine, or at least freeze the escalator tax and stop the annual increase?

Adjournment Proceedings

Mr. Francis Drouin (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound for his focus on Canada's world-class wine industry. From British Columbia to Ontario to Atlantic Canada, hundreds of wineries and cideries continue to drive our economy, supporting tens of thousands of jobs and providing billions of dollars in economic benefit.

Wine country tourism attracts more than four million tourists a year and contributes over \$1.5 billion to the economy. Over the past five years alone, employment in the industry has grown by 70%, to about 8,500 jobs. Wine sales have almost doubled, to over \$2 billion, and sales of Canadian alcoholic ciders have increased over 80%, to more than \$240 million.

We have worked hand in hand with the industry to create a program that would help it remain competitive. In June, our Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food announced a two-year program of up to \$160 million. It is a wine sector support program. The program is now up and running and is providing wineries with the tools they need to stay innovative and competitive and to capitalize on new opportunities.

All licensed wineries in Canada that produce or contract out the production of bulk wine from primary agricultural products, such as grapes, berries, other fruits, dandelions, rice and sap, are eligible for support under the program. For example, a grape winery that produced 100,000 litres of wine in the past year may be eligible to receive about \$80,000 through the program.

Canada's wine industry is robust and largely rural-based. The industry faces various challenges impacting its competitiveness, such as climate change, geography and labour costs. Support from this new program will enable the wine industry's businesses to become more resilient and will provide economic stability within the industry.

The program is intended to support Canadian wineries as they adapt to ongoing and emerging challenges over the short term. The

bottom line is that we stand firmly in favour of supporting this industry in its growth, economic development and ability to export. To quote Kelly Brown, chair of Wine Growers Canada, "Thanks to the leadership of the Government of Canada, Canada's wine industry is ready to grow back better."

I want to thank the four wineries back home that make great wine. I am sure my hon. colleague and I could compete over who has the best wine.

• (1905)

Mr. Alex Ruff: Madam Speaker, to push back, I am not going to argue with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food about who has the best wine. I have more orchards and cideries, even though I do have a couple wineries in my riding.

I am a little disappointed because the parliamentary secretary did not answer my two simple questions: Will the government commit to supporting Bill C-266 that will repeal or amend the annual adjustments to the duty on beer, malt liquor, spirits and wine, or at least freeze the escalator tax and stop these annual increases?

Mr. Francis Drouin: Madam Speaker, there are various ways we can support the wine industry. As I outlined in my speech, we provided \$160 million, but we are always open to new ideas. I know my hon. colleague is going to be waiting for the government response on the bill he just mentioned.

[Translation]

The Assistant Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Carol Hughes): The motion that the House do now adjourn is 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 7:07 p.m.)

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